

HUMANITARIANISMS: MIGRATIONS AND CARE THROUGH THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Teaching Module for 1 Class Unit

Humanitarianism and Mutual Aid Beyond Capitalism

Dean Spade argues that humanitarianism, saviorism, and charity have been extensively critiqued as logics that undergird and legitimize war, colonialism, racialized-gendered control, and extraction. How do people organizing immediate survival support for each other in the face of crisis work together to resist these methods and build practices of solidarity and collective self-determination? Cristian Capotescu shows how in the late 1980s, for many citizens of the former socialist bloc practicing and living socialism involved helping the less fortunate, the sick, and the poor through acts of giving. Such volunteer work and private assistance often invoked moral claims of a better life based on an ethics of shared suffering, dependency, and radical equality. This talk traces how socialist giving opened the possibility for ordinary people to enact notions of shared humanity in alternative ways that frequently eluded capitalist, Western modernity.

Webinar:

Dean Spade, “Mutual Aid: Radical Care in Crisis Conditions” & Cristian Capotescu, “Echoes of the ‘New Soviet Man’: Humanity and the Ethics of Giving in Late Socialism.”
▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, law professor Dean Spade and historian Cristian Capotescu talk about mutual aid under conditions of crisis caused by capitalism and charity in a socialist context. In each talk, these scholars explore our theme Rethinking the Human by attending to what care means through practices that privilege equality, solidarity, shared suffering, and collective self-determination.

Readings:

- Spade, D. (2020). Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next). Verso: Brooklyn, NY. P.1-42.
- Capotescu, C. (2020). Migrants into Humanitarians: Ethnic Solidarity and Private Aid-Giving during Romania’s Historic Flood of 1970. East European Politics and Societies. 2021; 35(2): 293-312.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: “Join Spade and Capotescu in imagining a new humanitarianism framework that goes against the values of capitalism and investigate the advantages and disadvantages of what they offer as opposed to a deeply rooted and corporatized humanitarian systems of care.”