

## WHAT IS IIPPE?



**IIPPE was founded in 2006 aiming to strengthen the presence of political economy across the social sciences through critical and constructive engagement with mainstream economics, heterodox alternatives, interdisciplinary, and activism**

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# IIPPE IN BRIEF

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## NAPLES 2014



By Michela Cerimele  
and Pietro Masina

The next IIPPE conference will be hosted by the University of Naples L'Orientale. Given the volatility of Italian politics at the moment, it is difficult to predict the environment in which the conference will take place. The current "grand coalition" may still be in place on a line of moderate economic austerity. More likely, we may have had elections with uncertain results. The impact of the crisis have been severe, albeit less so than Greece, Spain or Portugal: youth unemployment is currently at 40 per cent, industrial production has declined by 25 per cent since 2008, the country is still in recession and it may take years to return to pre-crisis GDP levels. Given the high social costs of the crisis, it is quite discouraging that the Italian left has so far been unable to present a credible political alternative. The largest party of the centre-left – Partito Democratico (PD), which still represents the majority of the former PCI militants and electorate – will most likely elect a young former Christian-democrat as its new leader on a platform that is at the same time populist in language and moderate in content. The other main left-wing party – Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà (SEL) – is not expected to achieve more than 5 or 6 per cent of the vote and will try to cooperate with PD in the hope of having some influence over a possible centre-left

government. Forces in the rest of the political left are too weak and fragmented to have a meaningful impact. This rather bleak picture contrasts with large and vital social movements and a very active role played by trade unions – in particular the metallurgy industry union (FIOM) that has become the symbol of resistance in the country.

In this context, we believe that the IIPPE conference can have a positive impact on the Italian debate on the crisis and provide support for the search for alternatives. Events in the last year confirm that adjustments within neoliberalism risk being the only available response in the absence of broad organized resistance based on a politically sound thinking: where day to day tactics are not disconnected from longer-term strategies. Longer-term strategies, in turn, must be solidly rooted in an understanding of the mechanisms and functioning of contemporary capitalism and its weaknesses. For example, the political right's persistent appeal to labour market rigidities as one of the obstacles to the solution of the crisis – along with more or less overt policies aimed at

*(Continued on page 3)*

# 4th Annual Conference

In July this year, IIPPE held its largest solo conference to date with over 250 delegates from more than 30 countries, across 6 continents, participating in 70 parallel sessions. Celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, The International Institute of Social Studies made an apt host for this year's conference, which had the theme of 'Political Economy, Activism and Alternative Economic Strategies', given its long history of progressive scholarship and engagement with activism theme was. Plenary speakers included the renowned activist and author, Susan George of the Transnational Institute, Bridget O'Laughlin, Peter Alexander, Yuezhu Zhao, Fred Fuentes, Geert Reuten, Fabio de Masi, George Stathakis & Stuart Holland. On top of sessions organ-

ised by IIPPE working groups, there were a number of panel contributions from other organisations including the European Progressive Economists Network, the EuroMemo Group, the Brazilian Association of Political Economy, the Russian International Moscow Economic Forum and the Civic Innovation Research Initiative (CIRI) at ISS. This conference had two important innovations. One was the one day Training Workshop which was organised one day prior to the conference and the discussions during

the lunch break on themes such as the comparison of the Turkish and the Brazilian revolts, and the International Moscow Economic Forum.



*Opening session of the fourth annual international conference in political economy*

**Plenary speakers:**  
**Yuezhi Zhao**  
**& Peter Alexander,**  
**with Ben Fine (far left)**  
**as chair in the final session**

## Training Workshops

Simon Mohun & Elisa van Waeyenberge

IIPPE has now successfully run three Training Workshops: in June 2012 (60 registrations) and in March 2013 (75 registrations), both in London, both running over two days, and both reported in previous Newsletters; and the third (61 registrations) on the day before the Annual Conference in July 2013 in The Hague.

This third Training Workshop was a one-day event, designed as a thematically coherent workshop around finance in four ninety-minute sessions, beginning at a high level of abstraction and developing more concrete analyses as the day progressed.

Simon Mohun began with a survey of the labour theory of value and exploitation. He followed this with a brief account of productive and unproductive labour, and concluded

with an analysis of interest as a form of surplus-value.

