

MARX2016 – abstracts

Vad betyder bokstavskoderna för de olika programpunkterna?

S: Talare

D: Diskussioner/intervjuer med författare

Spe: Särskilda konferensrelaterade ämnen.

Ca: Sessioner och paneler på temat *Kapitalismen år 2050 – uppgång, undergång, övergång?*

Cri: Sessioner och paneler på temat *Kritiska teorier, plattformar och rörelser*

EC: Sessioner och paneler på temat *Ekosocialism och klimat*

Med: Sessioner och paneler inom mediaspåret, undertema till Ca (*Kapitalismen år 2050*)

UC: Sessioner och paneler på temat *Att både förstå och förändra*

The letter codes for the events – what do they mean?

D: Discussions and interviews with writers.

S: Speakers

Spe: Specific conference-related topics

Ca: Sessions and panels within the theme *Capitalism in 2050 – Expansion, Destruction, Transition?*

Cri: Sessions and panels within the theme *Critical Theories, Platforms and Movements*

EC: Sessions and panels within the theme *Eco-Socialism and Climate*

Med: Sessions and panels within the Media subtheme of "Ca" (*Capitalism in 2050*)

UC: Sessions and panels within the theme *To Both Understand and Change*

TALARE / SPEAKERS

S-1: Göran Therborn

(Professor of Sociology, Cambridge University)

Saturday 15 October, 10.45–11.45, Z-salen

“Class, Race and Nation in the World of Migration”

The relationships of class and nation were a central preoccupation of early twentieth century Marxism, then mainly driven by strategic political issues of the labour movement in multinational dynastic empires, like the Romanov and the Habsburg, and manifested, above all in in works by Lenin and Otto Bauer. Later in the century it became an important issue in the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles in Asia and Africa, theoretically most articulated by Mao, but clearly much on the minds of all radical anti-colonialist leaders.

The problematic has now, in the early twenty-first century, unexpectedly returned with a vengeance to Europe, most sharply in Western Europe, where class was more articulated than in the post-Communist East. It was hammered in, beneath the hype of globalization and cosmopolitanism, and after the financial crash of capitalism in 2008, which brought inequality into a topic of polite mainstream conversation and rhetoric. The political effects of the crisis have been varied. But two stand out, nowhere has any attempt to tackle inequality been made, and the strengthening of xenophobic nationalism has been more widespread and more influential than egalitarian, class-conscious movements.

This outcome, so unexpected by Occupy movements as well as by the classical left, and by their respective ”organic intellectuals” calls for new reflections on class and nation as categories of identity.

Among anti-xenophobic people ”racism” and ”racist” are generously provided insults, which unintendedly tends to muddle waters of analysis. While xenophobia, hatred, fear and/or contempt for foreigners is an almost universal propensity, racism is an ideology of biological superiority. It is a product of European overseas colonialism, imported into Europe itself in the heyday of European imperialism and by the Nazis grafted onto the old tradition of xenophobic Anti-Semitism. The settler states of the Americas, Oceania, and South Africa were all constituted on a racist basis. Racism was also a constituent of settler class movements. ”Keep Australia White”, was the first plank of the Labour program until the 1970s.

Current Islamophobia is related to but not part a persistence of religion in the modern world. It is rather a cultural mutation of Euro-American colonial racism, often using the same epithets about the people of contempt and hatred, ”backward”, ”barbarian”, ”savage”.

Class, nation, and race are competing categories of collective identity, and their field of competition has been widely enlarged by the new mass wave of global migration. Gender is another major collective identity, but rarely superseding the three others mentioned.

Trans-continental and transnational migration are re-shuffling the political as well as the cultural landscape of the rich world. Migration is challenging and changing a world of hegemonic complacency. One important way of understanding its effects is through the lenses of class, nation and race, and through the entanglements and competition of collective identities.

With introduction by René León Rosales.

S-2: Kate Soper

(Professor emerita of Philosophy, London Metropolitan University)

Saturday 15 October, 12.00–13.00, Z-salen

"Marxism, critique and climate change"

The presumption of talk about the 'Anthropocene' is that climate change has somehow inevitably followed from human productivity activity. To adopt a Marxist perspective is to insist, on the contrary, that it is the outcome of capitalist production and consumption – in other words, of a historically specific *form* of wealth production, and one that has proved highly dystopian in both human and environmental terms. In my talk I shall argue that the excellent Historical Materialist account of the causes of climate change provided in recent studies requires an equally de-naturalising assault upon the ideas of progress and human well-being associated with the agendas of global capitalism. What, I shall ask, has Marxism to offer an alternative politics of prosperity? How can it best encourage transition to a post-capitalist and ecologically benign future?

