

# CURRENT AVENUES IN COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

// SUMMER 2023

15.05.2023 // **Clara Weinhardt** (Maastricht University)

14-16 Uhr *The rise of Brazil, India and China and special rights for  
HZ 7 developing countries in the WTO*

13.06.2023 // **Ben Ross Schneider** (MIT)

16-18 Uhr *Big Business and the inequality trap: Taxes, collusion, and  
PEG 2.G 121 undue influence in Latin America*  
(co-hosted with the Comparative Politics Speaker Series)

11.07.2023 // **Marc Schelhase** (King's College London)

16-18 Uhr *Risking money, risking lives: The political economy of risk in  
PEG 1.G 168 finance and the military*

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## Clara Weinhardt

(Maastricht University)

*The rise of Brazil, India and China and special rights for developing countries in the WTO*

**Abstract:** This lecture draws upon the findings of a DFG/SNF-funded research project (co-led with Klaus Dingwerth) on the evolution of special rights for developing countries in light of global power shifts. The starting point is that the rise of Brazil, India, China and other non-western powers has led to pressures to adjust international institutions to new economic realities. While scholars debate implications for the so-called liberal international order, we shed light on an a much less emphasised principle of global order: special rights for developing countries. In the World Trade Organization (WTO), the principle of special and differential treatment grants developing countries either permanent exemptions from liberalization obligations, flexibilities or longer transition periods. The rise of new centres of economic gravity, however, has begun to erode the distinction between the 'North' and the 'South', or 'developed' and 'developing countries'. As a result, developed country members of the WTO have become increasingly reluctant to grant Brazil, China, and India special rights. This lecture examines how emerging economies themselves have responded differently to pressure to graduate from developing country status, and how special rights for developing countries have evolved in light of global power shifts. In doing so, it sheds new light on the implications of the rise of Brazil, India and China for global trade governance.

**Clara Weinhardt** is Assistant Professor in International Relations at Maastricht University and Non-Resident Fellow at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin. Her research focusses on global trade governance and North-South relations, and how they have been affected by the geoeconomic turn and global power shifts. Her empirical research focuses on EU-Africa relations and emerging economies, especially China. She is the author of *Negotiating Trade in Uncertain Worlds: Misperception and Contestation in EU-West Africa Relations* (Routledge, 2020). Together with her DFG/SNF project partners, she is currently preparing a monograph on differential treatment of developing countries in the trade, climate change and global health regimes. She holds a PhD from the University of Oxford.



## Ben Ross Schneider

(Massachusetts Institute of Technology/MIT)


*Big Business and the inequality trap:*

*Taxes, collusion, and undue influence in Latin America*

(co-hosted with the Comparative Politics Speaker Series)

**Abstract:** Understanding business contribution to inequality requires first an analysis of the extraordinary power of business. Big business in Latin America has enormous instrumental power (through mechanisms such as lobbying, media concentration, and malapportionment) and structural power (via capital flight and threat of disinvestment). Business can wield this power in many ways that – even if not deliberate – increase and sustain inequality. First, business wields its power to keep overall taxation, and effective income taxes in particular, low, depriving the government of resources to redistribute and of the ability to lower inequality through taxes. Second, firms often collude in price fixing that increases costs to poorer consumers and boosts income to the rich.

Ben Ross Schneider is Ford International Professor of Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and director of the MIT-Chile program. He is the author of 'Teacher Unions, Political Machines, and the Thorny Politics of Education Reform in Latin America, Politics and Society' and the forthcoming book 'Routes to Reform: Education Politics in Latin America'.



**Marc Schelhase**  
(King's College London)

*Risking money, risking lives:  
The Political Economy of Risk in Finance and the Military*

**Abstract:** In this talk, Dr Schelhase engages with key themes from his recently published book 'The Political Economy of Risk in Finance and the Military' (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023). Reviews describe it as 'compelling', 'fascinating', 'deeply original' and 'a must read'. The book introduces the concept of the risk triangle, with its societal, organisational and personal angles, to two areas of inquiry, financial markets and security. Drawing on empirical and micro- and macro-level analysis, this innovative work seeks to demonstrate the challenges, dilemmas and, in many ways, also the impossibilities of risk analysis and risk management in these two distinct yet closely connected fields. The talk will be of particular interest to students of political science, economics and business as well as to risk professionals and risk-takers.

**Marc Schelhase** is a Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in the Defence Studies Department, School of Security Studies, King's College London at the Joint Services Command and Staff College, UK Defence Academy, where he is the Programme Director of the MSc in Defence Innovation. From 2009 to 2020 he was also a Visiting Professor in the Analysis and Management of Political Risk at the College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium.