

New Utopias for a Dystopian World

Building Counter Power

Emerging political narratives are becoming increasingly **dystopian**, and the key characteristic that defines them is an extreme **negation of limits** to the possibility of continuing the age of progress that is defined by the imperial mode of living.

Crises, challenges and sacrifices are presented as temporary, while their underlying causes remain ignored.

1. **Artificial intelligence (AI)** is prophesied as a silver bullet, a technological fix designed to ensure the locomotive of progress can keep rolling forward without ever questioning the destination.
2. Growing impacts of **climate change** require deep structural changes, yet they are met by *denialism and complacent deferral, by the political and economic elites*, that will only accelerate the dangerous threats.
3. The notion of **resource scarcity** is ridiculed as alarmist, while the use of *military power* is proliferating to secure those same key resources for the
4. The international architecture of principles to **uphold human rights** is in decay, as we witness the denial of *genocide* in Palestine, perpetrated by the Israeli state and enabled by the United States and met with the silent *complicity* of Europe.
5. The labour shortage in the **aging societies** of the Global North is also a crisis of care work, yet it is met with increasingly *racist and islamophobic violence* towards the migrant workers who perform the bulk of that essential paid care work.

These dystopian narratives, which **promise a world of progress for all beyond limits**, stand in stark contradiction to material reality. The promise of progress that they offer requires the continued growth of extractivist activities, rising energy demand, intensified geopolitical competition, and new forms of labour and ecological exploitation. It is a future of reproducing and deepening the very crises it claims to solve.

However, the **dystopian** saying that '*it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism*' may not be a final verdict, but a hopeful opening that forces us to initialise a



reflection from the question: **how have we lost the imagination and the persuasive power to defend a world better than capitalism?**

Through provoking lectures, polarising debates, and space for deliberative interventions, in this year's international degrowth political school, we will confront this reality and articulate a transformative space to launch hopeful utopias grounded on the notions of equity, sufficiency, and justice.

Strategic relevance of the school & beyond

This school seeks to open spaces of deliberation and convergence in strategic objectives for campaigners, researchers, activists, practitioners and public intellectuals from different backgrounds and countries.

It seeks to promote pluriversal development of utopias, foster persuasive communication and building of alliances and common platforms.

Amongst the desired outcomes of school are strengthening of international-intersectional networks with the aim of fostering resistance against fascism.