With introduction by Andreas Malm.

*Kate Soper has published widely on Marxism, environmental philosophy, ecocriticism, theory of needs and consumption, and cultural theory. More recent books include *What is Nature? Culture, Politics and the Non-Human* (Blackwell, 1995), *Citizenship and Consumption* (co-editor, Palgrave, 2007) and *The Politics and Pleasures of Consuming Differently* (co-editor, Palgrave, 2008). She has been a member of the editorial collectives of *Radical Philosophy* and *New Left Review* and a columnist for *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*. Her study on 'Alternative hedonism and the theory and politics of consumption' was funded in the ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' Programme (www.consume.bbk.ac.uk). She has participated since in a number of research projects on climate change and sustainable consumption, most recently as a Visiting Fellow at the Pufendorf Institute, Lund University, Sweden.*

S-3: Christian Fuchs

(Professor, University of Westminster, London)

Saturday 15 October, 13.15–14.15, Z-salen

“Marxism and Communication: Reflections on Capitalism and Post-Capitalism”

This talk is a comment on some issues in contemporary Marxist theory. It argues that much Marxist theory has not taken issues of communication serious enough. Within this theory tradition, there has been a strong tendency to reduce communication and to treat it as a secondary and derivable phenomenon. The approach advanced in this talk argues for a Marxist theory of communication and the critique of the political economy of communication as approach for understanding and criticising capitalism and advancing post-capitalism.

The talk takes issue with and opposes two popular companions to Marx’s *Capital*, David Harvey’s *A Companion to Marx’s Capital* and Michael Heinrich’s *An Introduction to the Three Volumes of Karl Marx’s “Capital”*. It is time to read Marx from a media and communications perspective.

The presentation also engages with how Marxist theory can today best understand and analyse digital labour, fetishism, ideology, nationalism, fascism, and crisis. It comments on Paul Mason’s recent book *Postcapitalism: A Guide to Our Future* and argues that Paul Mason is Henryk Grossman 2.0. The conclusion comments on how to think about the commons and communism today.

With introduction by Arwid Lund.

Christian Fuchs is a professor at the University of Westminster, where he is the Director of the Communication and Media Research Institute and the Westminster Institute for Advanced Studies. He is co-editor of the Marxist journal *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* (<http://www.triple-c.at>) and a member of the European Sociological Association’s Executive Committee. He is author of books such as “Reading Marx in the Information Age: A Media and Communication Studies Perspective on Capital Volume 1” (2016), “Digital Labour and Karl Marx”, “Culture and Economy in the Age of OSocial Media” (2015), “Critical Theory of Communication: New Readings of Lukács, Adorno, Marcuse, Honneth and Habermas in the Age of the Internet” (2016), “Social Media: A Critical Introduction” (2nd edition 2017), “OccupyMedia! The Occupy Movement and Social Media in Crisis Capitalism” (2014), *Foundations of Critical Media and Information Studies* (2011), “Internet and Society: Social Theory in the Information Age” (2008). Together with Vincent Mosco, he co-edited the collected volumes “Marx and the Political Economy of the Media” (2016) and “Marx in the Age of Digital Capitalism” (2016). Website: <http://fuchs.uti.at> Twitter @fuchschristian

S-4: Anwar Shaikh

(Professor of Economics, New School University, New York)

Saturday 15 October, 15.30–16.30, Z-salen

"Marx's Capital and the Economic Analysis of Capitalism"

Marx's notoriously unfinished project in *Capital* was to analyze the concrete operations of capitalist markets. Social and institutional factors play an important role, but at the same time, the factors are themselves limited by the dominant forces arising from "gain-seeking" behavior, of which the profit motive is the most important. These dominant elements create an invisible force field that shapes and channels capitalist outcomes. My book shows that Marx's project can be developed and used to explain empirical patterns in microeconomic demand and supply, wage and profits, technological change, relative prices of goods and services, interest rates, bond and equity prices, exchange rates, patterns of international trade, growth, unemployment, inflation, national and personal inequality, and the recurrence of general crises such as the current one which began in 2007–2008.

With introduction by Petter Nilsson.

