



Call for Papers for an EAEPE Special Session

# Behind the Platform

33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference,  
02-04 Sept 2021 (ONLINE)

Organizers: RA [G] and RA [V]

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Oliver Kessler, Manuel Scholz-Wäckerle

What are the (in)visible costs of platform capitalism and how are they experienced? One of the most evident legacies of COVID has been the marked inequality in the distribution of health, wealth and consumption in platform forms of capitalism. Insecure, self-employed Uber drivers with limited welfare protection have sometimes successfully lobbied for legal protection. But these securities have been scant in their provision and normalised the precarious status of platform work. Platform inequalities rest on other forms of inequality (gender, race, disability, debt, knowledge, carbon) already present in economic institutions. These already work on unequal assumptions of value, with for example, little transparency on their use of energy or the fatal mining practices they rely on for components. While investors have thrilled to the novelty of “disruption” created by platform technologies, the power asymmetries look more like the Dickensian practices that pre-date C20th welfare compromises. Platform capitalism rests on a wider range of intersecting inequalities than our recent traditions of political representation can capture. We see these insecurities in the political crises that now define liberal democracy. But we also see platform capitalism reproducing these inequalities in the normalisation of precarity across human lives, communities, spaces and sectors. We need to recognise



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and render explicit the lives and the material conditions behind the platforms of capitalism.

Topics addressed in the Call for the special session include among others:

- power, hegemony, regulation, institutions and global orders
- global value chains, crises, planetary carambolage, social-ecological reproduction, extractivism, energy usage
- future of work, platform-mediated labour, gender and gig work
- techno-feudalism, cognitive capitalism, intellectual monopoly capitalism, rent vs profit
- real life subsumption, exploitation vs emancipation
- platform cooperatives, commons, counter-platforms
- methodological implications

Invited Speakers:

Cecilia Rikap – CONICET - University of Buenos Aires and COSTECH Université de Technologie de Compiègne

Cédric Durand – University of Geneva

Evgeny Morozov

Please submit your abstract online till **15th of April** (select “Behind the Platform” as research area):

[https://eaepe.org/?page=events&side=annual\\_conference&sub=abstract\\_submission](https://eaepe.org/?page=events&side=annual_conference&sub=abstract_submission)