



The Many Faces of the Right:

Intellectual Traditions and Contemporary Transformations

The seminar formerly entitled “Liberalism and Conservatism at a Crossroads: Exploring the Notion of Society and the Individual, 19th-21st Centuries” will resume in the 2026-2027 academic year under a new title: “The Many Faces of the Right: Intellectual Traditions and Contemporary Transformations”.

The new title reflects the intellectual development of the seminar since its launch in September 2022 as well as the urgency to study growing societal and political trends. Initially conceived as a space for examining the interactions, convergences, and tensions between liberalism and conservatism from the nineteenth century to the present, the seminar has progressively broadened its scope. While liberalism and conservatism remain central to its concerns, the seminar now seeks to explore the plurality of traditions, doctrines, political languages, and institutional practices that have shaped the right in the Anglophone world and beyond.

This change of title is therefore not a change of object, but an expansion of perspective. The seminar continues to examine the relationship between liberalism and conservatism, but it now places that relationship within a wider constellation of right-wing traditions and transformations. This broader perspective also reflects the ongoing evolution of the right across the Anglophone world. Conservative, liberal, neoliberal, national-populist, radical right, religious, constitutional, authoritarian, libertarian, and social forms of right-wing thought may overlap, coexist, enter into conflict, or be strategically rearticulated according to changing historical and political contexts.

Launched in September 2022 as a joint initiative of the AGORA research centre, CY Cergy Paris Université, and the ICD research centre, University of Tours, the seminar expanded in 2024 to include BABEL, University of Toulon, CREW, Sorbonne Nouvelle, and TIL, Université Bourgogne Europe. This year, the seminar team is very happy to welcome Emma Bell, Professor of British Politics at Sorbonne Université, where she is a member of HDEA.

The seminar brings together scholars in civilisation studies, intellectual history, political science, history, philosophy, economics, sociology, and related fields. It remains grounded in the intellectual history of political and economic thought, while also opening onto the study of social practices, public policies, institutional change, and contemporary forms of governance.

Its aim is to understand how key political concepts such as liberty, order, authority, responsibility, society, the individual, sovereignty, the general interest, merit, tradition, nation, and the State have been mobilised, transformed, and contested by different traditions of the right. Particular attention is paid to the tension between the general interest and individual interest, especially as it appears in party politics, public policy, and ideological discourse. This tension provides a critical entry point into broader debates on social responsibility, solidarity and autonomy, the role of the State, intermediate institutions, civil society, and the moral foundations of political life.

The seminar also examines the ways in which older intellectual traditions are reactivated in contemporary political debates. It explores both long-term genealogies and present-day transformations, asking how ideas inherited from liberalism and conservatism are redeployed in relation to issues such as populism, nationalism, neoliberal reform, social policy, education, public morality, constitutionalism, identity, sovereignty, and the crisis of representative politics.

By adopting the title “The Many Faces of the Right”, the seminar seeks to construct a critical mapping of right-wing political languages and traditions. It aims to analyse their historical roots, their conceptual transformations, their internal tensions, and their strategic uses in contemporary public controversies.

For the 2026-2027 academic year, sessions will take place on **Fridays from 10.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.**

The seminar will be held fully online, except for the inaugural session on 25 September 2026, which will take place in hybrid format, both online and at the Maison de la Recherche of Sorbonne Nouvelle.

Programme for 2026-2027

25 September 2026 - Christopher Fear, University of Hull,

“Inside Right: Conservatism versus Faragism in the 2020s”

Hybrid session: online and at the Maison de la Recherche, Sorbonne Nouvelle

Abstract: This paper presents an examination of the performance and strategy of the British Conservative Party during a period of significant political challenge from Reform UK, the latest incarnation of “Faragism”. The paper explicates the chief characteristics of Faragism and lays out the nature of the challenge that Reform UK presents to the Conservative Party under present conditions. It also offers some analysis of how and why the Conservative Party has failed to meet these challenges, including at the level of local politics. Finally, the paper closes with some suggestions for a more successful strategy.

Biography: Dr Christopher Fear is a Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of Hull, where he also directs the Centre for Conservatism.

27 November 2026 - Axel Bercq, University of Toulon,

“The end of the broad church? The impact of post-referendum factionalism on the Conservative Party”

Biography: Axel Bercq is a PhD student at the University of Toulon. His thesis, supervised by Professor Karine Tournier-Sol, is entitled “Factionalism and power struggles in the Conservative Party in the pre- and post-Brexit period”.

29 January 2027 - Virgile Lorenzoni, Aix-Marseille University,

“Eternal rebels”: British and American conservative think tanks in a post-liberal age”

Biography: Virgile Lorenzoni is a lecturer in British and American civilisation at Aix-Marseille University. His PhD thesis focused on British and American conservative think tanks from a transnational perspective after 1945. His research interests include the study of conservatism as a political ideology, the reconfigurations of Anglo-American conservative thought, and the networks that contribute to the circulation and influence of these ideas across the Atlantic and beyond.

19 March 2027 - Théo Aiolfi, “Title to be announced”

21 May 2027 - Clémence Fourton, “Title to be confirmed”

“Neoliberalism and its Transformations: Theoretical Perspectives and Social Policy Case Studies”

Further details concerning the programme and the online access link will be circulated progressively during the academic year.

All seminar talks since 2022 are available on the YouTube channel of the AGORA research centre: <https://www.youtube.com/@laboratoireagora5949/videos>

Seminar team: **Emma Bell**, HDEA, Sorbonne Université; **Nathalie Anna Champroux**, ICD, University of Tours; **Laurence Harris**, CREW, Sorbonne Nouvelle; **Catherine Marshall**, AGORA, CY Cergy Paris Université; **Stéphane Porion**, ICD, Université de Tours; **Stéphane Révillet**, TIL, University of Bourgogne Europe; and **Karine Tournier-Sol**, BABEL, University of Toulon.