



**Venice International University**  
**VIU Summer School | Responsible Capitalism**  
**Micro and Macro-institutional conditions of transformation**



**June 9-13, 2019**

**Schedule:**

Morning: 9:30 – 12:15\*

Afternoon: 14:30 – 17:00\*

*\*The end of the sessions could be extended, if necessary.*

**Sunday, June 09**

*18:30: Welcome Cocktail* at Venice international University

**Monday, June 10**

*Morning: Guido Palazzo*, HEC Lausanne

**Storytelling and societal change**

This session will discuss the impact on language, discourse and storytelling on human behaviour. How does the way we make sense of the world influence ethical and unethical decisions and how can we use the insights on the narrativity of human existence as a leverage for societal change?

*Afternoon: Johanna Mair*, Hertie School of Governance/ Stanford University

**Transformative Processes in Action**

In this session we put the spotlight on organizations that adopt alternative organizational forms and therefore are often considered as the hope to ensure diversity within capitalism. In our conversation we will not rest on discussing the specific form or non-conformist actions these organizations take on but rather examine how what they do triggers transformation. At the centre of attention are mechanisms and processes that enable endogenous change. Using two readings as a starting point, we will revisit the potential of studying gradual processes of transformation that lead to new social orders. We will discuss theoretical opportunities and implications for research designs to push forward this line of inquiry.

**Tuesday, June 11**

*Morning & Afternoon sessions: all present professors*

**Presentation and discussion of research projects**

This day is devoted to the presentation of the research projects of participants. The format will be group discussions with 3 students per table and 1-2 professors per table (depending on how many students and professors are present). 45 minutes per student: 20 minutes presentation and 25 minutes discussion (including a break, we would have 2 ½ hours in the morning and again 2 ½ hours in the afternoon). With this format, each student can present twice in front of different Professors. No powerpoint.

## **Wednesday, June 12**

*Morning:* Elisa Giuliani, University of Pisa

### **Contemporary capitalism: Debunking ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’ rhetoric of economic development processes**

This session seeks to promote radical change to theorizing and planning economic development processes. There are two important wicked problems characterizing contemporary capitalism, which, if not properly addressed, could result in social and political catastrophe. The first is related to the burgeoning evidence of business-related human rights (BHR) regressions – i.e. deterioration, suffered by given individuals or social groups in their universal human rights, as a result of business firms’ operations (observed e.g. in the form of modern slavery; child labour; premature deaths due to industrial toxic emissions and business-induced climate change; failure to respect indigenous communities’ rights, etc.) The second is the increase (or persistence at record levels) of within-country economic inequality in many countries worldwide, and the rise of extreme wealth. Most accounts consider them two separate problems, requiring different solutions. But what if they are connected, and their nexus is crucial to the current functioning of capitalism? How can both problems be solved without undermining economic growth and its related benefits? Addressing these questions seems timely given that it has become progressively more evident that growth alone cannot lift people out of human misery.

*Afternoon:* Juliane Reinecke, King’s Business School

### **Taming Wicked Problems? Understanding the Evolution of Transnational Governance and Social Movement Dynamics**

This session will critically examine the role of private power in developing transnational governance solutions to wicked problems. Wicked problems are large scale social challenges caught in causal webs of interlinking variables spanning national boundaries that complicate both their diagnosis and prognosis, such as poverty, inequality, climate change, deforestation or conflict in global supply chains. To do so, we will focus on the political dynamics of how governance initiatives emerge and evolve out of conflicts between social movement actors and corporations. How do these dynamics shape definitions of who is responsible and what is sustainable or valuable? Given the multiplicity of private regulatory regimes, does the competition of social movement-led and industry-led initiatives lead to a race to the bottom or race to the top? Finally, we will discuss the implications of these types of governance dynamics to tame wicked problem.

## **Thursday, June 13**

*Morning:* Francesco Zirpoli, Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia

### **The evolution of decision-making in global companies**

This session will give particular attention to the implication of the fact that decision makers are often “multiply embedded” in organizations, in places, in informal social networks, in more formal associations, and so on. Interdependent decisions and actions of multiple agents acting in a distributed environment are profoundly altering both decision-making and the strategy implementation processes in ways that demand some rethinking of the governance and management conceptual toolkit. Sociological and organization theories, including theories of organizational politics, social movements, relational embedding and cognitive framing will be presented, discussed and applied to understand the conditions under which global firms confront with environmental, social and governance decisions.

*Student presentation*

*Afternoon:* Giovanni Favero, Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia

### **Itinerant workshop**

Walking through the city, we will discuss how Venice became Venice during the 20th century. The focus will be on the macro and micro conditions of the modern transformation in the



perception of the historical urban centre into “a city like no other” to be preserved as it is. The tour will start from the San Giobbe Economics campus of Ca’ Foscari University, formerly a slaughterhouse, and will end at Zattere with the view of an example of industrial architecture: the Stucky Mills. We will visit the Frari Church and the burial of Giuseppe Volpi, the founder of Porto Marghera. Together with a final glimpse to the last surviving squero building gondolas at San Trovaso, this provides a telling image of the complex relationship with tradition of modern Venice.



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