

Agenda #3, February 14, 2008

Session 4. Thinking about alternatives to capitalism

1. Thesis 1: the non sustainability of Capitalism thesis

- Economic Crisis could be the basis for episodic vulnerability of the state and capitalism to transformation even if there was no tendency for crises to intensify. (Todd van Gunten). What is the role of crisis in the theory of structural possibility? (Julián Rebón)
- Environmental crisis: might this ultimately raise costs in ways that weaken capitalism? (Catherine Willis)
- Could the intensification of crisis argument hold for parts of the developing world? (Julia McReynolds, Charity Schmidt)
- *Globalization and financial crisis*: could the global financial order be a source of intensified crisis? (Guillaume Neault) Could the crisis-management capacity of states erode because of globalization to the point that crises could no longer be neutralized or muted? (Charity Schmidt)
- The LTV and its relationship to our understanding of the laws of motion of capital. (Edo Novat, Rodrigo Salgado)

2. Thesis 2: Intensification of class struggle thesis

- Proletarianization: At the level of abstraction of the capitalist mode of production there is proletarianization and homogenization (Edo Novat, Rodrigo Salgado)
- Proletarianization: Could the proletarianization thesis apply in the third world? (Guillaume Neault, Charity Schmidt)
- Could struggles against capitalism be rooted in groups that are marginalized from capitalism rather than from class struggles within capitalism? (Eduardo Cavieres)

3. Thesis 3: The revolutionary transformation thesis

- Unconvinced by the skepticism towards revolutionary strategy and its implications. Why is this incompatible with “democratic experimentalism” (Rudolfo Elbert). Does the critique of revolutionary parties suggest a theory of transformation in which means must match ends – i.e. to generate democracy the means must be democratic? (Wes Markofski)

4. Thesis 4: The transition to socialism thesis

- Classical Marxism postulated socialism only as a possibility (socialism or barbarism), and in the 20th century socialism was empirically the only successor to capitalism. (Ricardo Donaire)
- Is capitalism the necessary precondition for socialism because of the ways it raises the forces of production? (Julián Rebón)

5. Other themes

- What is the timeframe of the theory and its predictions? [Molly Noble]
- “Capitalism is a historically specific form of economic organization that came into being as a result of the internal dynamics of the previous form of economy and will eventually cease to exist” (María Ana González, Rodrigo Salgado)
- Real Utopias vs Revolutionary Transformations: need to clarify this contrast (Rudolfo Elbert)