



Roosevelt  
Institute for  
American  
Studies

# **Seminar Series on Modern North American History**

**September 2024 – May 2025**

**Invitation**

**James T. Sparrow**  
**18 November 2024**

The political developments, societal transformations, cultural shifts, foreign policy initiatives, national security concerns, and international relations that originated from the US have left an indelible mark on the North American continent and the global landscape.

This hybrid seminar series, organized by the RIAS and the Sciences Po Center for History (CHSP) in Paris, forms a platform to explore these diverse and interconnected themes.

This series, one of very few of its kind in Europe, intersects with various significant historiographical trends, continuing the move towards a more integrated view of US and North American history. It pays special attention to the inclusion of global, imperial, transnational, and interconnected histories to reframe our understanding of the United States' place in the world and the emerging focus on international environmental history and issues.

The platform, which meets once a month in a hybrid format (online and in person), encourages active participation from doctoral students and aims to serve as an open and inclusive forum for discussing some of the most innovative recent scholarship. It aspires to bring together historians of different backgrounds and in different stages of their career, foster a historiographical and interdisciplinary conversation, and critically consider the contemporary societal and political ramifications of the historical events under discussion.



#### **Coordinators:**

- **Dario Fazzi (Leiden University / RIAS)**
- **Gaetano Di Tommaso (RIAS)**
- **Mario Del Pero (Sciences Po-Paris, Centre d'histoire)**
- **Olivier Burtin (Université de Picardie Jules Verne)**

# Invitation

## THE ARCHIVES OF SELF-REPRESSION: ANTICOMMUNISM, INTERNATIONALISM, AND THE CASE OF RALPH BUNCHE

**LECTURER** James T. Sparrow

**DATE** Monday, 18 November 2024 at 17:00 to 18:30 CET

**LOCATION** Hybrid (In-person at Sciences Po Paris or online)

Click on this [link](#) to register



James Sparrow is Associate Professor in History and the College, and an affiliated member of the Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science at the University of Chicago. He is the founding director of the Democracy Curriculum and former associate dean in the College, and director of the National Fellows in US Politics at the Jefferson Scholars Foundation. Sparrow has written about the social politics of total war and citizenship in the national security state; the political and conceptual history of the democratic state; and the history of the social sciences as they have been enlisted to inform national policy. His first book was *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government*, a history of the social politics of the national state as its foundations shifted from welfare to warfare during World War II. His talk is drawn from a new book project titled *New Leviathan: American Superpower and the Problem of the Democratic State in the American Century*.

In his lecture, Dr. Sparrow will explore the process and impact of anticommunism investigations on the life and work of Ralph Bunche, leading African-American diplomat and political scientist.

We know a great deal about the purgative effects of anticommunism on the Popular Front left. But how did loyalty politics shape the lives of government officials who were loyal anticommunists? Of particular interest are those who served in foreign affairs, since “internal subversion” was presumed to originate from abroad. This paper examines this question through the lens of Ralph Bunche’s loyalty investigations, which threatened the image and career of one of the most prominent African-Americans serving in public life in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Although he easily secured clearance in the end, Bunche navigated a harrowing trial that was private and public, personal and official, practical and conceptual, leaving a profound imprint on his approach to international statecraft, including UN Peace mediation, peacekeeping, and other diplomatic endeavors facilitating the self-determination of decolonizing nations in the Global South.

*To attend the lecture, please register [here](#).*

# Program

## Monday, 23 September 2024, 17:00 – 18:30 CEST

- [Melani McAlister](#) (George Washington University), *Promises, Then the Storm: Notes on Memory, Protest, and the Israel-Gaza War*

## Monday, 7 October 2024, 17:00 – 18:30 CEST

- [Jayita Sarkar](#) (University of Glasgow), *Global Southwests: Capital and Uranium in Africa and America*

## Monday, 18 November 2024, 17:00 – 18:30 CET

- [James T. Sparrow](#) (University of Chicago), *The Archives of Self-Repression: Anticommunism, Internationalism, and the Case of Ralph Bunche*

## Monday, 9 December 2024, 17:00 – 18:30 CET

- [Emma Day](#) (University College London), *Beyond Procreation: A New History of Reproductive Justice in the United States*

## Monday, 27 January 2025, 17:00 – 18:30 CET

- [Evan McCormick](#) (Columbia University), *Remembering a Presidency: The Obama Presidency Oral History Project*

## Monday, 17 February 2024, 17:00 – 18:30 CET

- [Joel Suarez](#) (Harvard University), *Towards a Global Labor History of the Volcker Shock: Mexico, Informality, and Undocumented Labor*

## Monday, 24 March 2025, 17:00 – 18:30 CET

- [Evan Bonney](#) (Sciences Po-Paris), *Forestry and the Intermountain Experiment that Transformed Executive Power in the Age of Empire, 1897-1914*

## Monday, 14 April 2025, 17:00 – 18:30 CEST

- [Gretchen Heefner](#) (Northeastern University), *'From the Red Desert to the Red Planet': Engineering the American Empire*

## Monday, 19 May 2025, 17:00 – 18:30 CEST

- [Jeanine Quené](#) (Roosevelt Institute for American Studies), *The (Un)changing Nature of U.S. Women's Conservatism Across the Twentieth Century*



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