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THE AUR FORUM

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THE DEATH OF NEOLIBERALISM

AUR IRGP is proud to announce The Forum, a pioneering student-led journal in international relations. First of its kind at AUR, The Forum is dedicated to fostering critical dialogue and thought on topics surrounding global affairs.

THE BIRTH OF NEOMERCANTILISM

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THE POWER OF CRITICAL INQUIRY

EDITORS NOTE

by **Lavinia Farina**

The global political economy is facing a profound change marked by a decline of *neoliberalism* and rise of *neomercantilism*. What was once perceived as the ultimate phase of human history has been eroded. What remains is a world where the role of the state is reimagined as an active producer of national prosperity and power. The neoliberal era's decline has been driven by increasingly frequent economic shocks, fallout from the 2008 financial crisis, and disruptions to the global market caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These exposed the limits and vulnerabilities of neoliberalism, paving the way for a new paradigm. As inequality rises, increasingly fragile supply chains expose the limits of global interdependence, and states have taken it upon themselves to seize control of their economic destinies. The world is now witnessing a neomercantilist moment, where the role of the state is reimagined no longer as a passive guarantor of markets, rather as a player actively shaping the economy. Prosperity and power of states is now linked to strategic protectionism, economic nationalism, and the pursuit of relative gains over absolute ones. The paralysis of



the World Trade Organisation makes clear that the world order is shifting from a unified global trading network to one of competing trading blocs. Nation-states now rely on the neomercantilist strategy of market interventionism to bolster their power. The world is rejecting the previous order that fought for ever deepening trade relations as a method to foster peace. In that context, where are we now?

A letter from the Editor in Chief

The AUR Forum represents the culmination of multiple high achieving, highly motivated individuals that, without their contributions, this journal would not exist in the form it does now. Namely, I would like to acknowledge Norbert Tornyai and Logan Uhlig for shaping the vision and the success of this publication.





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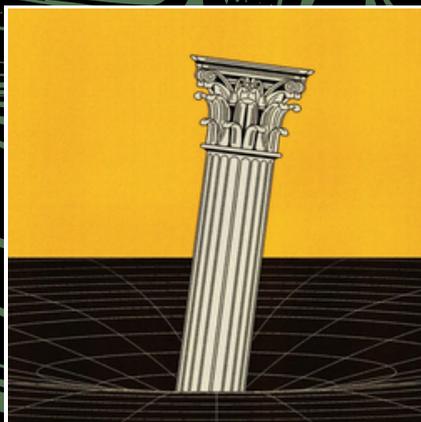
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THE IMPACTS OF FOREIGN AID CORRUPTION ON DEVELOPMENT

by Ishrat Jahan Haque Mitu

Corruption is referred to as the abuse of authority for personal gain and can range from collaboration and bribery to misappropriation (Filipenco, 2024). It reduces the efficacy of development aid, erodes public trust in organisations, undermines democratic processes, widens societal gap, and increases the number of people forced into poverty (Filipenco, 2024). Developmental aid, often known as foreign aid, is economic and developmental assistance provided to poor nations (Hongli & Sackey, 2020). Foreign aid has helped to stabilise the global order, helping both poor and rich nations (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). The aim is to reduce poverty, raise living standards, and encourage long-term growth through financial grants, loans, and technical assistance, but corruption undermines these objectives (Filipenco, 2024).

Impact of FAC on Development

One critical question is whether increasing aid leads to increased corruption. It is difficult to measure the changes in the levels of corruption following changes in the flow of aid. Corruption data are not perfect by nature, although they have been collected for a considerable number of nations in recent years (NBER, 1999). Researchers discovered evidence of a weak "voracity effect" of foreign aid, implying that countries receiving more aid may have higher levels of corruption, and no evidence that foreign aid improves corruption levels in recipient countries (NBER, 1999). Corruption has a significant impact on development assistance, diminishing its effectiveness. When aid

funds are diverted for personal gain, less capital is allocated to the intended beneficiary, such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare services (Filipenco, 2024). Corruption in the development sector disproportionately impacts marginalised populations, which rely heavily on foreign assistance. For instance, according to Transparency International's 2019 report, 80% of respondents in the Democratic Republic of Congo had to make unofficial payments to gain access to critical public services such as water facilities (Filipenco, 2024). Corruption can exacerbate economic inequality by distorting tax systems, providing insufficient social sector interventions, and denying the poor access to education and basic accommodation (Maqbool & Ali, 2021). Corrupt activities have the potential to divert aid funds away from projects that would benefit the majority of the population and towards those that would benefit a smaller group of people, exacerbating already existing socioeconomic disparities (Filipenco, 2024).

