

Call for Participants: The Capitalist State in the 2020s

This is an **open call for scholars interested in participating in a series of four collaborative workshops** examining the evolution of the capitalist state in the contemporary moment, hosted by UCL's [Centre for Capitalism Studies](#). The workshops will focus on industrial strategy and financialization, militarism, and borders and carceral infrastructures.

Unlike your average conference or seminar series, the aim is to assemble an **interdisciplinary group of scholars who can attend all of the in-person workshops**, building a collaborative community of inquiry.

Each workshop will be led by a subset of 3 to 4 participants, who will each give a brief (10-minute) presentation relating to the themes of that session and lead the ensuing discussion.

This CFP is open to researchers at all levels, and we would **particularly encourage early career academics** to get in touch.

Please contact Dr Matteo Tiratelli (m.tiratelli@ucl.ac.uk) **by October 4th, 2024**, if you would like to participate. If you would like to present, please also provide a 150-word abstract relating to the themes for one of the workshops below. The first three workshops will be held in Room 822, IOE, 20 Bedford Way, WC1H 0AL.

Workshop 1. Industrial strategy in the Global North (4th December 2-3.30pm)

From Biden's Inflation Reduction Act to the European Green Deal Industrial Plan, the last few years have seen a rush of state-led development projects aimed at rejuvenating economic growth and mitigating the worst effects of climate change. But while some have celebrated these moves as signalling the end of neoliberalism and the return of Keynesian-style industrial planning, others have warned about the ongoing centrality of finance and monetary policy. In particular, the hegemony of what Daniela Gabor calls the 'Wall Street Consensus' marks an important point of continuity with the neoliberal era, in which the state still sees its primary role as 'de-risking' various asset classes. How should we understand these patterns of change and continuity? What tensions and contradictions will the state encounter as it pursues these strategies? How might new patterns of financialization and economic development shift the balance of power amongst the different branches of the state? How does this policy agenda interact with geopolitics and patterns of economic convergence/divergence?

Workshop 2. Global militarism (12th February 2-3.30pm)

Between renewed Sino-American tensions, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the war in Gaza, states have rushed to increase military spending and bend supply chains around their geostrategic interests. Is this the start of a deeper 'militarisation' of the state and of civil society? How do these trajectories vary around the world? How do they interact with the ongoing outsourcing of military capacity to private firms, from the role of Elon Musk's Starlink Satellites in Ukraine to private mercenary groups like G4S? How will artificial intelligence, online disinformation and the rise of low-cost drone technology change the shape of the military state and its interactions with industry?

Workshop 3. Borders and carceral infrastructure (2nd April 2-3.30pm)

Across Europe and North America, the growth of far-right parties has pushed governments to take an increasingly authoritarian stance towards immigration, protest and crime. This has manifested in greater investments in a range of geographically dispersed infrastructures: from border walls and migrant processing hubs to high-security prisons and digital surveillance. Do these trends mark the return to the fascist states of the 1930s? The continuation of neoliberal politics? Or something totally new? What are the affordances of technological innovations in surveillance and big data processing for the state and for those who might want to resist it? How should we understand the interconnections between restrictions on mobility and a broader crackdown on political organising and 'social deviance'?

Workshop 4. Concluding plenary (TBC - late May)

This form of the final session will be shaped by the workshop participants, but the aim is to finish with a larger public event which could feature a more formal presentation of ideas/research from the workshops, a keynote speaker, a panel discussion, or something else entirely.

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