

Lecture 4
22 March 2018
10 AM to 12 PM

Contradictions of Capitalist Society

This lecture will address specific contradictions of capitalist society, derived from the expanded conception, namely: contradictions pertaining to social reproduction, ecology, imperialism, and politics, each understood as a specific "background condition" for a capitalist economy that is also a site of tension and social struggle.

Lecture 5
23 March 2018
10 AM to 12 PM

Criticising Capitalism

An examination of the implications of the expanded conception for the practice of critique.

Lecture 6
23 March 2018
3 PM to 5 PM

Contesting Capitalism

The main focus of this lecture will be on the grammar of social struggles, introducing the concepts of "boundary struggles" (in addition to class struggles) and a "triple movement" (in lieu of Polanyi's double movement), with special attention to the present.

Who can attend:

A maximum of 50 participants on a first come basis: Postgraduate students, Research students & Faculty members of recognised academic institutions

Registration Fees*

- JNU Masters Students: FREE
- JNU Research Students (M.Phil. and Ph.D.): Rs. 1,000
- JNU Faculty: Rs. 2,000
- Other educational Institutions Research Students: Rs. 2,000
- Other educational Institutions Faculty: Rs. 4,000
- Other Government Institutions: Rs. 10,000
- Industry and Private Institutions: Rs. 15,000
- Participants from outside India: US\$ 500

*Does not cover travel or accommodation.

Advance registration required at:

<http://www.gian.iitkgp.ac.in/GREGN>; and,
<http://gianregister.jnu.ac.in>

Two Karls are Better than One!!!

Capitalism, Crisis, Critique

On Ecology, Democracy and Social Reproduction

March 19-23, 2018

CSLG CONFERENCE ROOM, JNU

Invited Faculty

Professor Nancy Fraser

Henry A. and Louise Leob Professor
Departments of Philosophy and Politics
New School for Social Research, New York



Host Faculty

Prof. Amit Prakash

Email: amit@jnu.ac.in

Prof. Niraja Gopal Jayal

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Overview

Capitalism is an institutionalised social order and not merely an economic order. Such an understanding of capitalism foregrounds the constitutive institutional complex that underlies the logic of primitive accumulation that broke up social and customary rights and transferred control of resources to owners of capital. Through a complex (and spatially differentiated) process, the market emerged as the central allocator of the societal surplus, which in turn also structured many of the supportive social and political institutions. However, this process was co-constituted by the continued existence of non-market exchange mechanisms (such as social reproduction), without which the pursuit of the endless accumulation of capital could not have survived. Alongside, the process of capital accumulation also created conditions of emancipatory politics, often led by organised labour – the process evocatively described by Karl Polanyi as the Double Movement. However, this process – many aspects of which are the subject matter of intense academic debate – does not adequately lend itself to an analysis of contemporary capitalism.

Contemporary capitalism is at a distinct stage in its evolution, characterised by an expansion in its economic logic with a simultaneous contraction of the politico-social processes of expansion of individual rights and entitlements. The fundamental factor in this is the shift from production to finance, which has led to a host of changes in the relations of production worldwide, leading to numerous dysfunctions – political, social, economic, financial, ecological – referred to in the literature as the crises of contemporary capitalism.

Besides, changes in the relations of production under contemporary capitalism have been expressed as the transformation of organised labour into a precarious and informalised body of workers without the solidarity to lead the kind of emancipatory politics witnessed in the past century. Further, the vast majority of political leadership across the ideological spectrum seem to endorse neoliberal markets, which in turn is likely to destroy the bases of the social reproduction of capitalism itself. Protests in the form of social movements however seem to lack the solidaristic coalescence necessary to fulfil the role of organised labour of yore.

These processes have collectively been seen as a crisis of capitalism and are the subject matter of an emerging re-interrogation of the complex dynamics of capitalism. However, extant literature is marked by a relative paucity of robust critical social theory that could offer a thoroughgoing understanding of this crisis. Contemporary explanations privilege economic processes with only relatively marginal attention to the novel forms of political processes and idioms of social conflict engendered in the process, pre-eminent among which are contestations over public power, nature, and forms of social reproduction, aside from labour. Furthermore, new axes of inequality have emerged including nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, class and identity, to which the extant models focussed on labour struggles are unable to provide a reliable analytical guide.

Objectives

- To encourage critical engagements with the nature and character of contemporary crisis of capitalism.
- To offer a platform for postgraduate and research students to think collectively from a variety of theoretical and empirical vantage points.
- To construct an epistemological community to draw in a variety of experiences to reflect and theorise on the complexity of capitalism in its contemporary avatar in both, India and the world.

Teaching and Learning Methods & Duration:

- Duration of the Course: 1 week (12 hours)
- Series of six interlinked lectures of about 2 hours each
- Tutorials: 06 hours by host faculty

Course Details

Lecture 1

19 March 2018
10 AM to 12 PM

What is Capitalism?

This lecture will introduce an “expanded conception of capitalism” as an “institutionalized social order,” as an alternative to the standard view that it is an economic system.

Lecture 2

20 March 2018
10 AM to 12 PM

Why Two Karls are Better than One

This lecture will discuss the conception of contemporary capitalism outlined in the first lecture by synthesising ideas from Karl Polanyi with ideas from Karl Marx.

Lecture 3

21 March 2018
10 AM to 12 PM

Historicizing Capitalism

This lecture will apply the expanded conception to rethink the standard periodization of “regimes of accumulation”.