

# **The role of Critical Political Economy in the analysis of asymmetries, inequalities, and the climate crisis**

Winter School  
26<sup>th</sup> january 2023

Starting from the general theme of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Portuguese Association for Political Economy "Dependencies, Asymmetries and Territories", this Winter School will seek to deepen ontological debates about the role of Political Economy and will have climate issues (and responses to this crisis) as its background.

In the first part of the Winter School, we will seek to debate ontologically and epistemologically the role of Critical Political Economy as an instrument of analysis of the power relations that develop around how we collectively organize production and social reproduction over time and space, also problematizing social inequalities and their asymmetrical manifestations resulting from these same power relations. We will also seek to promote an epistemological debate on how interdisciplinarity between the social and natural sciences can promote broader grids of analysis and action that better address the challenges raised by climate justice movements.

The second part will be dedicated to the debate on climate change as an intrinsic phenomenon to capitalism and the choices inherent to a system based on a myriad of inequalities (economic, social, political, institutional, territorial) – as well as the urgent struggles to combat it. Finally, we are interested in mobilizing theoretical knowledge in the search for concrete and collective solutions that we will experiment in the brainstorming lab.

To close the Winter School, there will be a discussion of doctoral projects.

**1st Session – 9:30 – 11h (in English)**

**Auditório B0.01, Complexo Laboratorial**

Angela Wigger

**Reasons for a Critical Political Economy approach to Global Political Economy**

From the perspective of Critical Political Economy, we propose to reflect on the limitations and contradictions of prioritizing epistemology over ontology in the social sciences. By contrasting the choices of the scientific process, one can identify theoretical pitfalls, reject the

neutrality of knowledge, and politicize and problematize socioeconomic inequalities and asymmetries. This session will further explore the critical aspect of Political Economy, its dialectical approach, and its role in awakening and exploring plural alternative futures.

## **2nd Session – 11:30 – 13h (in Portuguese)**

### **Auditório B0.01, Complexo Laboratorial**

Rui Cortes

#### **Thinking Beyond Productivism: The Political Economy of Knowledge and the Challenge of Climate Justice**

Every year Portugal faces the undeniable evidence of the destruction of its ecosystems. From the endemic forest fires to the growing crisis of water resources, including the unbridled extractivism promoted in the name of "modern" productivist sustainability, the consequences of the ongoing environmental crisis accumulate with the high social and human cost of the destruction of the materiality that sustains us. Faced with a future without ecosystems capable of realizing it, it becomes imperative to think about the different knowledges that for decades have sought to respond to the continuous suppression of life. This session will discuss the interdisciplinarity necessary to face the depletion of natural resources promoted by neoliberal public policies and the expansion of unbridled capitalism. At the same time and questioning the technical-scientific knowledge and its articulation with social and political knowledge, the session will also investigate the possibilities of convergence of academic knowledge with social and environmental struggles.

## **Lunch - 13h – 14:30**

## **3rd Session – 14:30 – 16h (in English, online)**

### **Auditório B0.01, Complexo Laboratorial**

Andreas Malm

#### **Surviving and Fighting in a World on Fire: Some Thoughts on the Next Steps of the Climate Struggle**

We are now entering a period of "overshoot", where the 1.5 degrees target is likely to be breached any year and business-as-usual continues to accelerate beyond the limits for endurable global warming. What do we do then? This talk will reflect on the challenges of progressive climate politics in an era when, it seems, on some counts, it is already too late. But the later it is, the more necessary the climate revolution.

#### **4th Session – 16:15 – 17:30**

##### **Auditório B0.01, Complexo Laboratorial**

##### **Laboratory**

Following the principle "Hackathons are no longer just for coders", at the end of the Winter School a brainstorming session will be organized, with the perspective of solving a given problem with new ideas and perspectives. Based on the theme "Dependencies, Asymmetries and Territories", the organization of the Winter School will present a key current problem or challenge, framed by the perspectives presented by the guest speakers. To escape the dominant logic of top-down decision making and promote democratic processes in the elaboration of solutions based on sustainable development criteria, a hybrid session will be created in which all the new ideas presented by the participants will be later discussed in groups to create a single key solution. We therefore propose to expose current challenges and discuss possible solutions of multidimensional character through a hybrid brainstorming session, to be facilitated by the organization and the speakers of the winter school.

#### **5ª Sessão 17:45 – 19:30**

##### **Presentation and discussion of the submitted PhD Projects**

**Auditório B0.01, Complexo Laboratorial, Sala C1.01, Sala C1.04, Sala C1.13**

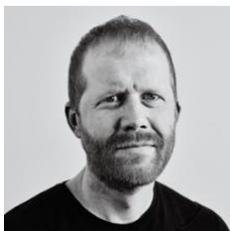
##### **Bios:**



**Angela Wigger** is Associate professor of International Relations of Global Political Economy at Radboud University, in The Netherlands. She is a specialist in the discipline of Global Political Economy and researches on capitalist crises and responses from a historical materialist perspective. Her focal points are the geopolitics of industrial and antitrust policy, industrial reshoring attempts, the “competitiveness”; fetish, internal devaluation, and debt-led accumulation in the age of rentier capitalism. Angela co-edits the book series Progress in Political Economy, the journal Capital&Class, chairs the supervisory board of the Centre for Research of Multinational Corporations (SOMO), and is a Euromemogroup member.



**Rui Cortes** is a Full Professor at UTAD and a researcher at the Centre for the Research and Technology of Agro-Environmental and Biological Sciences (CITAB). With a PhD in Forest Sciences and a career spanning more than forty years linked to issues of ecosystems, ecology, biodiversity, rivers and hydrographic basins, Cortes has become a national reference in the ecology of aquatic ecosystems, assessment of the environmental impact on water resources and watersheds management, always with an interdisciplinary approach. Throughout his career, he has served in several Portuguese government advisory bodies in the field of his areas of expertise, having a deep knowledge of the reality of the national ecosystems, their populations, and economic, social and environmental challenges.



**Andreas Malm** is Associate Professor at the Department of Human Geography at Lund University in the area of Human Ecology and a member of the editorial board of the academic journal *Historical Materialism*. He is also the author of several books on the Political Economy of climate change and a noted activist in this area. His book *How to Blow Up a Pipeline* - where he criticizes the lack of climate activism and provides arguments for sabotage as a logical form of climate activism - has been translated into several languages and inspired a film of the same name.