S-5: Lucia Pradella

(Ph.D. in Political economy, King's College, London)

Sunday 16 October, 11.00–12.00, Z-salen

"Capitalist crisis and the many lives of reformism"

The immediate aftermath of the crisis exposed the limits of neoliberalism and raised the promise of global Keynesianism. Eight years after, reformist alternatives are experiencing a deepening crisis as well. Dilma Rouseff impeachment in Brazil—which follows other left defeats or crises in Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, and Venezuela—marks a deep crisis of new developmentalism in Latin America. After the dramatic capitulation of Syriza in 2015, new left advances in Europe (Portugal, Spain, the rise of Corbyn) have re-proposed the idea of a 'government of the left' able to channel the demands of social movements into realist anti-austerity strategies. My paper contextualises these trends within the underlying crisis of global capitalism. This crisis, I argue, is exposing the structural antagonisms of capitalism, and the link between processes of impoverishment North and South. In the face of these dynamics, social-democratic strategies—aimed at maintaining a balance between class and national interests—have little to offer to the working class. In order for the labour and social movements that resist neoliberalism and the crisis to advance, therefore, it is necessary to build a political project able to address the international roots of the crisis and

develop alternative forms of power to institutional politics. The crisis itself offers new possibilities and challenges in this direction.

With introduction by Frida Jansson.

S-6: Vivek Chibber

(Professor of Sociology, New York University)

Sunday 16 October, 12.15–13.15, Z-salen

"The Promise and Perils of Postcolonial Theory"

The recent past has witnessed a massive shift in political power away from labor and toward capital. Part of the fallout of this development has been a displacement of Marxist and other Enlightenment theories on the Left, by explicitly anti-Enlightenment and anti-universalist views associated with postcolonial theory. With its promise to rid radical politics of its Eurocentrism and parochialism, postcolonial theory offers a very attractive vision for progressive politics as well as for social theory. But there is a profound mismatch between its rhetoric and its substance. This talk examines the myriad ways in which postcolonial theory in fact strengthens the very Eurocentrism it seeks to overturn, and weakens the solidarities it claims to defend. For progressive politics in the twenty-first century, a revitalized and universalistic socialism still offers the best prospects for success.

With introduction by Daniel Hedlund Jorquera.

S-7: Gilbert Achcar

(Professor, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London)

Sunday 16 October, 13.30–15.00, Z-salen

"Arab Spring to Arab Winter: What Happened?"

The Arab Spring of 2011 was but the beginning of a long-term revolutionary process, rendered much more complicated than other revolutionary processes by specific socio-political features -- rentierism and patrimonialism -- of the dominant Arab state system. Another complicating specific feature is the fact that counter-revolution in the Arab region is two-pronged: the revolutionary process confronts not only the established regimes, but also their Islamic fundamentalist contenders. These peculiarities, combined with the intrinsic weakness of progressives in the region, provide the main explanation for the shift from the initial revolutionary phase to the ongoing counter-revolutionary phase that started in 2013. The various dynamics of this shift will be assessed in the light of the particular

conditions that prevail in the different key theaters of the 2011 uprising. The region will find no new stability as long as no solution emerges for the explosive socio-economic factors behind the Arab Spring.

Moderator: Håkan Blomqvist.

Gilbert Achcar is a Lebanese scholar, writer and socialist. He is Professor of Development Studies and International Relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London. His latest book is *The People Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising* (2015).

(I svensk översättning finns Achcars *Barbariernas kamp: 11 september och den nya världsordningen*)

S-8: Beverley Skeggs

(Professor of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London)

Sunday 16 October, 15.15–16.45, Z-salen

“A New Regime of Accumulation: Digital Economics”

I will be drawing on an ESRC research project on “A Sociology of Values and Value” (ES/KO10786/1) that uses software to track the trackers (Facebook) and examine the value process created as our data is searched in detail for sources of potential value. If our personal data is traded in milliseconds up to 70k times per day does this mean that we been "enclosed", "captured", "transduced" ? Do we care? Are we aware? Does it matter? Is it possible to escape? If we want to understand capitalism in the present I argue that we need to understand the opaque mechanisms that experiment with our personal disclosures. Working through the tracking data and a close analysis of digital economics I will argue that Facebook is part of a new regime of capitalist accumulation.

See the website: <https://values.doc.gold.ac.uk/> for an outline of the project.

