

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Gill		Winter 2023/24
Capitalism and its cycle of crises – endogenous or exogenous causes, creative or self-destructive coping?		Tuesday 10.00 – 12.00 a.m. Konradstrasse 6, room 209
<p>Over the last twenty years, our societies in the Global North have experienced a series of crises – first the financial crisis of 2007, which originated in the crash of the US mortgage market. This was followed by the Euro crisis in 2010, which was interpreted in Northern European countries as a consequence of the high level of financial indebtedness of Southern European countries, and which focused most dramatically on Greece. Then, in 2015, we saw the refugee crisis as a result of the war in Syria. The climate crisis – that is, the sudden awareness that we are living beyond the ecological limits of the Earth system – came around 2018 and was silenced, at least for a few years, by the Corona crisis. The latter ended with the start of the war in Ukraine. And all the while, the ongoing crisis of the electoral system – the splintering of political parties and the emergence of ever larger right-wing protest movements.</p> <p>Usually, all these crises are presented as exogenous to the capitalist system – coming from outside as a sudden and unprovoked attack. But if we're experiencing so many crises in such a short period, shouldn't we be asking whether they might be coming from within, whether the capitalist system is either more in trouble than before, or whether late capitalist societies have installed institutions – such as an over-alarms press – that make us hypersensitive to many issues that in other times would have been seen as minor challenges rather than catastrophic risks? In the seminar we will read older theories of crisis, such as those of Karl Marx and Josef Schumpeter, which analyse the general tendency of capitalism to rejuvenate itself through these self-produced crises. Based on this, we will then discuss how we can interpret the current crises beyond their face value. Are we really living in such a dark time, or is the public mood blackened for other reasons?</p>		
Slides and Texts you can see with the internet links below, for the texts you need as open sesame: Crises23		
Schedule		Schedule of "preferred discussion partners" and of "essay writing"
17.10.	Introduction	
Part I: Normality of crises		
24.10.	Modernisation: Crisis as normalcy? *Baudrillard, J. (1987). Modernity. Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, Volume XI, No 3 (1987), pp. 63-72. Jayasuriya, K. (2023). Polycrisis or crises of capitalist social reproduction. Global Social Challenges Journal, 1(aop), 1-9.	Slides 1 Text 1a Text 1b
31.10.	All Saints	
07.11.	Capitalism: eternal self-repair by crises? *Shaikh, A. (1978). An introduction to the history of crisis theories. US capitalism in crisis, 219-241. Kindleberger, C. P., Aliber, R. Z., & Solow, R. M. (2005). Manias, panics, and crashes: A history of financial crises (Vol. 7). London: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 1-37.	Slides 2 Text 2a Text 2b
14.11.	State and capitalism as perennial war-making *Tilly, C. (1982). War making and state making as organized crime. Manuskript. Arrighi, G. (1990). The three hegemonies of historical capitalism. Review (Fernand Braudel Center), 365-408.	Slides 3 Text 3a Text 3b
Part II: "This time it is different!" Post-normality of the current crises?		
