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Online Workshop: Critical Political Economy of the European Polycrisis

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Hosted by the Centre for the Study of Social and Global Justice (CSSGJ)

Over the last decade, the European Union (EU) has faced a series of intertwined crises, including the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 and the structural adjustment programmes imposed by the EU and the IMF on several member states; the increase of flows of refugees triggered by war and famines and the humanitarian disaster caused by Fortress Europe; Brexit and the rise of Euroscepticism. In turn, new crises have emerged and further intensified the previous ones: the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the impending climate catastrophe. Some scholars have referred to this situation as "Polycrisis" (Tooze, 2022). The EU has responded with a number of policy initiatives including the European Green Deal, the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility, the REPowerEU Plan, ensuring energy security independent from Russia, and the European Critical Raw Materials Act.

Critical Political Economy (CPE) is well placed to analyse the European Polycrisis and its impact on EU integration. Since the relaunch of the process of European integration in the 1980s, CPE scholars have analysed the various facets of European integration, uncovering the complexities and contradictions that shape its development, the power dynamics underlying them and their socio-economic outcomes, going beyond the limitations of mainstream European integration studies and political economy.

Many of these contributions have been collected in edited volumes, which have become key references to map the evolution of European integration over time (e.g., Bieler and Morton, 2001; Cafruny and Ryner, 2003; Overbeek, 2003; van Apeldoorn et al., 2009; Petros et al., 2012; Crespy and Menz, 2015, Jäger and Springler, 2015). These books are fundamental to understanding the trajectory of EU integration until the late 2010s. Yet, we believe that the European Polycrisis and the changes it triggered to form and content of EU integration call for a new round of contributions, which are also able to address some of the 'blind spots' of critical approaches to EU integration.

The aim of this workshop is to foster critical discussions that go beyond conventional narratives of European integration, delving into its underlying power structures, inequalities, socio-political implications, and its relationship with the global context. The final output of the workshop will be an edited volume including the contributions presented at the workshop.

We invite submissions that engage with various aspects of the European Polycrisis from a critical political economy perspective. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Theory and methods for a critical political economy of the EU Polycrisis
- Core-periphery relations, uneven and combined development
- Competing hegemonic project and transnational social forces
- Post-Covid European economic governance
- EU external relations within heightened geopolitical competition
- Climate crisis and environmental sustainability
- Gender and social reproduction
- Racial capitalism
- Digitalization, technology and surveillance capitalism
- Labour agency, contestation, and resistance
- Populism, nationalism, and the rise of the far-right

References

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Jäger J. and Springler E. (2015) (eds) *Asymmetric Crisis in Europe and Possible Futures. Critical Political Economy and Post-Keynesian Perspectives*. London: Routledge.

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Petros N., Overbeek H. and Andreas Tsolakis (2012) (eds) *Globalisation and European Integration: Critical Approaches to Regional Order and International Relations*. London: Routledge.

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