When a position of authority is misused for personal gain, the decisions taken might eventually lead to a loss of trust among citizens, resulting in a decrease in community involvement and jeopardising success of projects (Filipenco, 2024). Institutions remain less effective even when financing is available. It further promotes an unfavourable economic environment, hinders foreign investment, and lowers entrepreneurial activity (Filipenco, 2024). Foreign aid that is not



used appropriately risks establishing a dependency mentality in recipient countries. Corrupt officials who are more focused in short-term benefits and personal gain find it easier to continue relying on aid rather than investing in initiatives that promote an independent economy (Filipenco, 2024).

Case Studies

Several aid donors, including the Danish and British governments, as well as the World Bank, ceased and significantly reduced financial aid to Kenya in 1991, preventing government officials and their family from syphoning millions of dollars (UIA, 2024). Aid granted to Romania in the early 1990s for orphans and institutionalised inmates of psychiatric hospitals was reportedly diverted into the hands of corrupt authorities and intermediaries who sold it on the black market for a profit in neighbouring countries (UIA, 2024). According to the Financial Times, half of the \$500 million provided by the World Bank to Russia to reform its coal business in 1998 went missing as coal miners stood outside the main government offices in protest of months without pay (UIA, 2024). In 1991, corruption among Kenyan government officials grew so widespread that aid donors lost faith that their support was not reaching the people it was intended for, and hence discontinued their aid programs (Perlez, 1991). Kenya received significant increases in aid, both from the World Bank and individual donors (Perlez, 1991). The Danish government was the largest donor, but it discontinued its 17-year support for rural development in Kenya after an audit revealed that the majority of the almost \$40 million in aid funds disappeared due

to corruption (Perlez, 1991). Furthermore, the British government chose not to send funds to Kenya to subsidise oil costs for consumers (Perlez, 1991).

Behavior of Donors and Effectiveness

Donor nations and organisations continue to support corrupted regimes without enforcing strict anti-corruption measures, and as long as they continue to accept foreign help without penalties, people in power may feel no obligation to confront corruption (Filipenco, 2024). Bribery is used by corrupt corporations to divert public-sector resources. If corrupt public officials are detected accepting bribes, they can face consequences (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). The net effect of foreign aid is highly dependent on its level. When the amount of foreign aid is moderate, the beneficial impact of boosting public goods expenditure overcomes the negative effect of corruption. In this scenario, foreign aid helps to boost economic growth (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). However, if the amount of foreign aid exceeds a particular threshold, the corruption-promoting effect becomes more noticeable. As a result, aid diminishes the favourable influence on public goods spending and slows economic growth. The relationship between foreign aid and economic growth has a hump-shaped structure, showing that excessive foreign aid is detrimental in fostering long-term prosperity (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). High levels of corruption control provide positive assistance management and provide donors with assurance that the aid will be used for the intended objectives, preventing leakage through systems. (Maqbool & Ali, 2021). Foreign aid may also push governments to enhance their tax



systems, allowing the elite to avoid taxation while filling financial gaps. As corruption is reduced, aid becomes more effective in reducing income inequality. Therefore, foreign aid reduces income disparity in nations with strong anti-corruption measures.

How aid money is distributed can potentially provide opportunities for misconduct. Well-targeted development aid takes government's shortcomings into consideration and assists in improving the capacity of local institutions to resist corruption (Transparency International, 2005). It has been noticed that good governance and strong institutional quality, as well as political stability, corruption control, the rule of law, and accountability, can effectively support growth and development (Hongli & Sackey, 2020). In addition, the ineffectiveness of aid in promoting growth in Africa can be attributed to an increase in corruption and political instability, as well as a poor level of human development (Hongli & Sackey, 2020). As a result, even though aid is intended to help citizens, it can also empower corrupt actors. The hump-shaped relationship suggests that aid must be well managed as too much aid can worsen corruption and reduce its positive effects, and that strong anti-corruption measures can increase aids' positive impacts.