“The violence of class - a conversation with Beverley Skeggs”

In what ways are austerity measures – being the main political response to economic crises – reproducing and strengthening class divisions in society? What possibilities are there for resistance and solidarity when the economic exposure of the working class is criminalised or used for televised entertainment? How can feminist and Marxist analyses help us understand how class is lived and experienced in very different conditions?

In this talk, sociologist Lena Sohl and political scientist Sofie Tornhill discuss class, violence and feminist resistance with Beverley Skeggs, professor of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London. With books such as *Formations of Class & Gender: Becoming*

Respectable, Class, Self, Culture and Feminism after Bourdieu, she has made an important mark on contemporary theoretical and social debate

*(”I klassamhällets våld – ett samtal med Beverley Skeggs”: Hur hålls klassamhället på plats när åtstramning på bred front är det politiska svaret på krisande ekonomier? Vilka möjligheter finns till motstånd och solidaritet när ekonomisk utsatthet görs till teveunderhållning eller kriminaliseras? Hur kan feministiska och marxistiska analyser hjälpa oss att förstå hur klass levs och upplevs på vitt skilda villkor? Lena Sohl, sociolog, och Sofie Tornhill, statsvetare, samtalar om klass, våld och feministiskt motstånd med Beverley Skeggs, professor i sociologi och verksam på Goldsmiths universitet, London. Genom böcker som *Att bli respektabel, Class, Self, Culture och Feminism after Bourdieu* har Skeggs gjort stort avtryck i samtida teori och samhällsdebatt. Artiklar av Skeggs översatta till svenska finns publicerade i *Fronesis* nr 25–26 och nr 40–41.)*

SAMTAL / TALKS

D-1: Boksamtal – Nina Björk [på svenska]

Söndag 16 oktober, 11:15–12:00, entréplanet

Nina Björk samtalar med ekonomhistorikern Soheyla Yazdanpanah, Södertörns högskola, om sin nyutkomna biografi *Drömmen om det röda: Rosa Luxemburg, socialism, språk och kärlek*

D-2: Samtal med Kajsa Ekis Ekman och Mikael Nyberg, "Kapitalets automatik och myten om det postindustriella samhället" [på svenska]

Söndag 16 oktober, 15:15–16:30, entréplanet

SÄRSKILDA ÄMNEN / SPECIAL TOPICS

Spe-1: “Oath on the commodity: Freedom, Equality and Bentham – Right and legal theory in the light of the critique of political economy” [in English]

Sunday 16 October, 11.00–12.45, Hedén

– – This session has been changed at a late stage; two presentations (30 minutes each), and slight revisions of titles and descriptions. – –

Marxist theorists have been challenged to establish the link between the critique of political economy and a theory of law as well as a theory of the state, since the mature Marx did not provide a systematic theory of law or of the bourgeois state. The presenters intend to shed light on central aspects of this missing link referring to the later attempts of Walter Benjamin and Louis Althusser at a radical theory of legal form and a Marxist informed criticism of the formal structure of modern law.

Nikos Tzanakis-Papadakis: “Violence and legal form: Walter Benjamin's critique of law and its affinities to the critique of political economy”

(Doctoral student, Freie Universität, Berlin)

The theologico-political foundation of Carl Schmitt's theory of exception will be examined in the light of the early as well as the Marxist informed criticism of W. Benjamin, who attempted to conceptualize the juridical form in relation to the class struggle.

Dimitra Alifieraki: Legal Form, Legal Ideology and “Socialist Law”: Louis Althusser's contribution to the Marxist Theory of Law

(M.A. student, Technische Universität Berlin)

The Althusserian concept of the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA), albeit the fact that they do not strictly belong to the relations of production, will be interrogated on its fruitfulness to account for the juridical order as a mediating instance between the legal subject and the ideological interpellation.

Spe-2: “Marx and Russia” [panel, in English]

Saturday 15 October, 12.00–13.30, Palme

The aim of the panel is to discuss the Marxist analyses of Russia's development. The contributions deal with reception of Marx's theory in Russia, starting already in Marx's

lifetime (from the 1870's on) and stretching to the present. The focus is on economic development and discussions of Russian economics. In Marxist analysis, Russian Capitalism has always had specific traits which distinguish it from the Western, "classical" form of capitalism. It is obvious that this difference between Russia and the West remains and is poignant yet today, despite the globalisation processes.

