

PATTERNS OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

A Conference Jointly Hosted by Sciences Po and the University of Chicago Center in Paris

NOVEMBER 19–20, 2026

Paris, FRANCE

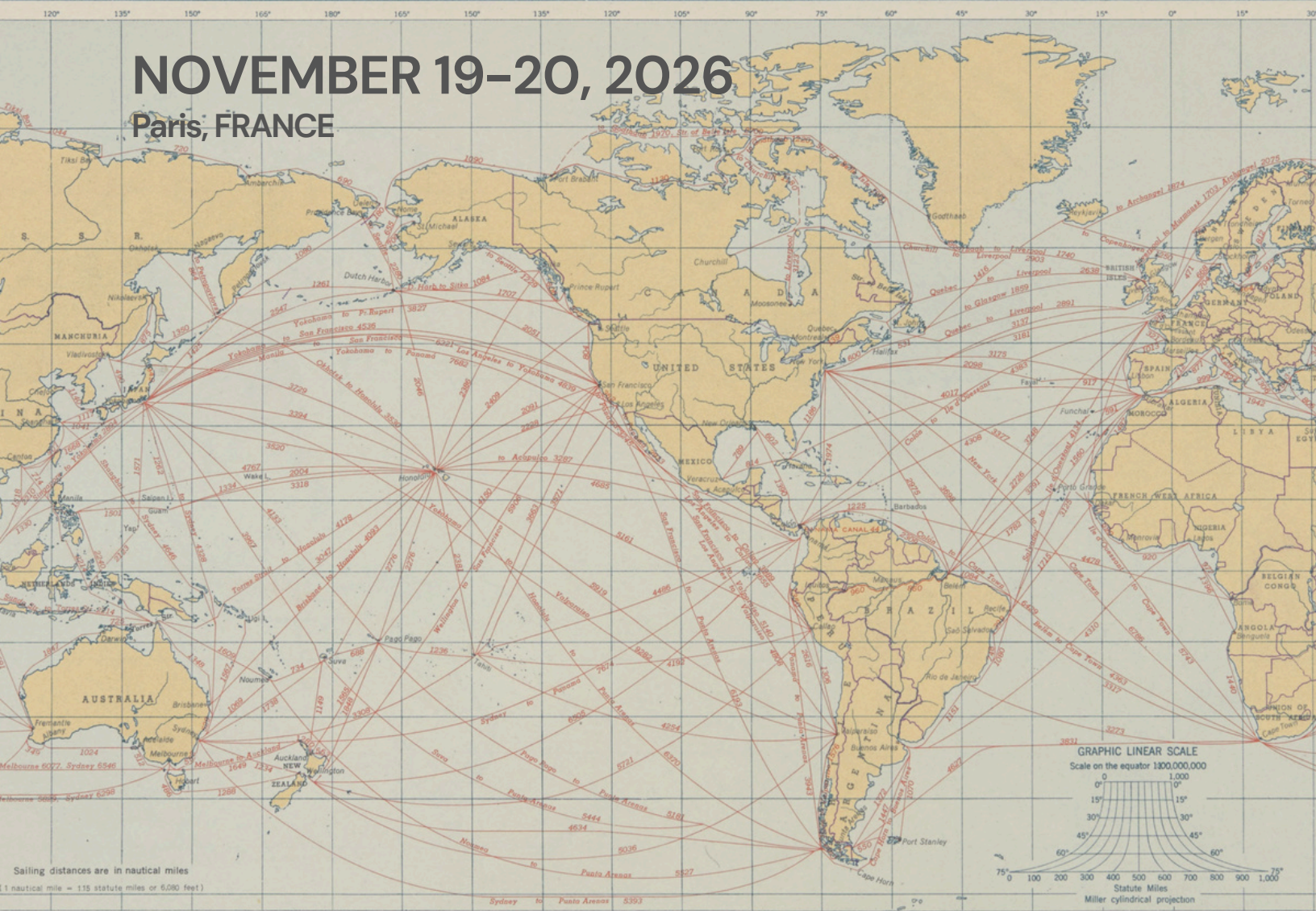


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CALL FOR PAPERS
Deadline: JULY 3

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Call for Papers

Patterns of Global Economic Integration and Disintegration: 1850s to the Present

Colloque Junior, Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po (CHSP) – University of Chicago (UChicago)
Centre in Paris, November 19-20, 2026

Scientific Committee: Paul B. Cheney (UChicago); Mario Del Pero (CHSP); Jonathan Levy (CHSP); James T. Sparrow (UChicago); Sofia Valeonti (American Univ. of Paris); Paula Vedoveli (Getulio Vargas Foundation)

Organizing Committee: Hugo Carlier (CHSP); Atman Mehta (UChicago); Giulio Piumelli (CHSP/SSM Naples); Eduardo T. Romero (UChicago)

Submissions Guidelines:

This conference is designed to provide a platform for PhD candidates and early-career scholars to present their work. While the conference aims to be genuinely interdisciplinary, preference will be given to submissions drawing on primary sources.