Strategies to Reform

Foreign aid should not exceed the growth-maximizing threshold, otherwise, it becomes counterproductive. Countries with weaker institutions should receive less foreign aid than stronger ones due to their lower growth maximising threshold. As a result, a clear solution is the need for institutional reforms and anti-corruption

policies to ensure the success of foreign aid (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). Through cooperation, donor countries acquire bargaining influence over the recipient countries' governments, allowing them to implement tighter anti-corruption legislation. As a result, coordination among donor countries improves the effectiveness of foreign aid in supporting growth (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024). Improvements in institutions and anti-corruption policies foster growth and expand the threshold for growth, maximising foreign aid. Likewise, donor countries might place restrictions on providing aid, such as the execution of anti-corruption legislation (Bethencourt & Tallo, 2024).

Conclusion

While foreign aid is intended to promote development and alleviate poverty, corruption frequently undermines its effectiveness in recipient nations. To guarantee that aid is distributed properly, donor and recipient countries must prioritise transparency, implement anti-corruption measures, and work together to promote institutional reform.

About the Author

Ishrat Mitu is a senior at the American University of Rome and Vice President of the International Relations and Global Politics club. Fluent in English, Bangla and Hindi, Ishrat is a citizen of Bangladesh and resident of Hong Kong. She is an International Relations major pursuing a double minor in Peace and Conflict Studies as well as Mediterranean politics, society, and culture. She aspires to build her career in humanitarian aid, with a focus on emergency relief and crisis response.



THE DEATH OF NEOLIBERALISM

by **Maya Souza**

In this day and age, capitalism and competition is the norm in society. The modern world sees the free market as the most efficient way to allocate resources and achieve economic growth.

Neoliberalism; an ideology centered on free markets, privatization, and minimal government intervention, has dominated global policy since the 1980s, but has simultaneously caused a host of global issues. Now, Neoliberalism is dying, not because it has been defeated by alternative systems, but because its internal logic, endless competition, deregulation, and corruption, have eroded the social foundations it depends on. The very foundations it was built on has become its own downfall.

In countries like South Africa, neoliberal policies have hollowed out public institutions and created conditions ripe for corruption, showing how market-centered governance corrodes state capacity. In theory, trading with developed countries should increase growth, reduce poverty in a country, and have better economic welfare. Take for example South Africa: even though South Africa trades with some of the largest powers in the world such as the USA, China and Germany, and has the largest economy in Africa, 68.1% of South Africa's population is still currently living in poverty. They also have the highest Gini coefficient of any country, meaning gains are almost exclusively among the elite. Deregulation and privatization allowed for the elite to cut corners and make themselves richer at the cost of the majority. Reducing government rules and oversight of private

industries have also allowed private enterprises to bulldoze locals. They have the potential, capital intensive infrastructure, and raw resources to compete globally on a higher level if they used their resources to their full capacity. In addition, reducing poverty would only be beneficial for South Africa's economy. Unfortunately, those in power have stakes in the privatization of South Africa and profit from deregulation. Unless we address the failings of Neoliberalism, the majority of the South African population will still be in poverty even though trade has increased the country's GDP. Similar scenarios can be seen in many other countries around the world.

Neoliberal theory assumes markets allocate resources efficiently, yet in healthcare, this logic led to systemic inequity and vulnerability. Privatization has made the quality and quantity of healthcare based on how much you can pay, leaves many with piling debt, and some hesitant to seek medical help in the first place. Furthermore, reducing government spending on social programs reduces the amount of aid low income and disadvantaged populations receive. Due to this, Neoliberal economies such as the US, Brazil, and the UK suffer from weakened health systems and unequal access to healthcare. Decades of privatization left societies without the public health and social infrastructure needed to respond effectively. Federal governments had to intervene massively during the Covid 19 Pandemic, something Neoliberal ideology claims is unneeded, but saved thousands of lives and



livelihoods. During this time governments reemerged as protectors of life and stability, not just markets. This proved that what society needs is a more hands on approach than that of Neoliberalism.

A vial of Insulin can cost up to \$250-\$300 in the US, but only costs \$2 to \$6 to produce. Without regulations like the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act, that forced a \$35 monthly cap on insulin costs for Medicare, the monopolies that produce Insulin could raise prices to their own discretion. These horrendous markups are unnecessary and immoral. Though this is just one of the many consequences created by competition fostered by Neoliberalism.