Samantha Ashman then provided a more historical account. Picking up from the first session, she began with the circuit of capital and its forms. She then looked at the roots of the recent growth in finance, before turning to neoliberalism and its relation to finance. Having sketched some implications for accumulation and crisis in the contemporary world, she surveyed approaches to financialisation, and how these related to the periodization of capitalist development. And she concluded with some remarks about financialised accumulation and its implications for the state, society and reproduction.

She was followed by Duncan

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Lindo, who began with some empirical observations about the extent of derivatives markets and the centrality of banks. He then turned to how one might theorise the emergence of commercial banks from the circuit of capital (via discounters), and dealt in some detail with the operation of banks as securities dealers and banks as derivatives dealers, before concluding with some recent developments in EU bank legislation.

Because this programme was fairly dense, we had scheduled the whole of the final session for discussion. This was popular, and ran over time by some considerable margin. The presentations have

been uploaded on to the IIPPE webpage.

We had hoped to attract Conference participants, and this proved successful. We also succeeded in attracting Masters and PhD students from ISS at The Hague. In all of this, we were helped enormously by the generous provision by ISS of free accommodation for 40 participants for the night before the Workshop and for the duration of the workshop.

Our plans for the future include a one-day workshop on basic political economy (led by Simon Mohun and Alfredo Saad-Filho) on the day before the Historical Materialism Conference in London in November. At the time of writing, we have more than 100 registrations,

and we will report on this in the next Newsletter.

We will also run a two-day event in March in London on class and class structure, and a call for participants will go out in early January 2014. We hope to run a one-day event before the Annual Conference in Naples in September 2014, and we are also actively exploring the possibility of running Training Workshops in the north of England. We will make appropriate announcements to the IIPPE membership as soon as these plans are firmed up.

**Video recordings from the training workshop and conference plenaries can be viewed at [www.iippe.org](http://www.iippe.org)**

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weakening workers even further all over Europe – exemplify the centrality of the ‘organized attack on labour’ in neoliberal strategies. Despite this clear assault on labour, the left have failed to organise on the basis of labour centred alternatives.

Another key point that we would like to explore during the next conference is the contribution of scholarship, and that of the intellectuals more generally, in identifying the ideal, tactical and strategic contents of renewed forms of political organization both within and beyond the current party system. Indeed the disarticulation of theory from praxis on the left that gives strength to neoliberal positions and as such deserves close attention and discussion. Seen from the Italian perspective the issues mentioned here are of paramount relevance and Italian scholarship has much to contribute and, at the same time, to learn from current debates. From this starting point we are organising panels on two interrelated topics. First, we seek contributions that explore where we are with labour movements: the extent to which they are articulated with broader social movements; if



and on what terms they continue to be of concern to left-wing parties, and whether or not restarting on the basis of the centrality of labour is still relevant in terms of scholarship, conflicts, alternatives, as well as the relationship between these. Second, we are interested in the relationship between intellectuals and politics. Here we would particularly welcome participation of scholars in two strong, but somewhat conflicting, Italian traditions: the Gramscian and the Workerist. Any suggestions for and/or contributions to the organization of panels are very much welcome. (see call for papers on p.12)



## From Gezi Resistance to the Present: Contours of the Turkish Political Landscape

By Galip Yalman

Department of Political Science and Public Administration  
Middle East Technical University



Gezi Park 2013

As has been reported in the western media, there has been an unprecedented series of events in Turkey in the summer this year that has changed the political scene, if not, the actual balance of social forces in the country. What has triggered this tumultuous process, which has forced all political actors to reconsider their position and strategies, was a last minute public resistance against the destruction a green park area in central Istanbul. The struggle to keep Gezi Park and its contiguous Taksim Square has not only brought about a spontaneous mass movement, the likes of which have not been seen in the recent history of the Turkish Republic, but also rekindled an ongoing debate about the nature of the movement on the one hand, and the possibilities for transforming the terms of the political struggle in society on the other. No doubt a sound analysis of the nature of the movement will be invaluable to reach a better understanding of the possibilities for transformative action.