Aleksandr Buzgalin: "Marxism in Present-Day Russia; A Presentation of the 'Critical School of Post-Soviet Marxism'"

(Professor, Lomonosov University, Moscow)

Michail Voeikov: "Marx's Vision of the Future of Socialism in Russia and Modern Debates"

(Professor, Lomonosov University, Moscow)

Pertti Honkanen: "Early Reception of Marx's Economic Theory in Russia"

(Ph.D., The Social Insurance Institution of Finland, Helsinki)

Vesa Oittinen. "Marx and Russian Revolutionaries – The Case of Bakunin"

(Professor, Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki)

Spe-3: Seminar on methodology and class analysis with Göran Therborn [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 13.15–14.45, Beskow

The seminar, initiated by the Swedish IMER Association, is primarily directed to PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. It begins with Göran Therborn briefly discussing the possibilities to follow radical research traditions within the social sciences of today, focusing on questions regarding research methods and broader class analyses. For example: how to conduct class analyses that takes into regard the impacts of nationalism, migration, ethnicity, racialisation, and gender? The remainder of the seminar will be devoted to questions and discussions on these issues.

(Seminarium om metodologi och klassanalys med Göran Therborn: Detta seminarium äger rum på initiativ av IMER-förbundet och är 90 minuter långt. Det riktar sig främst till doktorander och juniora forskare. Det inleds med ett kortare anförande av Göran Therborn där han diskuterar möjligheten att verka i en radikal tradition i samhällsvetenskapen idag. Fokus ligger på frågeställningar rörande breddade klassanalyser och metodologi. Hur kan man, exempelvis genomföra klassanalyser som inkluderar påverkan av nation, migration, etnicitet/ras, kön? Efter Therborns inledande anförande kommer den resterande delen av

seminariet att bestå av möjlighet till frågor och diskussion. Göran Therborn blev intervjuad i *Clarté* 2/2015, i artikeln "Peka på sprickorna!" där han berättar om sitt perspektiv. Artikeln är tillgänglig online: [http://clarte.nu/laes-clarte-pa-naetet/2-2015-eu-in-i-vaggen/9308-Goran-Therborn-\(intervju\)---Peka-pa-sprickorna--93](http://clarte.nu/laes-clarte-pa-naetet/2-2015-eu-in-i-vaggen/9308-Goran-Therborn-(intervju)---Peka-pa-sprickorna--93))

Spe-4: Filmvisning och diskussion – Kan vi göra det själva? En film om ekonomisk demokrati [på svenska]

Söndag 16 oktober, 12:30–14:00, Palme

Regissören Patrik Witkowsky visar och diskuterar den uppmärksammade dokumentärfilmen *Kan vi göra det själva? En film om ekonomisk demokrati*. Filmen ställer en enkel men utmanande fråga: Varför sträcker sig demokratin till den politiska sfären, men inte till den ekonomiska? Den har tidigare visats på svensk TV och blivit utvald till *Film For Action's* lista *The Top 100 Documentaries We Can Use To Change The World*. Ekonomisk demokrati diskuteras ur olika perspektiv och exempel ges på demokratiska företag i verkligheten.

Mer information: <http://ekonomiskdemokrati.se>

SESSIONER & PANELER / SESSIONS & PANELS

Ca-1: "Capitalism, Time, Humanity" [in English]

Sunday 16 October, 11.00–12.15, Palme

David Zachariah: "Economic Laws of Motion of Capitalism"

(CMS Stockholm)

Marx famously aimed to lay bare the economic laws of motion of modern capitalism in *Capital*. In this popularized talk we first review some basic economic laws through the lens of classical physics. We show the inner mechanism of financial systems and clarify the distinction between real and symbolic appropriation in capitalist economies. Finally, we illustrate how a small set of principles can give rise to a rich set of patterns that are observed empirically.

Paula Rauhala: "Reconstructing Hans-Georg Backhaus's 'Materialien zur Rekonstruktion der Marxschen Werttheorie'"

(Doctoral student in Philosophy, University of Tampere, Finland)

As Stefan Bollinger (2008) has showed, the movement of 1968 is often conceived erroneously as an exclusively western phenomenon.

Along with the 1968 movement an interest in Marxian theory, especially on Marx's critique of political economy revived – not only among the students and scholars of West-European countries such as France, Italy or West-Germany, but also in the countries of the Eastern bloc. After all, one of the inspirers of the new readings of the Capital was the publication the “Grundrisse” in 1939-41 in Soviet Union and 1953 in GDR.