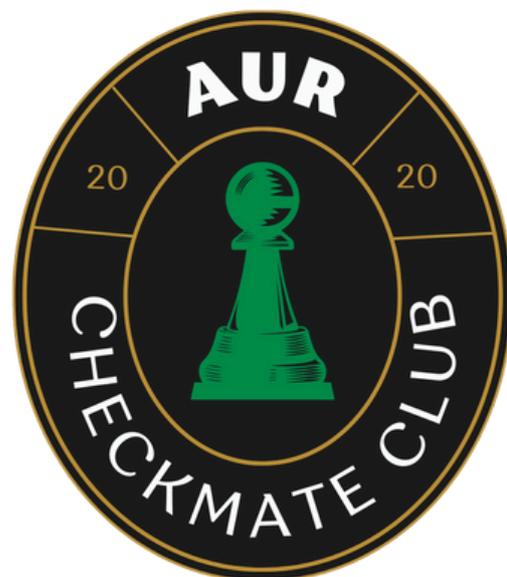
The environmental crisis has revealed that unregulated markets cannot preserve the planet's life-support systems, further discrediting Neoliberalism's promise of self-correcting growth. Neoliberalism sees nature as a resource, and in economic terms it is, but we forget that it's shared and inherited from the last generation. Pushing off the responsibility to the next generation, as done in the past, is not a sustainable practice. Sustainability implies that there is oversight and forethought, and thus cannot exist within a Neoliberalism world. Market based solutions like carbon trading have been made worse by deregulation and are merely shifting the responsibility and subsequent blame to developing countries. Not to mention green deals between countries can only work if countries create the regulations and have a government willing to enforce said regulations; regulation that goes directly against the ideals of Neoliberalism. Countries ripe with corruption or developing countries are more concerned about competing globally than fixing their

internal issues. The minimal government intervention of Neoliberalism simply cannot take care of our planet in the long term.

Neoliberalism is dying, because more people are beginning to see that the institutions it is built upon are its own downfall. Deregulation fostered corruption, privatization takes advantage of inequality, and competition erodes the foundations of society. It is not a long term solution for countries nor for the sustainability of the world. What world would you want to live in with no systems in place to regulate and hold people accountable?

About the Author

Maya Souza is a junior and guest writer from the University of Rhode Island who is majoring in Economics. She is an American whose love for learning about other cultures brought her to AUR, where she is actively studying international trade during the most turbulent economic period in the 21st century, thus far. She plays Ultimate Frisbee competitively for URI and is an active member of the Checkmate club at AUR.



THE END OF THE FREE MARKET ILLUSION

by Mihajilo Gucunja

Over the past half-century, the world has witnessed the rise and apparent decline of the neoliberal order. Once celebrated as the “end of history” (Fukuyama, 1992), neoliberalism promised boundless prosperity through market liberalization, deregulation, and the free flow of capital. In practice, however, it functioned as a political project to restore class power, systematically weakening organized labor and transferring productive forces to the Global South in search of cheap labor. Within the imperial core, most notably the United States and Great Britain, the result has been deindustrialization, wage stagnation, and the erosion of working class security. Disillusionment with this model has fueled a new wave of protectionist and nationalist politics; tariffs, trade wars, and anti-immigration rhetoric that together signal the emergence of a neomercantilist phase of capitalism. Yet, rather than reversing neoliberal decline, these measures merely conceal its contradictions, channeling popular anger away from capital and toward scapegoats. This article argues that neomercantilism represents capitalism’s attempt to manage its own crisis, a desperate strategy that preserves profit while deepening inequality and repression. But before we begin, we must define our terms.

Neomercantilism refers to the contemporary re-emergence of protectionist and nationalist economic policies within advanced capitalist states. It prioritizes trade surpluses, domestic production, and state intervention in markets, often justified as a defense of

national interests against foreign competition. While classical mercantilism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sought national wealth through protectionist trade and state-directed accumulation, neomercantilism operates within the global capitalist system rather than outside it. It represents an attempt by core capitalist states, especially the United States and Great Britain, to manage the contradictions produced by neoliberal globalization; rising inequality, deindustrialization, and popular discontent. As Dani Rodrik (*The Globalization Paradox*, 2011) notes, such policies are political responses to the social instability of globalization. Still, they neither challenge the logic of capital accumulation nor resolve its crises.