The core agent of this struggle is Taksim Solidarity (<http://taksimdayanisma.org/?lang=en>) which brought together a diverse group that includes trade unions, professionals' organizations, political parties, community groups, and sports club fan groups, in opposition to neoliberal-cum-Islamist urban regeneration project of

Taksim Square and Gezi Park which have been personally by the Turkish Prime Minister. In that respect, Taksim Solidarity differs from other protests movements such as Occupy Wall Street that have been characterised by their lacking a specific set of demands. At the same time, this movement shares other features attributed to such movements such as spontaneity and the lack of a hierarchical structure of decision-making. It would, however, be insufficient to portray the struggle of Taksim Solidarity as an example of a "right to city" movement with the aims of reclaiming public spaces and striving for "healthy urbanisation and liveable cities". For these demands have been coupled with a set of broader political demands for enhancing democratic rights and freedoms and an end to the use of indiscriminate violence against those who are keen to exercise their rights and resist interference in their life styles.

The emergence of such an extra-parliamentary political opposition was certainly an important factor in the brutal ways in which the Turkish government has attempted to suppress the resistance and discredit the very idea of resistance to its policies. Repetitious use of police violence against protesters were not confined to those who occupied the Gezi Park and Taksim Square for two weeks in June 2013, but led to a number of deaths in several cities as the protests rapidly spread across the country. Such a brutal assault on peaceful protests and the verbiage continuously uttered by the Prime Minister to bolster the rank and file of his own party has certainly played a part in shifting the perception of the AKP (Turkish acronym for Justice and Development Party) government - which has been in power for nearly eleven

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years - as a mildly-Islamist political entity, instrumental in democratizing the society whilst diligently adhering to the precepts of neoliberal transformation. There has been increasing disenchantment across the liberal intelligentsia in Turkey as well as in the West who perceive a turn towards authoritarianism in rhetoric and practice bent on imposing conservative religious morals on the society. A prime example is provided by the Prime Minister's new initiative to put an end to the shared accommodation by male and female students in compliance with his government's adherence, as he put it, to the principles of "conservative democracy".

Ironically, this new initiative has been announced in the wake of the EU's decision to open a new chapter in the protracted process of accession negotiations with Turkey which has remained dormant for the last three years or so.

There has also been a sudden reawakening to the pitfalls of finance-dominated model of capital accumulation. In fact, a constant feature of the Turkish debt-led and jobless economic growth model since the twin crises of 2001 has been the soaring current account deficits financed by hot money flows. Yet, while these features have been the basic staple for the critiques of this model, the long-time advocates of financialisation seemed to have awoken to a new reality which is reflected in their commentaries about the virtues of capital controls in mitigating the volatility that ensue from the sudden changes in the direction of the flows of capital. Meanwhile, the government, intent on identifying the plotters responsible for the protests movement, has blamed a shadowy "interest rate lobby" for instigating instability for the sake of their vested interests. Hence the government's refusal to raise interest rates as a means of preventing capital outflows in the wake of Federal Reserve's decision to terminate quantitative easing in the medium term which, in turn, raised eyebrows about the credibility of the Central Bank's conduct of monetary policy.

The AKP government was determined, however, to regain the momentum which it seemed to have lost in the wake of the Gezi resistance as local government elections are looming in the spring of 2014. Thus, it attempted to rejuvenate its peace initiative for the resolution of the Kurdish question by announcing a new "democratization" package. But it turns out that the most tangible element of this initiative



***Destruction of green spaces at METU 2013***

was nothing but the advancement of their long-term position with respect to, what is known as, the headscarf (Türban) issue. The remaining obstacles preventing women from wearing headscarfs in public spaces, including the Parliament, have been removed by decree.

Last but not least, the AKP government has again shown its lack of respect for the preservation of green areas and its determination to encroach upon public spaces by forcefully destroying part of a forest within the campus of Middle East Technical University, a state university in Ankara, so as to build a motorway running through a densely populated residential area. As it has been the case with the assault on Gezi Park, there was large scale indignation with respect to the ways in which this assault has been carried out after sunset on a public holiday. Construction of the road continues despite the protests. Meanwhile, university authorities have begun legal procedures as a last resort to prevent further encroachments upon the public spaces on campus.



