



Trade, (De)Globalisation & the New Mercantilism

Module Convenor:

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Advice & Feedback Hours:

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Introduction

My name is Julian Germann and I'm a Senior Lecturer in International Relations. I have fully revised and updated this third-year specialist option after teaching it every year since 2014, and I am excited to welcome you to this module.

You can contact me by email between 9 and 5 Mondays to Fridays or stop by anytime during my weekly advice & feedback hours.



Overview

In this module, we will interrogate the crises and tensions that have shaken today's global trade system to the core.

The value of global exports

Time series of value of world exports at constant prices, relative to 1913 (i.e. values correspond to world export volumes indexed at 1913=100)



Source: Federico and Tena-Junguito (2016)

OurWorldInData.org/international-trade • CC BY

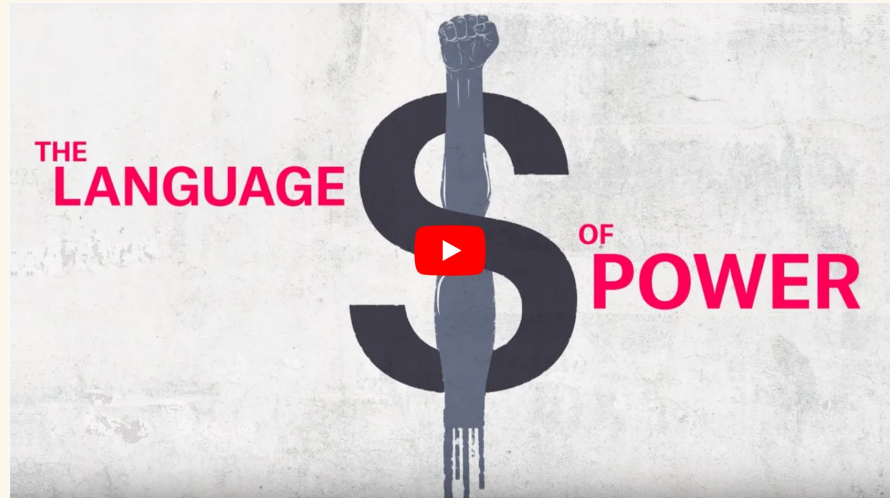
Overview



This means that you will gain in-depth knowledge about urgent issues such as the US tariff and tech war on China, the British exit from the European Union, the impact of the pandemic on global supply chains, and the North-South confrontation within the World Trade Organisation.

Overview

To do so, we will develop a critical International Political Economy (IPE) approach that puts the question of “power” at the centre of its analysis.



*Ha-Joon Chang. 2019. "Learn the language of power".
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_wus-lnQIs&t=1s*

Overview

You will learn to apply this lens in order to explore how trade has been governed, conducted and increasingly contested over the past two decades, and to examine the new instruments and alliances that are being forged to reshape the geographies of production, exchange, and investment.



Overview



In doing so, we will assess the debate over a “new mercantilism” and the seismic shift in the form and direction of capitalist globalisation this portends, as well as the limits to and possibilities for a more ethical and sustainable trade system.

Weekly Topics (indicative)

Topics

Week 1: Studying Global Trade in Crisis

Week 2: Historicising Global Trade

Week 3: Free Trade and its Critics

Week 4: Mercantilism and State Power

Week 5: Class Conflict and Unequal Exchange

Week 6: Mid-Term Essay Preparation

Week 7: The Backlash against Neoliberal Globalization

Week 8: The Rise of China and the Tech Cold War

Week 9: Corporate Power and Global Supply Chains

Week 10: Final Essay and "Time to Write" Workshop

Week 11: Revision and Extended Office Hours

Sample Readings



Klein, Matthew and Michael Pettis. 2020. *Trade Wars are Class Wars*. London: Yale University Press. Please read: Introduction, Chapter 1: “From Adam Smith to Tim Cook: The Transformation of Global Trade”; Conclusion.

Rodrik, Dani. 2018. *Straight Talk on Trade*. Please read: Preface, Chapter 1, pp. 1-3, 10-14. Chapter 2, pp. 15-30, 44-47, Chapter 5, pp. 123-126, 133-136, Chapter 10, pp. 227-236.

Marçal, Katrine. 2015. *Who Cooked Adam Smith’s Dinner? A Story about Women and Economics*. London: Portobello Books.

Mishra, Pankaj. 2018. “The Rise of China and the Fall of the ‘Free Trade’ Myth” *The New York Times*, February 7, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/07/magazine/the-rise-of-china-and-the-fall-of-the-free-trade-myth.html>.

Eberhardt, Pia and Cecilia Olivet. 2012. *Profiting from Injustice: How Law Firms, Arbitrators and Financiers are Fuelling an Investment Arbitration Boom*. Brussels/Amsterdam: CEO, TNI. Please read: Executive Summary, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 7-17.

Cafruny, Alan. 2019. “Can the United States Contain China? Contradictions and Limits of US Power in the Trump Era and Beyond”. *Russia in Global Affairs* 17 (1): 100-122.

Module Organisation



overview lectures



available on the week's canvas site



please watch *before* our workshop



preparatory & follow-up activities



required & recommended readings



individual & group work



workshops



plenary discussions



breakout group exercises

Module Assessment

1. a 1500-word mid-term essay, worth 30% of your final mark, due in Week 7
2. a 3500-word final essay, worth 70% of your final mark, due in January