Neoliberalism is an economic and political doctrine that seeks to subordinate all spheres of social life to market logic through privatization, deregulation, and the weakening of labor power. Emerging in the 1970s as a reaction to the crises of post-war Keynesianism, it restructured global capitalism by prioritizing capital mobility over social welfare, eroding collective protections in favor of individual competition. According to David Harvey (*A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2005), neoliberalism is best understood not as an ideology of *free markets*, but as a class project, a deliberate effort to restore the power of economic elites after the social democratic gains of the mid-twentieth century. Through policies of deregulation, privatization, financialization, and austerity, it re-established capital’s dominance over labor both domestically



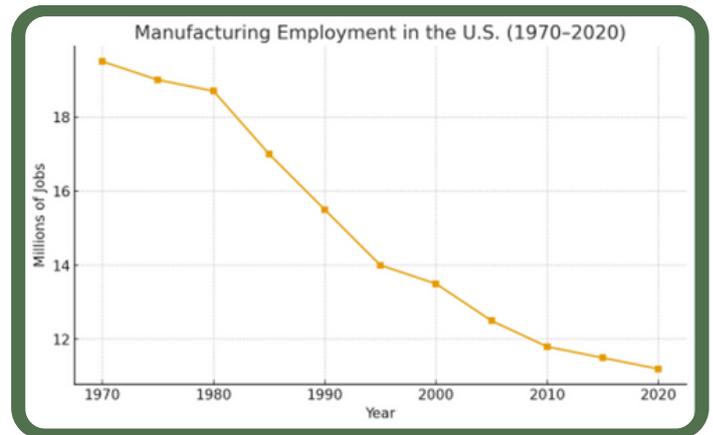
and globally, often by relocating production to regions where labor was cheapest and most easily exploited.

Neoliberalism as a Class Project

While mainstream economic discourse often portrays neoliberalism as a natural evolution of capitalism or a technocratic response to economic inefficiency, a Marxist analysis reveals its deeper social function. Neoliberalism did not emerge merely as a set of free market reforms, it was a political project to restore the power of the capitalist class after the postwar period of social democracy and organized labor. Following the crises of overaccumulation and stagflation in the 1970s, capital sought to reassert profitability by dismantling the structures that had empowered the working class. As David Harvey argues, neoliberalism “has not been about the restoration of markets, but about the restoration of class power.” (Harvey, 2005) Through privatization, deregulation, the liberalization of trade and finance, and the suppression of labor unions, it reconfigured the global economy in favor of capital mobility and against the collective strength of labor. This transformation was justified ideologically through appeals to individual freedom, entrepreneurship, and efficiency. Yet, its material outcome was the opposite; the concentration of wealth, precaritization of labor, and the erosion of social protections. Production was offshored to the Global South, where labor was cheaper, effectively displacing productive forces from the imperial core and undermining domestic industry. The working class in the United States, once the symbolic beneficiary of capitalist modernity, became the principal victim of neoliberal globalization.

The Imperial Core in Decline

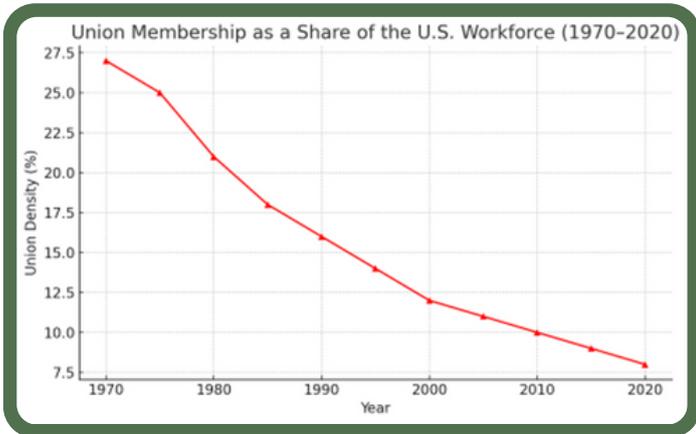
The structural consequences of neoliberal globalization are most visible in the economic and social decline of the American working class. From the 1970s onward, U.S. policymakers embraced deregulation and free trade as universal goods, facilitating the mass relocation of production to the Global South. This process hollowed out the industrial base that had once sustained stable, unionized employment for millions. Between 1970 and 2020, U.S. manufacturing employment fell from nearly twenty million to around eleven million workers, a decline accelerated by the expansion of global supply chains and competition from low-wage economies such as China.