By Susan  
Schroder &  
Lynne Chester

University of  
Sydney

## Political Economy at the University of Sydney: Challenging the Orthodoxy

In the 1970s, a movement began at the University of Sydney to provide and protect the academic freedom and space of staff and students interested in political economy. The movement culminated in the emergence of an independent department in 2007 – over 30 years since the initial push began for its creation. Within this space intellectuals have explored and continue to explore alternative frameworks with which to understand how societies organize themselves to recreate the material conditions for their continued existence. Economic phenomena and processes are not treated as occurring in isolation from social, historical and political processes. Hence the department engages a broad range of methodological approaches with an openness to incorporate historical, political and sociological considerations, besides the economic. That is, the characteristics of social-economic systems, capitalist or not, are examined with a multidisciplinary approach.

The department held a conference this past April to celebrate the contribution to political economy by Emeritus Professor Frank Stilwell after some forty years at the University of Sydney. Outside of Australia the name Frank Stilwell is not well known. Within Australia, however, is another matter.

Originally from Southampton, England, Frank Stilwell arrived in Sydney in 1970 to test his fortunes as a young academic in the Economics Department at the University of Sydney. At the time, the department was beginning its shift towards a dichotomous, American-style approach to the discipline – under the guidance of another recent arrival, the New Zealander

and Head of Department the late Warren Hogan (1929-2009). Stilwell had been trained as a neoclassical microeconomist, specializing in regional and urban development. On paper he appeared to be well-suited to the Americanization of the Economics department at Sydney. What Hogan didn't count on was the radicalization of Stilwell and two of his colleagues who arrived shortly afterwards – Evan Jones and Gavan Butler – by the likes of the late Ted Wheelwright (1921-2007).

The April 2013 conference commemorated the contributions of Frank Stilwell and laid out directions for the department's future. Participants were presented with an array of research from political economists, both from Australia and abroad, whose research entails a strong link to Stilwell's own writings on topics such as economic inequality, cities and regions, economic policy, teaching political economy, the environment and history of economic ideas. A book containing selected papers from the conference is about to be published by Springer and includes the invited keynote contributions by John E. King, Jane Kelsey, Andrew Mearman, Gabrielle Meagher, Brendan Gleeson, and Mark Diesendorf. We are delighted to have Geoff Harcourt provide the foreword for the book.

There are a number of challenges posed for the Department as it goes forward from the Stilwell era. One challenge is the evaluation of research output from the staff of this department. Most university departments align with conventional structures. However, political economy is an amalgam of economics, history, political science, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies and other social sciences. A typical mainstream economics department will incorporate aspects of these disciplines within the narrow confines of the closed methods it employs. The methods are

Susan K. Schroeder  
Lynne Chester *Editors*

### Challenging the Orthodoxy

Reflections on Frank Stilwell's  
Contribution to Political Economy

 Springer

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that of economics. Political economy involves open methods which cross disciplinary boundaries right at the start of any analysis. As universities are pressured to compete for research funding, the scrutiny of research output has increased. Political economy is not an easy discipline to evaluate. The diversity of opinion which gives Political Economy strength, also makes it vulnerable to its research not being recognised by the very metrics used to rank and compare disciplines and institutions.

Another challenge faced by political economy is the competition with mainstream economics for the attention of progressive policy makers. In the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, mainstream economics has been searching for some form of paradigm shift to maintain its viability in the policy arena. It is well-understood that at its heart the current mainstream frameworks which underlie policy are quite conservative. Their present methods will not permit more effective progressive policies. Progressive economists such as those within political economy have an advantage with its open methods. However, policy-makers are accustomed to support in the form of mainstream analyses slid into their hands by lobbyists on behalf of vested interests. Political economy

faces a challenge, then, increasing its exposure within the policy arena. How can we, for instance, be better at exposing policymakers to our analyses? It's a challenge needing the support of progressive networks within Australia and internationally.

To rise to this challenge the department is increasing its presence at international conferences and with collaborative research projects. And, we are also expanding our range of policy issues – beyond the generation that Stilwell represents - that we seek to address. Important focuses of our contemporary critical analysis have included: the global financial crisis; the relationship of country risk assessment to international financial crises, business cycles and financial fragility; struggles around employment and human rights, and international labour migration; the creation of gendered and racially-specific visions of economic progress; the hegemony of neoliberalism and its relationship to the social foundations of capitalism; the short-term consequences and longer-term implications of restructured energy markets; de-industrialisation and the restructuring of production; the operation and outcomes of markets for social provisioning previously provided direct by government; and the impact of financialisation.