One of the interesting meeting points for the researchers of both blocs was Germany, due to the common language of both German states. The West German Neue Marx Lektüre, and the Capital-renaissance among West German students and scholars from the 1960's onwards is usually understood in juxtaposition with the eastern Marxism-Leninism. This perception, based on the self-understanding of this school, might be accurate in some respects. However, it seems to me, that the eastern Marx-research influenced much more on its formation than it is usually understood.

At least the eminent forerunner of this school, Hans-Georg Backhaus knew the research of the Soviet bloc very well. In his key texts from the late 1960's and mid-1970's (Dialektik der Wertform, Materialien zur Rekonstruktion der Marxschen Werttheorie I, II, III) Backhaus comments on such an important East German scholars as Wolfgang Jahn, who studied extensively bourgeois economists views on Marx's theories of value and surplus value, the eminent economist Fritz Behrens, and Walter Tuchscheerer, who researched the genesis of Marx's Capital. Besides commenting on Soviet economics textbooks Backhaus comments on important Soviet philosopher Evald Ilyenkov's understanding of Marx's method and the work of Vitaly Vygotsky, known as a MEGA-editor, who also wrote important studies on the formation of Marx's Capital. How much these authors, among the others who are not mentioned here, influenced the formation of the Neue Marx-Lektüre, which still inspires many students of Marx and Marxism?

Jon Wittrock: "Marx within the Matrix: Marx, Human Enhancement, and the Other Community"

(Ph.D. in Political and Social Sciences, Södertörns högskola)

This paper considers responses to the relation between Marxism and evolutionary biology. It rejects both a Marxist rejectionism of evolutionary biology, as well as a rejection of Marx based upon a reading of the result of evolutionary biology, e.g. as presented by Peter Singer's “A Darwinian Left”. Rather, it argues, the evolved nature of human beings adds a layer of inherited structures, to which a Marxist ought to relate critically. To put it succinctly, biological nature becomes a layer of the “muck of the ages”, it is something to which we must relate critically, just as Singer argues. But in so doing, we need not reject Marx, or replace a Marxist left with a “Darwinian” left. There are two aspects to this. Firstly, descriptively, we may consider whether human, biological nature really puts the kind of constraints on potential socioeconomical arrangements that Singer implies, and if so why. Secondly, normatively, there is no reason to dismiss post-humanist or trans-humanist proposals to change or “enhance” human nature, genetically, technologically, or by

chemical means. What is important is to consider what kind of political agenda such strategies may serve, and what shared, social world they are supposed to create. Following from the above, we can restate the question which lies at the core of communism as a project of political change: which is that “other community” towards which we strive, and which ought to replace existing, capitalist sociopolitical arrangements?

Ca-2: Workshop – “Geopolitical Economy of New Imperialism” [in English]

Sunday 16 October, 14.30–16.45, Sandler

More than a century has passed since the writing of the first studies of imperialism and the beginning of the First World War. At the session, there will be analyzed the features of imperialism are preserved, and which was acquired a new look and why. There will discussed issues of global hegemonic power of capital and the virtual fictitious of financial capital and geopoliticeconomy contradictions. Particular attention will be paid to whether Russia still is imperialist power or no.

Moderator:

Per Leander, writer and journalist

Discussants:

Eva Björklund, Stockholm president of the Swedish-Cuban Association and editor of *Cuba*
Ali Esbati, Member of Parliament (Lft)

Presentations:

Samir Amin: “New imperialism: what is it?”

(Professor emeritus, Economic Science)

Natalia Yakovleva

(Researcher, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)

Alexandr Buzgalin: “Imperialism of 21st century: Russia and the West”

(Professor of Economic Sciences, Moscow State University)

Mikhail Voeikov: “Rosa Luxemburg imperialism and militarism: reactualization”

(Doctor of Economic Sciences, Russian Academy of Science)

Georgi Tsagolov: "China, Russia, the West: interimperialistic contradiction?"

(Professor of Economic Sciences, International University, Moscow)

Ca-3: "Kapitalismen 2050? En slutgiltig systemkris och sönderfall eller nya möjliga reformer för att forma en mera rättfärdig och hållbar världsordning" [på svenska]

Söndag 16 oktober, 14:30–16:45, Palme

Den kapitalistiska världsordning i neoliberal tappning som växte fram ur välfärdskapitalismens kris på 1970-talet, kännetecknades länge av ett starkt nästan oinskränkt självförtroende. Margaret Thatchers självsäkra fras, *There is no alternative (TINA)*, parafraserades i olika former både av politiker och liberala samhällsvetare. Efter mer än fyrtio år av neoliberal offensiv är denna övertygelse skakad i sina grundvalar. Världsekonomin har efter 2008 års finanskris inte återhämtat sig. Tillväxten i det kapitalistiska systemets kärnländer, Västeuropa och USA, är svag och återkommande tillbakagångar är legio.

