Beyond Resistance. Digital Labor, Social Cooperation, and Infrastructural Struggles



Abstract: Engaging with the challenges and resistance surrounding digital labor may benefit from a theoretical approach to platform capitalism that emphasizes the infrastructural dimension of the operations of digital platforms. While there is a need to focus attention of the proliferation of labor conflicts in the digital world, this infrastructural dimension points to the crucial relevance of wider circuits of social cooperation as sources of value in contemporary capitalism. Working with such concepts as "potential labor," exploitation, dispossession, and extraction I will raise a set of questions on the ways in which digital labor conflicts can be articulated with more general social struggles to foreshadow a reappropriation of wealth and power as the material horizon for a new politics of liberation.

Sandro Mezzadra works as a Professor of Political Theory, Università di Bologna, Department of Arts, Italy. Among his books: Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor (with Brett Neilson, 2013), The Politics of Operations. Excavating Contemporary Capitalism (with Brett Neilson, 2019), Bolivia beyond the Impasse (with Michael Hardt, 2023), The Rest and the West. Capital and Power in a Multipolar World (with Brett Neilson, 2024).