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. All Employees, Manufacturing [MANEMP]. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, FRED, 2024.

Real wages tell a similar story. Despite rising worker productivity and corporate profits, median weekly earnings have remained largely stagnant in real terms since the late 1970s. The promise of upward mobility has been replaced by widespread precarity, with many young workers forced into low-wage service jobs that offer neither security nor benefits. Compounding this crisis is the collapse of organized labor: union density in the United States has fallen from roughly one

in four workers in 1970 to less than one in ten today.



OECD. Trade Union Density (Indicator). OECD Data, 2024.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Union Members — 2023 Summary. U.S. Department of Labor, Jan. 2024.

Together, these indicators reveal not a neutral process of market adjustment but a deliberate redistribution of power and income from labor to capital. The neoliberal *freedom of capital* has meant the unfreedom of workers, who now confront economic insecurity and political marginalization within the very heart of the imperial core.

The Neomercantilist Response

As the contradictions of neoliberal globalization intensified, sections of capital began to abandon the universalist rhetoric of *free markets* and pivot toward a new protectionist pragmatism. This neomercantilist turn represents not a rejection of neoliberalism but its mutation; an attempt to preserve capitalist accumulation under conditions of social fragmentation and geopolitical rivalry. Domestically, this shift has manifested in the rhetoric of *America First* and the revival of industrial policy under both Republican and Democratic administrations. State subsidies for semiconductor manufacturing and *reshoring* initiatives are justified as measures of national security, yet their

class content is clear: public funds are mobilized to secure corporate competitiveness rather than rebuild the social wage. Protectionism here is not about protecting workers but about protecting profits from Chinese competition.

Politically, neomercantilism finds its mass base in right wing populism, a reactionary articulation of class anxiety that channels legitimate grievances into nationalism, xenophobia, and cultural resentment. The deindustrialized worker, stripped of union power and social solidarity, becomes a subject of economic despair easily mobilized against migrants or foreign *enemies*. Trumpism, Brexit, and similar movements across Europe reflect this logic. They are forms of *reactionary Keynesianism*; temporary redistributions to domestic capital coupled with intensified border regimes and racialized nationalism.

On the international level, the United States and its allies have reasserted a strategic economic nationalism aimed at containing China and reconfiguring global supply chains. Yet this strategy exposes the fragility of the imperial core: the same mechanisms that once underpinned global dominance, financial liberalization and global production networks, now undermine it. Neomercantilism, then, is not a renewal of empire but a symptom of its decline, an ideological effort to reassert control over a global order that capital itself has rendered uncontrollable.

Echoes of the Past

The resurgence of economic nationalism and xenophobic rhetoric in the imperial core evokes unsettling parallels with the interwar years. Then, as now, a global capitalist crisis produced both economic

dislocation and ideological confusion. The Great Depression shattered faith in liberal capitalism, and political elites responded by turning inward, erecting tariffs, restricting migration, and mobilizing chauvinist myths of national rebirth. Today's neomercantilist policies follow the same logic: they promise protection from the very insecurities generated by capitalism's own global expansion. This repetition is not accidental. Both periods represent moments when the contradictions of capital accumulation could no longer be managed through liberal institutions. In the 1930s, the bourgeoisie turned to fascism as a means of disciplining labor and restoring profitability; in the 2020s, capital flirts once more with authoritarian solutions to crisis. Anti-immigrant discourse, the policing of dissent, and the valorization of the *productive citizen* all point toward a similar trajectory, a defensive, exclusionary, nationalism cloaked in the language of economic sovereignty.

The lesson of history is clear: protectionism and repression cannot resolve capitalism's internal contradictions. They can only defer them, often at catastrophic human cost. The parallels between the declining neoliberal order and the interwar descent into authoritarianism remind us that when capital faces crisis, it turns not toward emancipation but toward control.

