

## BIO

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Andreas Kalyvas teaches political theory in the Department of Politics at The New School for Social Research and the Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts. Before joining the New School, he taught at Columbia University and the University of Michigan. He has been a visiting research professor at the University of Barcelona, Spain, and has also taught in Chile, Germany, Poland, and South Africa. He has been a co-director of the *Radical Critical Theory Circle* since 2015. His research revolves around the question of democracy, the philosophy of the modern state, and the history of political thought with a strong emphasis on the relationship between popular sovereignty and constituent power; the norm and the exception; dictatorship and states of emergency.

Prof. Kalyvas is the author of *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary: Weber, Schmitt, and Arendt* (Cambridge UP, 2008) and the co-author of *Liberal Beginnings: Making a Republic for the Moderns* (Cambridge UP, 2009). He has co-edited two books by Carl Schmitt, *Dialogues on Power* (Polity Press, 2015) and *Ex Captivitate Salus: Experiences, 1945-1947* (Polity Press, 2017). His most recent publications include: “Whose Crisis? Which Democracy? Notes on the Current Political Conjuncture” (*Constellations*, 2019), “Democracy and the Poor: Prolegomena to a Radical Theory of Democracy” (*Constellations*, 2019), and “Dictatorship” (*Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon*, 2022). He is currently completing a book manuscript entitled, *The Political Logic of Dictatorship: Republicanism, Democracy, and the Enemy Within*.

## Abstract

### **Marxism Decolonized:**

### **Bolshevik Anti-Colonial Thought**

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My presentation is an intervention in the ongoing debates on decolonizing Marxism. There is a firm belief that Karl Marx and the first generation of 19<sup>th</sup> century Marxists conferred to Europe a historical, economic, and political primacy that failed to properly understand the centrality of colonialism, thus remaining trapped within a provincial Eurocentric framework that has since then plagued Western Marxism. Against this background, I argue, a new discourse emerged in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that broke away from classical and orthodox understandings of socialism to put forward a radical vision of the capitalist world system that eventually resulted in a profound and comprehensive reformulation of Marxism based on a systematic and explicit anti-colonial logic. The talk is a preliminary and schematic attempt to revisit this formative, initial encounter between Marxism and the colonial question in order to inquire, on the one hand, how it radically transformed Marxism by decolonizing it and, on the other hand, how it inaugurated a global anti-colonial revolutionary vision, the first ever to blend into a unified discourse capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, racism, and communism. Such a decisive repositioning of the colony had radical implications for Marxism and, as importantly, for anticolonialism and its global diffusion. It marks a sharp geopolitical and decolonial turn in the historical development of Marxism, announcing a global anticolonial theory from a

communist standpoint. Geography subsumed history. The colony took primacy over the metropole. In short, anti-colonialism came to define the Bolshevik doctrine of communism.