We need to maintain and extend this

research contribution as we engage with, and contribute to the development of heterodox economic traditions such as Post-Keynesian economics, institutional economics, Marxism, evolutionary and feminist economics. In this sense, we need to not only continue but extend the legacy of Frank Stilwell's contribution to the Department of Political Economy and Australian political economy more generally.

The book to be published by Springer,

***Challenging the Orthodoxy: Reflections on Frank Stilwell's Contribution to Political Economy, is a collection of papers by not only well-known heterodox economists but also emerging scholars of political economy, political activists, not-for-profit researchers and alumni of Sydney's Political Economy program, a further reflection, we think, of the contemporary relevance of the discourse generated by the analytical frameworks which fall under the rubric of political economy.***

**VISIT  
WWW.IIPPE.ORG**

**We are seeking contributions for the next issue of the IIPPE Newsletter.**

These can be: (each up to 900 words max)

- Call for papers
- Announcements of publications and upcoming events
- Short book reviews
- Summaries based on recent or current research
- Short opinion pieces

Please send contributions to [iippe@soas.ac.uk](mailto:iippe@soas.ac.uk)

# Greek Universities Under Threat

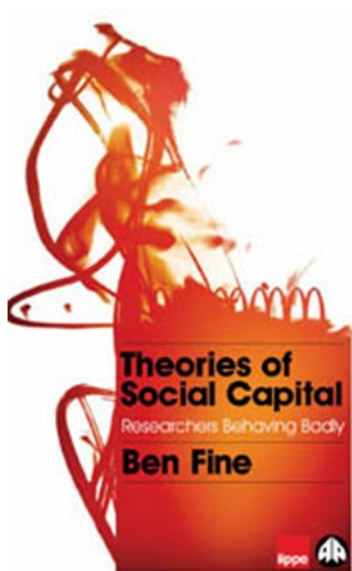
Under the latest austerity measures, the Greek Government has decided to suspend 1349 administrative staff from 8 Universities, including 49 from the University of Crete. This decision follows a number of other measures that have already negatively affected the Universities over the last two years of austerity in Greece, in particular a freeze on all new appoint-

ments, both academic and administrative, an increase in the number of first year students in most Faculties and huge cuts of up to 50% in the regular budget. A petition has been set up to support the University of Crete in particular. If you wish to sign it go to:

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/support-to-university-of-crete.html>



Check out the IIPPE book series published by Pluto Press: [www.plutobooks.com](http://www.plutobooks.com)





# WORKING GROUPS PAGE



Working Groups form the backbone of IIPPE. The purpose of the working groups is to facilitate discussion and collaboration in order to strengthen and further the development of political

economy. We currently have working groups organised around 17 topics (see box below for a full list of the WGs as well as contact details for each). IIPPE working groups are at various stages of development with each running itself subject to conforming to broader IIPPE aims. So far, activities that have been organised by IIPPE working groups include workshops, panels at conferences, online debates and exchange of literature and other resources. The IIPPE working groups have brought together researchers from across disciplines, institutions and countries. A number of working groups are plan-

ning working paper series and other collaborative work. IIPPE is looking to expand the diversity and scope of the working groups, and we welcome suggestions and offers to organise new working groups as well as collaboration with other working groups from outside the initiative. Those interested in this should contact individual working groups or, for more general enquiries, those interested in setting up new groups please contact [iippe@soas.ac.uk](mailto:iippe@soas.ac.uk).

Visit [www.iippe.org](http://www.iippe.org)

## Current Working Groups

**Agrarian Change**

[D. Johnston \(dj3@soas.ac.uk\)](mailto:dj3@soas.ac.uk)

**Beyond Developmental State**

[J. Saraswati \(js6258@nyu.edu\)](mailto:js6258@nyu.edu)

**Commodity Studies**

[L. Campling \(liamcampling@yahoo.co.uk\)](mailto:liamcampling@yahoo.co.uk) &  
[S. Newman \(susanamynewman@gmail.com\)](mailto:susanamynewman@gmail.com)  
[Niels Hahn \(nsc.hahn@gmail.com\)](mailto:nsc.hahn@gmail.com)

**Conflict, War and Development**

**Environment**

[vacant](#)

**Financialisation**

[A. Kaltenbrunner \(A.Kaltenbrunner@leeds.ac.uk\)](mailto:A.Kaltenbrunner@leeds.ac.uk) &  
[J. Michell \(jomichell@gmail.com\)](mailto:jomichell@gmail.com)

**International Financial Institutions**

[E. van Waeyenberge \(elisa@btinternet.com\)](mailto:elisa@btinternet.com)

**Law and Development**

[R. D'Souza \(r.dsouza1@westminster.ac.uk\)](mailto:r.dsouza1@westminster.ac.uk)

**Marxist Political Economy**

[G.H. Gimm \(ghgimm@gmail.com\)](mailto:ghgimm@gmail.com)

**Minerals-Energy Complex /  
Comparative Industrialisation  
Neoliberalism**

[Basani Baloyi \(basani.baloyi@wits.ac.za\)](mailto:basani.baloyi@wits.ac.za)

**Political Economy of Institutions**

[A. Saad-Filho \(as59@soas.ac.uk\)](mailto:as59@soas.ac.uk) & [K. Birch \(kean.birch@lbss.gla.ac.uk\)](mailto:kean.birch@lbss.gla.ac.uk)  
[D. Milonakis \(milonakis@econ.soc.uoc.gr\)](mailto:milonakis@econ.soc.uoc.gr) &  
[G. Meramveliotakis \(meramveliotakis@yahoo.gr\)](mailto:meramveliotakis@yahoo.gr)  
[A. Brown \(A.Brown@lubs.leeds.ac.uk\)](mailto:A.Brown@lubs.leeds.ac.uk) & [D. Spencer \(das@lubs.leeds.ac.uk\)](mailto:das@lubs.leeds.ac.uk)  
[K. Bayliss \(Kb6@soas.ac.uk\)](mailto:Kb6@soas.ac.uk)

**Political Economy of Work**

**Privatisation**

[A. Christoforou \(asimina.christoforou@gmail.com\)](mailto:asimina.christoforou@gmail.com)

**Social Capital**

**Urban and Regional Political Economy**

[J. Gough \(Jamie.Gough@sheffield.ac.uk\)](mailto:Jamie.Gough@sheffield.ac.uk), [Ozlem Celik \(ozlemcel79@yahoo.com\)](mailto:ozlemcel79@yahoo.com)

## Book Review: Informational Entropy, A Recommendation for Robert Biel's Thermodynamic Analysis of the International Political Economy

Robert Biel's *The Entropy of Capitalism* (Brill, 2012) takes sociological systems-theoretical analyses in a new direction, offering cutting-edge theorization of the international political economy and to systemic crises of capital (e.g., in ecology and international relations). The crises of capital, for Biel, are immanent to the system, which Biel analyzes through an energetic-thermodynamic framework.

For Biel, crises the system generates can be assessed—and thus its future behavior partially assayed—by the way in which the system reacts to its entropy production. The system of capital exists at far-from-equilibrium conditions which require it to ingest very high levels—inputs—of matter, energy, and information just in order to reproduce itself as an output. Capital must, in turn, dissipate its entropy into its environment to attenuate loss of its organization and structure. Biel labels capital a high-input system and uses the core-periphery distinction to point out that, historically, capital has dumped its entropy into natural environments and the global south (thus ramifying crises in ecology and forms of imperialism/decolonization).

For Biel, capital allows for a range of accumulation regimes (mercantilist, Taylorist,

etc.—Biel defines the current regime as neoliberal) to dominate this continual reproduction of the system by providing rules (in practices and policy) for the management of its input-output transfers. What is required to understand the international political economy, on Biel's analysis, is a grasp of the accumulation regime of the system. Any accumulation regime premised on the maintenance of such high-input requirements, must in turn generate high-input suppression of its entropic waste, thus ramifying systemic crises (energetically, materially, and informationally very expensive to contain).

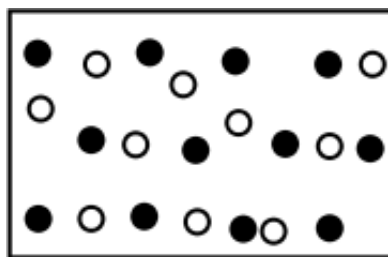
To overcome these crises, Biel proposes a low-input alternative to capital's high-input dynamics, citing urban agriculture movements that can function as part of a low-input accumulation regime—posing low-input solutions to crises in food (with prices, production, etc.). Here, local communities work together to engage in low-input practices that would negate high-input industrial agriculture and factory farming.