Conclusion

The proclaimed *death of neoliberalism* does not mark the birth of a new social order, but the decay of an old one. Neomercantilism, cloaked in the language of national renewal, is capitalism in retreat, a system turning inward to defend its contradictions with tariffs, border walls,

and authoritarian measures. Once again, the working class is told that its immiseration is the fault of the foreigner or the migrant, while the true authors of crisis, the ruling class, remain untouched. History, however, offers no salvation in repetition. The same contradictions that have driven capitalism from neoliberal expansion to neomercantilist contraction reveal its fundamental limits. No combination of protectionism or fiscal nationalism can overcome the basic logic of exploitation on which the system depends. The *solutions* now offered are merely mechanisms of control, designed to preserve accumulation at the cost of human dignity and democratic possibility. What lies ahead, then, is not a new equilibrium but an open struggle over the future itself. Either capital will continue to consolidate its power through repression, or the working class will rise to reclaim its own. The time has come to recognize that the crisis is not temporary; it is terminal. The only true alternative to the chaos of a dying order is the creation of a new one: a socialist world founded on collective ownership, democratic control, and solidarity across borders.

About the Author

Mihajilo Gucunja is a freshman majoring in International Relations at the American University of Rome and a member of the International Relations and Global Politics club.



THE FAILED NEOLIBERAL EXPERIMENT IN GUATEMALA

by Christopher Teixeira

There was once a feeling throughout the world that post-Cold War there was supposed to be extensive cooperation, proving the theory of neoliberal institutionalism to be a normative theory issuing in a new era. However, this time never came, and so this piece aims to shed light on a primary example of the height and downfall of an institution that came to fruition under the belief of neoliberalism, The International Committee Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). In brief, this was a post-Guatemalan Civil War UN backed *operation* that within their mandate specified they were there “to support and assist institutions of the State of Guatemala responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes allegedly committed in connection with the activities of illegal security forces and clandestine security organizations...” (CICIG, 2006) essentially acting as a vehicle to aid with work that Guatemala’s Public Prosecutor would otherwise be overwhelmed with handling alone. Ultimately, I aim to inform of their success; but, more importantly, how the end of their mandate demonstrated the weakness of the web of neoliberalism.

In its first years from 2006–2009 CICIG did not have any large success and so after a series of reforms in 2009 and 2012, CICIG was given the ability to ensure a *speedy* trial so that people would have little time to flee the country before said trial. These reforms made it so that in 2015 when CICIG was once again under pressure, they were able to produce a report on the network known as La Linea exposing an

operation that sought to defraud the Guatemalan State of \$120 million by pocketing the taxes on imported goods to those involved. This exposed then President, Otto Perez Molina, and Vice President, Roxana Baldetti, as heads of the operation and would ultimately lead to their resignation after mass public demonstrations. For the four years to come, those in positions of power understood that they were not free of impunity with CICIG around, and that the people of Guatemala had renewed their trust with public prosecutors’ ability to uphold the justice they oversaw. Now, unfortunately, there is an end to this unique *operation*, and it comes from both within and outside the state. Essentially, then 2018 President Jimmy Morales, in fear of being exposed for corruption, launched a smear campaign against CICIG, accusing them of promoting *homosexuality* and *feminist ideologies* in a country heavy on *machismo* thinking. More influentially, however, was when Morales moved Guatemala’s embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2018, only two days after the Trump administration’s decision to do the same. This calculated move garnered the appreciation of the US and so when pressured to pull funding from CICIG, the US complied. This made it that when it came time to renew their mandate, with no funding, and with the public distrusting the organization, in 2019, CICIG’s time came to an end.

Ultimately, CICIG’s work led to the dismantling of “70 criminal structures led by death squads and the civil war military



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CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS #2

11 NOV. 2025, 7.00PM
THE AUR AUDITORIUM



**FILM
SCREENING**

Quo Vadis, Aida?

During the Srebrenica massacre, Aida, an English teacher and translator, strives to save her husband and children from the invading Serbian forces by taking refuge in a United Nations camp.

QUO VADIS, AIDA WAS WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY JASMILA ŽBANIĆ,
AND BASED ON HASAN NUHANOVIĆ'S BOOK UNDER THE UN FLAG



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CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS #1

11 NOV. 2025, 12.30-1.30PM
THE AUR AUDITORIUM



SREBRENICA 30 YEARS LATER

REFLECTIONS ON GENOCIDE

Examining how and why genocide was perpetrated in Europe at the end of the 20th century, we will consider questions of accountability, memory, and international responsibility, and what Srebrenica still teaches policymakers, scholars, and citizens today.

DISCUSSANTS

PROFESSOR ANTONIO MARCHESI (AUR)
SYDNEY COMPTON (AUR ALUMNA)
ZAHRA BEG (SOAS)

