

ICS Seminar Series

INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE AND SOCIETY

The World as Concession: Thinking Through the Cosco Terminal at Piraeus

Professor Brett Neilson

Abstract

In 2009 the Greek government granted Chinese state-owned company Cosco a thirty-five year lease on Pier 2 of the container port of Piraeus. The concession functions as a transshipment zone where containers arriving on ships from China can be transferred onto feeder ships travelling elsewhere in the Mediterranean without incurring customs duties. A deal between Cosco and Hewlett Packard has sealed an arrangement where hardware products manufactured in China will be transported through the terminal and the Piraeus site is widely identified as China's 'gateway to Europe'. With attention to the labour regimes and logistical technologies that facilitate mobilities through this space, the paper examines the Cosco concession in Piraeus from the point of view of China-led globalisation, economic crisis, the production of urban space and the role of infrastructure in building the material fabric of the contemporary capitalist world.

Biography

Brett Neilson is Professor and Research Director (2013-present) at the Institute for Culture and Society (ICS) at the University of Western Sydney. His research and writing aim to provide alternative ways of conceiving globalisation, with emphasis on its social and cultural dimensions. Drawing on cultural and social theory as well as on empirical and archival information, this research has derived original and provocative means for rethinking the significance of globalisation for a wide range of contemporary problems and predicaments, including the circulation of popular culture, the proliferation of borders, the ascendancy of global financial markets, the pressures of population ageing and the growing heterogeneity of labour. With Associate Professor Sandro Mezzadra, he is author of *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor* (Duke UP, 2013). His writings have been translated into twelve languages: Italian, French, German, Swedish, Finnish, Greek, Hungarian, Turkish, Polish, Chinese, Japanese and Korean.

Date

Thursday 15 May

Time

11.30am - 1pm

Venue

EB.2.04 Parramatta South
Campus