We wish to suggest a future direction for research in the area that Biel has decisively opened up for systems-theoretical analyses. Over against Biel's general thermodynamic analysis of entropy, information is

unique in its relation to entropy production. Information can increase in a system even while that system's entropy increases. Biel's account makes bits of this plain, but might be taken further by commenting

on the differences between thermodynamic and informational entropy, viz., for instance, comparing Gibbs' or von Neumann's formulation of entropy against Shannon's formulation of informational entropy. Information links up with forms of agency (i.e., decoders of information) in a way that reduces uncertainty in a system even while that system may be unaffected energetically or materially by the decoding. Thus, an important key to assaying the future behavior of the capital system might involve directing attention to a specific theory of informational entropy and its analysis.

By Robert Drury King, Sierra Nevada College; Free University of Brussels, Centre Leo Apostel



## Announcements

### NEW BOOKS

#### **A Prelude to the Foundation of Political Economy: Oil, War, and Global Polity**

By Cyrus Bina

Published by Palgrave Macmillan

This is a groundbreaking volume of theory and strategy on political economy and polity of the twenty-first century, which unites domains of economics, politics, international relations, and the environment in an organic whole. Distilled in concrete terms, it elucidates the enigma of oil in view of the centrality of global social relations and with respect to two major exigencies of our time, namely, world peace, and defense of our ecosystem. A Prelude to the Foundation of Political Economy also highlights the need for detachment of US foreign policy from dependence on oil, to reveal rather vividly the illusion of America's power and leadership. This book is a wakeup call to the altered reality in which we live.

#### **India's Perception, Society and Development: Essays Unpleasant**

By Arup Maharatna

Published by Springer

In its search for the non-economic roots of India's overall sloth and murky progress in its broad-based economic and human development, the book illuminates major oddities deep inside a unique mental make-up full of perceptual and ideational dilemmas, many of which are arguably shaped by the long-standing and dominant influence of what could be called the Brahminical lines of thinking and discourse.

#### **The Disempowered Development of Tibet in China: A Study in the Economics of Marginalization**

By Andrew M Fischer

Published by Lexington Books

The study represents one of the only macro-level and systemic analyses of its kind in the scholarship on Tibet, based on accessi-

# Announcements

ble economic analysis and extensive interdisciplinary fieldwork. It also carries much interest for those interested in China and in the interactions between development, inequality, exclusion and conflict more generally.

## **'Economics and HIV: The sickness of Economics'**

By Deborah Johnston

Published by Routledge

This book offers an insight, for both economists and development practitioners generally, into why economics has largely failed to provide useful insights on the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa. Two broad themes are discussed. First, how does the character of the economic system increase (or reduce) HIV risk? After a failed attempt to situate 'development' as a panacea for HIV, more recent attempts from mainstream economics seek to 'incentivise' HIV risk reduction through cash transfers. However, this view, with its roots firmly in homo economicus, is equally likely to fail. Second, why does mainstream economics suggest that such a terrible disease will have almost no economic impact? Standard impact assessments of AIDS suggest that it will do little to affect economic growth and may even increase welfare. The reasons for such perverse findings will be discussed and an alternative perspective offered.

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

**16th Conference of the Association for  
Heterodox Economics**

**The Triple Crisis Finance, Development and  
Environment  
3-5 July 2014**

**University of Greenwich, London**

Important Dates:

Abstracts: 31 January, Decisions on abstracts by 14 February

Refereed papers: 14 May, Review comments to authors by 28 May

Final papers (and non-refereed papers) 10 June

Contact: [b.cronin@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:b.cronin@greenwich.ac.uk)

<http://www.hetecon.net/>

## **THE SECOND MOSCOW ECONOMIC FORUM**

**26-27 March 2014**

**Moscow State University**

To participate in the Forum on an individual basis, please apply to the Organizing Committee of the Forum before 1 January 2014 with CV, contact details (e-mail), topic and summary of your paper.

No registration fee.

Visa support and reservation of the hotel will be provided by the organising committee.

