

## Call for Papers: Doctoral Workshop and Symposium

### Labour, Nature and Technology: Rethinking Capitalist Subsumption

King's College London | 18th, 19th June 2026

Recent scholarship across political economy, human geography, political ecology, and digital labour studies has increasingly examined how contemporary capitalism reorganises relations between work, ecological processes, and technological infrastructures. Yet these debates often develop in relative isolation. Research on labour has focused on transformations in labour processes and employment relations, while political ecology has explored the appropriation of nature within capitalist accumulation, and studies of digital capitalism have analysed the growing role of technological infrastructures—from platforms to artificial intelligence—in shaping economic activity.

This symposium seeks to bring these conversations into dialogue by exploring how capitalism incorporates heterogeneous domains of social and material life into circuits of accumulation. Drawing inspiration from recent debates around the concept of 'subsumption' (Banaji, 2010; Harootunian, 2015; Saenz De Sicilia, 2025; Tomba, 2013), the workshop approaches labour, nature, and technology as interconnected terrains through which capitalist incorporation unfolds unevenly. Rather than assuming that capitalism uniformly transforms these domains through technological innovation or industrialisation, the workshop explores how diverse social relations, ecological processes, and institutional arrangements are articulated within broader dynamics of capitalist development.

Ecological processes follow biological and environmental temporalities that cannot be fully synchronised with the abstract time of capital (Battistoni, 2025). Similarly, reproductive and informal labour often remain embedded in social relations that resist complete technological reorganisation (Baglioni, 2025; Baglioni et al., 2022; Mezzadri, 2021, 2025). At the same time, technological systems from digital platforms to algorithmic infrastructures seek to coordinate and govern these heterogeneous processes through new forms of measurement, mediation, and control (Briziarelli, 2024). Bringing these perspectives together raises broader questions about how labour processes, ecological systems, and technological infrastructures are articulated within contemporary capitalism and how these dynamics shape patterns of uneven development.

The symposium will combine thematic discussions with doctoral paper presentations, creating a space for PhD researchers to present work in progress and receive feedback from invited scholars and peers. The symposium will include a collaborative reading session at the conclusion of the first day and a roundtable discussion at the end of the workshop.

We invite PhD students and early-career researchers to submit proposals that engage with the workshop themes. Possible topics linked to theme include the following, but are not limited to:

- Labour processes and transformations of work

- Platform economies, digital infrastructures, and technological governance
- Political ecology and the incorporation of nature within capitalism
- Social reproduction, care work, and informal labour regimes
- Ecological limits and capitalist development
- Uneven development and global labour regimes
- Infrastructures, logistics, and the coordination of economic activity
- Conceptual debates around subsumption, incorporation, and capitalist transformation

Selected participants will present their work in discussion-oriented workshop sessions, designed to provide constructive feedback and foster interdisciplinary dialogue.

#### Abstract Submission Guidelines:

- A 250–300 word abstract and a short biographical note (100 words) in a single PDF
- Submit to [hitesh.potdar@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:hitesh.potdar@kcl.ac.uk)
- Submit by 17th May 2026, 11:59 PM (GMT)

The workshop will take place in person at King's College London (Strand Campus).

#### References:

- Baglioni, E. (2025). Reproductive Subsumption: Notes on the making of reproductive labour in capitalism. *RADICAL PHILOSOPHY*, 2.19(Summer).
- Baglioni, E., Campling, L., Mezzadri, A., Miyamura, S., Pattenden, J., & Selwyn, B. (2022). Exploitation and Labour Regimes: Production, Circulation, Social Reproduction, Ecology. In E. Baglioni, L. Campling, N. M. Coe, & A. Smith (Eds.), *Labour Regimes and Global Production* (1st ed., pp. 81–100). Agenda Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781788213622.005>
- Banaji, J. (2010). *Theory as history: Essays on modes of production and exploitation*. Brill.
- Battistoni, A. (2025). *Free gifts: Capitalism and the politics of nature*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691263489>
- Briziarelli, M. (2024). *Supersuming Subsumption: Theory and Politics*. BRILL. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004703582>
- Harootunian, H. D. (2015). *Marx after Marx: History and time in the expansion of capitalism*. Columbia University Press.
- Mezzadri, A. (2021). A Value Theory of Inclusion: Informal Labour, the Homeworker, and the Social Reproduction of Value. *Antipode*, 53(4), 1186–1205. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12701>
- Mezzadri, A. (2025). Life and the Labour Process in the Planetary Social Factory. *Global Labour Journal*, 16(2). <https://doi.org/10.15173/glj.v16i2.6723>
- Saenz De Sicilia, A. (2025). *Subsumption in Kant, Hegel and Marx: From the Critique of Reason to the Critique of Society*. BRILL. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004713826>
- Tomba, M. (2013). *Marx's Temporalities* (Vol. 44). Brill.