The conference will take place over two days (November 19-20, 2026), with one day hosted at Sciences Po Paris and the other at the University of Chicago Center in Paris. It will open and close with two keynote lectures, which will be announced at a later stage.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted by July 3. Submissions should be sent to [this link](#). Contributions may be submitted in English or French.

Selected participants will be notified by the end of July and will be asked to send a short paper in English or French (between 2500 to 8000 words, excluding bibliographical references) by October 25. All papers will be pre-circulated internally among the participants to encourage discussion.

Each participant will have 15-20 minutes to present their paper in English. Each panel, consisting of 3 or 4 participants, will allow substantial time for debate with discussants and the audience.

The organizing committee may not be able to fully cover travel and lodging expenses for all participants. Applicants are encouraged to note any funding needs when submitting their proposals; requests will be reviewed based on available financial resources.

The publication of a volume/series of articles collecting the contributions to the conference is envisaged.

For any questions, please refer to: pgeid2026@gmail.com.

Proposal

We gladly announce a call for papers for a conference on the historical foundations of economic integration and disintegration from the mid-nineteenth century to the present.

We invite submissions that explore the concrete forces shaping, propelling, constraining, or reversing economic interconnectedness across the world. Despite the development of a voluminous literature on topics such as trade expansion, capital mobility, and cross-border production in the social sciences, historical perspectives over the past forty years have rarely made the global economy the subject of dedicated analysis.

The straightjackets undergirding common narratives – “free market” against “state intervention”, “free trade” against “mercantilism,” or “financial liberalization” against “regulation” – betray the need to explore the diversity of forms global economic integration or disintegration may assume. We believe that detailed archival research and a distinct historical framework can elucidate the heterogeneity of linkages in the global economy over time.

We seek contributions that more precisely map the forces compelling economic integration, examine why such connections have repeatedly frayed or been disrupted, and move beyond common binary or linear narratives on the topic.

Potential axes may include, but are not limited to:

- Global Economic Governance
- Trade, Finance, Money, and Debt
- Commodities and the Environment
- Ideas, Politics, and Contestation
- Social Aspects of the Global Economy

Scope

Within the postwar period, the earliest dedicated scholarship on global economic integration emerged from a reevaluation of the *longue-durée* history of capitalism by radical scholars. Such scholars argued that a single global capitalist economic system resulted from, among other factors, European states’ acquisition of foreign colonies over five centuries ago (Amin 1974; Wallerstein 1974-2011). Shortly afterwards, the fall of the Soviet Union and the Asian Financial Crisis, suggesting in turn both the appeal and the fragility of an interconnected global economy, invited further study. Academics at the time explicitly analogized “globalization” at the turn of the millennium to the *belle époque* a century prior, mining the experience of the late nineteenth century to inform policy debates regarding financial regulation, trade policy, and immigration (O’Rourke and Williamson 1999). These works counted falling transportation and communication costs, liberal trade policy, growing capital flows, and multinational corporations as factors underpinning a more tightly integrated global economy. Others went further, arguing that this round of globalization was because of a new “political outlook” embracing global economic forces and the benefits of secure property rights, transparent governance, and sound policy institutions (James 2001).

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, intellectual efforts devoted towards deconstructing “neoliberalism” increasingly subsumed global economic integration as the outcome of a deliberate project to favor internationally mobile capital and finance over state regulation (Kotz 2017;

Slobodian 2018; Gerstle 2022). Over the past decade, however, as states began to participate more forcefully in the economy – whether via intervention in financial markets, industrial policy subsidizing favored sectors, more assertive trade policy, or financial sanctions – the global economy has once again become an important subject of study for historians, social scientists, and policymakers alike (Mulder 2022; Thompson 2022; Daunton 2023; DeLong 2023; Farrell and Newman 2023; Fishman 2025).