For information: [alternativy@bk.ru](mailto:alternativy@bk.ru); [www.me-forum.ru](http://www.me-forum.ru);

+7 (495) 781-37-15

## **The Third SPERI Annual Conference**

**The Global Contours of Growth & Development beyond the Crisis**

**30 June – 2 July 2014**

**Halifax Hall, University of Sheffield**

Please email abstracts (of no more than a page in length) of proposed papers/panels to

[speri@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:speri@sheffield.ac.uk) by no later than **Friday 31 January 2014**.

## **CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Research in Political Economy is an annual hardback book series established in 1977, with volumes advancing a critical analysis of political economy. It is a referred publication that can consider contributions up to 20,000 words, i.e., longer than for journals. Journal length submissions are equally acceptable.

The Research is soliciting contributions generally. It is also undertaking active consideration for two special volumes:

1. "Debating the State of Political Economy"

Since the advent of classical political economy, there has been a variety of debates and commonalities among the various approaches. What are contending approaches to the dominant paradigms and how are these approaches perhaps better suited to capture the changing and complex nature of global capitalism and the varied themes and interests therein: environmental justice, gender, race and class, development, resistance movements, and the ongoing privatization of the commons under neoliberalism?

2. "The Political Economy of Dispossession", edited by Susanne Soederberg.

For general articles for early publication, we give priority to work received by January 1, 2014.

The website for the series is at [www.emeraldinsight.com/books.htm?issn=0161-7230](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/books.htm?issn=0161-7230), or at [www.buffalo.edu/~zarembka](http://www.buffalo.edu/~zarembka). Submissions may be sent to [zarembka@buffalo.edu](mailto:zarembka@buffalo.edu).

## **IIPPE IN BRIEF ISSUE 10**

Please send announcements, short book reviews and opinion pieces of no more than 900 words to [iippe@soas.ac.uk](mailto:iippe@soas.ac.uk) for consideration for inclusion in the next newsletter to be published in July 2014.





5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Political Economy

## The Crisis: Scholarship, Policies, Conflicts and Alternatives

Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Naples, Italy

16-18 September 2014

### Call for Papers

The economic crisis that started in 2007 has become the deepest global contraction since the Great Depression, and the economic recovery has been the slowest and weakest on record. The costs of the crisis include a wave of unemployment that may take another decade or longer to clear, and higher taxes and reduced public services for working people, such as healthcare and education, in order to bail out wealthy bankers and bondholders. A whole generation, especially the youth, has been blighted by the crisis, which has had devastating consequences for hundreds of millions of people across the world. Protests and violent conflicts have flared up on several continents, in particular in Southern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, which may develop into larger-scale conflicts.

From the viewpoint of political economy, the current strategy of 'adjustment within neoliberalism' is economically inconsistent, socially dysfunctional and politically intolerable:

It is built on the premise that neoliberal capitalism is intrinsically stable, even though every finance-driven expansion since the 1970s has ended in a crisis requiring a large state bail-out. In other words, neoliberalism is dynamic only between crises, and it depends in boom and recession on extensive, supportive government intervention.

It is built on a misguided position on the role of the government in the economy, which assumes that massive fiscal spending is appropriate to support finance in crises, while it is never appropriate for governments to spend even much smaller amounts to protect employment, incomes, living standards and public services, either in better times when obtaining government revenue would be easier or – even – as a more effective response to crises.

It is also built on the notion that economic and social provision should be subjected to the self-interests of the financial system, an unacceptable proposition in itself that becomes absurd when the financial system has clearly demonstrated that it has become highly dysfunctional under neoliberalism.

The Fifth Annual Conference in Political Economy will examine the global crisis from the complementary angles of ***scholarship, policies, conflicts*** and ***alternatives***. Papers on all aspects of political economy are welcome, while those on these topics are especially encouraged.

Deadline for proposals of papers and panels: 1 April 2014

Successful submissions will be confirmed by 1 May 2014

Registration deadline: 15 May 2014

Deadline for full papers: 1 September 2014

Please visit [www.iippe.org](http://www.iippe.org) for the full call for papers and information on how to submit.

If you have any questions concerning your submission, please contact Al Campbell  
([al@economics.utah.edu](mailto:al@economics.utah.edu))