Denna nya situation har på nytt rest frågan om det kapitalistiska systemets långsiktiga överlevnad. Diskussionen om långsiktiga systemiska utmaningar har förvisso inte saknats under den långa eran av neoliberal intellektuell dominans men haft en mera marginell position i den globala offentligheten. I dag har alternativa idéer marxistiska eller andra systemkritiska ansatser fått ett större genomslag. Stora strukturella snedbalanser, skenande ekonomiska klyftor och en klimatkris har skakat också delar av den globala kapitalistiska eliten.

Vi är en grupp forskare vid den ekonomisk-historiska institutionen i Stockholm, som på under en lång tid forskat och reflekterat över de långsiktiga strukturella problemen i den nuvarande kapitalistiska världsordningen. För att förstå dynamiken i den aktuella situationen menar vi att ett långt historiskt perspektiv är oundgängligt. Vårt fokus är kring hur de stora strukturella snedbalanserna påverkar geopolitiska fundamenta i världsordningen. Har den pågående finansialiseringen och med den ökade skuldsättning bara inneburit att systemet lever på lånad tid? Kommer en fördjupad klimatkris innebära att konflikter kring mat, vatten och energi att innebära en ökad risk för olika typer av väpnade konflikter och stora folkomflyttningar? Det är brännande frågor som bäst belyses i brett historisk perspektiv.

Panelen kommer att innehålla fem presentationer. Deltagarna spänner över ett brett spektrum på institutionen. Lars Ahland är doktorand. Hans forskning gäller frågor om skuldsättning i Sverige i ett hundraårsperspektiv. Matilda Baraibar är en nydisputerad forskare, som forskar om livsmedelssystem och förändringsmönster i det globala Syd. Rodney Edvisson är docent vid institutionen och har under en lång tid forskat om långsiktig ekonomisk utveckling i Sverige och globalt. Jonathan Feldman är också docent vid institutionen. Han har forskat om teknologisk förändring och vilka möjligheter en omställning till olika former av grön teknologi skapar. Ulf Jonsson är professor e.m. och

har under en lång tid forskat om globaliseringen av livsmedelssystemet och de geopolitiska konsekvenserna av olika typer av förändringsmönster. De enskilda bidragen presenteras i nedanstående abstracts.

Lars Ahnland: "Statskapitalism och finansialisering i Sverige 1900–2012"

I samband med finanskrisen 2008 och den kräftgång som präglade världsekonomin sedan dess har tre frågor dykt i den ekonomiska debatten: Hög skuldsättning, växande inkomstklyftor och en svag investeringsutveckling, trots rekordlåga räntor och enorma behov.

Det är även tre av de mest centrala trenderna i det som brukar kallas finansialisering, en process där finansiella frågor och hänsyn får en allt större roll inom samhällsekonomin. Frågan är då om dessa trender hänger ihop, och i sådana fall hur.

Ortodox teori bygger på antaganden om rationella aktörer, en förutsägbar framtid, och en ekonomi i jämvikt, där pengar och skulder inte har någon betydelse i det långa loppet. Med ett sådant synsätt är det svårt att förklara tiden efter 2008.

Heterodoxa ekonomer har i stället på jämvikt fokuserat på konflikt och förändring, och utgått från att monetära förhållanden har verklig betydelse. I enlighet med både Marxistisk och Keynesiansk tradition har efterfrågans roll i ekonomin stått i förgrunden hos dessa.

Enligt Marxistisk underkonsumtionsteori, med bland annat Rosa Luxemburg, Paul Baran och Paul Sweezy, så leder klassklyftor till ett underskott i konsumtionen i relation till kapitalackumuleringen. Enligt Luxemburg löstes det tidigare genom kolonialismen, genom vilken kapitalet exporterades till andra delar av världen. Enligt Baran och Sweezy var det främst den växande statsapparaten som sög upp kapitalackumuleringen under efterkrigstiden.

Från 1970-talet var så kapitalismen tvungen att evolvera in i en ny form – finansialisering. Somliga har uttryckt det som att den nu, i brist på nya marknader, tvingats kolonisera framtiden genom ökad skuldsättning.