21.11.	Secular Stagnation and the beginning of the post-fossil era *Galbraith, J. K. (2014). The end of normal: The great crisis and the future of growth. Simon and Schuster. Prologue and Chapter 14. Moore, J. W. (2010). The end of the road? Agricultural revolutions in the capitalist world-ecology, 1450–2010. Journal of agrarian change, 10(3), 389-413.	Slides 4 Text 4a Text 4b
28.11.	Change now! Or the environmental crisis as way of life? *Brown, B., & Spiegel, S. J. (2019). Coal, climate justice, and the cultural politics of energy transition. Global environmental politics, 19(2), 149-168. Buell, F. (2004). From apocalypse to way of life: Environmental crisis in the American century. Routledge. Chapter 6.	Slides 5 Text 5a Text 5b
05.12.	Welfare State crisis and the derailment of the labour class vote *Gingrich, J., & Häusermann, S. (2015). The decline of the working-class vote, the reconfiguration of the welfare support coalition and consequences for the welfare state. Journal of European Social Policy, 25(1), 50-75. Castles, F. G. (2002). The future of the welfare state: crisis myths and crisis realities. International Journal of Health Services, 32(2), 255-277.	Slides 6 Text 6a Text 6b
12.12.	The new multi-dimensionality of voting (and the resulting problem to build governments) *Hillen, S., & Steiner, N. D. (2020). The consequences of supply gaps in two-dimensional policy spaces for voter turnout and political support: The case of economically left-wing and culturally right-wing citizens in Western Europe. European Journal of Political Research, 59(2), 331-353. Brenner, J., & Fraser, N. (2017). What is progressive neoliberalism?: A debate. <i>Dissent</i> , 64(2): three short political statements (Fraser / Brenner / Fraser)	Slides 7 Text 7a Text 7b Text 7c Text 7d
19.12.	De-alignment or re-alignment of political representation? *Bornschieer, S., Haffert, L., Häusermann, S., Steenbergen, M. R., & Zollinger, D. (2022). Identity Formation between Structure and Agency—How 'Us' and 'Them' Relates to Voting Behavior in Contexts of Electoral Realignment. Haffert, L., Bornschieer, S., Häusermann, S., Steenbergen, M., & Zollinger, D. (2022). Group identities and their perceived representation in the party system: evidence from four European countries.	Slides 8 Text 8a Text 8b
09.01	Media between fragmentation and new alignments *Alexander, J. C. (2015). The crisis of journalism reconsidered: Cultural power. Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences, 8, 9-31. Kantola, A. (2013). From gardeners to revolutionaries: The rise of the liquid ethos in political journalism. Journalism, 14(5), 606-626.	Slides 9 Text 9a Text 9b
16.01.	War and the state of exception *Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2004). Multitude: War and democracy in the age of empire. Penguin. Chapter 1 (pp. 1-35) Shevchuk, D., Shevchuk, K., & Zaitsev, M. (2023). Existential resilience of human being in the wartime everyday life. Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, 28-42.	Slides 10 Text 10a Text 10b
23.01.	The pandemic state of exception *Agamben, G. (2021). Where are we now?: The epidemic as politics. Rowman & Littlefield. chap. 1-7 (pp. 1-22). Corradetti, C., & Pollicino, O. (2021). The "War" Against Covid-19: State of Exception, State of Siege, or (Constitutional) Emergency Powers?: The Italian Case in Comparative Perspective. German Law Journal, 22(6), 1060-1071. Humphreys, S. (2006). Legalizing lawlessness: On Giorgio Agamben's state of exception. European journal of international law, 17(3), 677-687.	Slides 11 Text 11a Text 11b Text 11c
30.01.	Instructor not available (PhD examination)	
06.02.	Seminar final discussion and critique	Slides 12
<p>How to get certificates (6 ECTS):</p> <p>- reading the main texts (marked with a star "**") for each meeting</p> <p>- being two times a "preferred discussion partner" – this means that you have carefully read all the texts for the respective meeting (not only the texts with the star* marks). This means that you are particularly asked to participate actively in the discussion and you can also be addressed directly with questions about the texts. Main assessment criteria: active and meaningful participation in the discussion, knowledge and understanding of the text, inclusion of all texts.</p> <p>- writing two five-page literature essay: Based on your reading of all the literature on the announced date (which must not coincide with your PDP role), you will send a short essay on the topic by midnight on Sunday before each session. The essay will summarise the literature and seek your own interpretation (see below for more details). Please always send via email and as a PDF. Writing an "essay" does not mean looking at the subject matter or even the world as a whole from the depths of one's mind or the loftiness of one's moral standpoint. Rather, a literary essay in the context of this seminar is based on a thorough reading and reflection of the texts given for each session. These are to be brought into conversation with each other: What are the similarities and differences? Are only different phenomena illuminated, or are different methodological and normative perspectives also brought into play? What points of criticism can be formulated from the theoretical and methodological perspectives chosen in the texts themselves (in the sense of "immanent criticism")? Three possibilities of expansion can be positively honoured, but are not mandatory: To which texts of the previous seminar reading are there connecting lines or interesting contrasts? What would be current examples of application that are not yet mentioned in the texts? Furthermore, what might be the "blind spots" of the chosen texts if one takes another designated theoretical perspective?</p>		
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