

# On Crude Oil and the Apeiron

In spite of electrification, digitalization, nuclear and renewable energy, IT and the WEB, is Crude Oil in the global economy and post-industrial society still the apeiron of our world?



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UNESCO Chair in  
Sustainable Development  
and Territory Management



ICT e Innovazione per Società e Territorio



ELEVENTH SEMINAR

**Energy and Power.**

**Social ontology perspectives and energy transitions**

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There is a general and trivial understanding that oil is the most important energy source, yet, at the same time, the role of oil in our world is still underestimated, if not, sometimes, masked.

On the track toward a carbon-free economy, can we keep considering oil just as another energy source and replaceable as long as production function and the relative price allows it? Oil shapes the present, global economy in many ways, ranging from material production to transports, from chemistry to agriculture, from the monetary system to the financial sector. And, of course, geopolitics. Our world is composed by oil derivatives, directly or indirectly. Oil is transfused into the production of most things, in so far that it resembles what for some ancient Greek philosophers was the apeiron. The unmoulded, unlimited, primal substance that yields the building material for the World. Oil, we must acknowledged, is not unlimited though.

In this seminar we will look at three fundamental aspects of the oilification of economy and society:

- 1) oil as an energy source;
- 2) oil as a financial asset and;
- 3) oil as a metabolic regulator.

Finally, we will demonstrate the profound impact the oil price has on the global division of labor and structure of the global economy.



**Thursday**  
**9th June 2016**  
**h.15,00 - 17,00**  
**Aula C3**  
**Campus Luigi Einaudi**  
**Lungo Dora Siena 100/4**  
**Torino**

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