Once described by prominent historians as the “most important single debate” in the social sciences (Hopkins 2002), we propose to convene a group of scholars to discuss the heterogeneous causes for the integration and disintegration of the global economy over time. We welcome genuinely interdisciplinary contributions from across the social sciences. Papers may approach the topic from a wide range of prisms: economic, political, social, environmental, intellectual, to state a few. However, participants should situate these forces within their broader historical context, paying attention to the contingencies, consequences, casualties, and asymmetric relations underpinning the making and unmaking of periods of economic integration or disintegration. We encourage submissions that advance combined arguments based on both empirical and conceptual work.

Below are illustrations of topics that papers may choose to address. While these will be welcomed by the committee, submission need not conform to the subjects described by the axes. They are intended to be suggestions more than stipulations.

Axis 1. Global Economic Governance

The origins, conflicts, crises, and transitions of global economic governance, as well as the interplay among its diverse actors, scales, and modalities, offer a critical framework for analyzing economic integration and disintegration alike (Peet 2009; Clavin 2013; Todd 2021; Thornton 2021; Martin 2022; Daunton 2023, Velkar 2023). Potential questions may include: which conflicts in the global economy have elicited efforts toward international governance, and what legacies did such endeavors leave behind? Which matters have deliberately been made objects of governance, and which have been left outside the ambit of regulation? Which institutions, public or private, have either succeeded or failed in managing, shaping, and navigating processes of economic integration, and why? How can we periodize the history of global economic governance, and across which spaces? How do periods of transition unfold, and what characterizes them?

Axis 2. Trade, Finance, Money, and Debt

Trade, finance, and debt – and their complex entanglements – are at the core of the global economy and strongly influence its patterns of expansion and fracture (Flandreau and Zumer 2004; Abdelal 2007; Findlay and O’Rourke 2007; Roos 2019; Barreyre and Delalande 2020; James 2023). Submissions might address lines of inquiry such as: how have different international monetary systems, including the gold standard and Bretton Woods, stimulated or precluded global economic integration? When have capital flows determined trade patterns, and when have trade patterns driven capital flows, and why? To what extent have FDI and foreign debt enabled economic development in the periphery, and to what extent have they merely served to consolidate an unequal global economic system? What has been the historical connection between military power and trade in the global arena? How have the interests of financial capital influenced domestic political agendas?

Axis 3. Commodities and the Environment

Commodities have shaped the character of economic interconnections over time, raising questions regarding intertwined economic and environmental transformations (Topik and Wells 2014; Beckert 2015; Shulman 2015; Toprani 2019; Mitman 2021). Suggested topics of interest comprise: in what ways did demand for commodities such as rubber, cotton, coal, fertilizer, petroleum, or spices (to name only a few examples) shape the nature of connections in the global economy? How have they impacted the governance of the global economy? What political responses – on domestic, transnational or imperial scales – have particular commodities generated and why? How have ecological factors constrained or propelled economic relations? And conversely, in what ways have intensified global connections transformed environmental landscapes across the world?

Axis 4. Ideas, Politics, and Contestation

Processes of economic convergence and fragmentation have dialectically shaped local, national, and international political contexts, fostering intellectual and popular debate, legitimation, and contestation (Slobodian 2018; Edwards 2023; Helleiner 2021, 2023; Zahra 2023; Palen 2024; Thornton 2026). Indicative areas of focus could be: historically, what has been the political or intellectual context of episodes of economic integration, disintegration, or reconfiguration? Which ideas have been most salient in sustaining the legitimacy of global economic connections, and which have contributed to significant transformations in the world economic order? Why has greater economic integration on occasion inspired progressive political movements, such as Christian pacifists and feminists in the mid-nineteenth century? On other instances, why has it bred discontent expressed through more repressive political forces? How have the domestic tensions produced by the global economy been managed over time?

Axis 5. Social Aspects of the Global Economy

The making and unmaking of the global economy have always been embedded in social relations: neglected and marginalized actors, networks, and communities illuminate the uneven foundations of global economic change (Cooper 2017; Yates 2022; Van der Linden 2023). We welcome papers that explore issues like: what kinds of economic connections have social groups – for instance, ethnic networks, religious groups, or extended family units – enabled and what implications have these had? How has the role of such groups in shaping the global or transnational economy changed over time? Conversely, what impact have global economic phenomena had on the constitution of social groups and identities through history? How do social factors impact organizations such as multinational corporations, or technocratic assemblies like the G-10? What challenges has the process of global integration created for working communities and more local social groups in both the Global South and the Global North?

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