Min forskning handlar sambandet mellan inkomstklyftor, investeringar och skuldsättning i Sverige. Jag kan genom tidsserie-ekonometri visa att det existerar både kort- och långsiktiga samband mellan dessa tre variabler i Sverige under perioden 1900-2012. Tre perioder kontrasteras mot varandra: Den turbulenta perioden 1900-1940, den stabila efterkrigstiden fram till cirka 1980, och finansialiseringen som skett därefter.

Matilda Baraibar: "Kritik av marknadens hegemoni från aktörer i systemets kärna"

Denna session behandlar frågan om det kapitalistiska systemets långsiktiga överlevnad. Diskussionen i detta papper tar avstamp i att konstatera att långsiktiga systemiska utmaningar, såsom utarmning och långsiktig förstörelse av ekosystemen, alltmer kommit att accepteras som en kronisk del av en ekonomi som styrs av marknadsmekanismer. De senaste decenniernas ökade finansialisering av ekonomin uttrycks ofta erbjuda de stora investeringsaktörerna ytterligare verktyg att kunna göra vinster, medan risker och kostnader

påläggs på andra och/ eller in i framtiden. Kostnaderna beskrivs också som i ökande grad "osynliga" för såväl investerare som slutkonsumenter, eftersom globaliseringen och finansialiseringen skapar en ökande distansiering mellan platserna där genomgripande marknadsbeslut tas och platserna för dess biofysiska och sociala konsekvenser. Denna distansiering uttrycker sig inte enbart geografiskt, utan även temporallt (t.ex. genom framtidskontrakt som handlas innan skörden ens är sådd).

Marknaders oförmåga att internalisera sociala och ekologiska kostnader uttrycks inte längre enbart av systemkritiska ansatser, utan har alltmer kommit att omfattas diskursivt av hela det globala etablissemanget. Marknader har visat sig sällan vara så självreglerande som de ekonomiska modellerna utgår ifrån, och de självreglerande mekanismerna har dessutom blivit allt svagare i takt med att varukedjorna generellt sett blivit allt längre och aktörerna involverade i värdekedjan allt fler. Mot bakgrund av denna växande kritik med vass udd mot tilltron till marknaders självreglerande förmåga, skulle man kunna förvänta sig att vi nu skulle gå mot en begränsning av handelsfriheten och en striktare statlig reglering av ekonomin för att värna om de naturresurser som nu i hastig takt hotas. Men ännu så länge så är det inte det vi ser. Istället hävdas allt oftare att lösningen på problemen är att marknadens aktörer själva antar frivilliga standarder som leder dem att inte enbart agera i vinstintresse, utan med samhällets bästa framför ögonen; en sorts privat marknadsreglering mekanismer. Dessa svar från marknadens aktörer (tillsammans med mäktiga internationella organisationer) kan ses som försök att rädda systemet, och slippa statlig inblandning.

Mitt bidrag kommer att titta närmre på det underliggande antaganden om hur marknader fungerar som återfinns i såväl FNs som Världsbankens reglerings initiativ av finansiella investeringar, samt diskutera vad dessa får för konsekvenser för det kapitalistiska systemet i framtiden.

Rodney Edvinsson: "Långa vågor i den kapitalistiska utvecklingen?"

Långa vågen eller cykel teorier menar att förutom den vanliga konjunkturcykeln genomgår kapitalismen längre cykliska svängningar, med uppgångsfaster på 20-30 år följt av nedgångsfaser av ungefär samma längd. Schumpeter är en av långa vågen teorin främsta förespråkare, men det finns också en marxistisk variant som företräds av Ernst Mandel (1923-1995), fokus för denna artikel. Teorin om långa vågor drogs Mandel till ungefär i mitten av 60-talet, då han förutspådde att efterkrigstidens långa våg skulle gå in i en ny nedgångsfas. Artikeln är kritisk till de deterministiska antagen som Mandel, liksom andra långa-vågen-teoretiker gör. Dock, enligt långa vågen teorin skulle vi i dagsläget var inne i en längre fas av nedgång i kapitalism, som troligtvis kommer följas av en uppgång senare. 30-tals-depressionen, 70-tals-krisen och 2008 års finanskris är alla delar av ett längre cykliskt mönster för kapitalismen. Mycket talar för att kapitalismen sedan 2007 har varit i en nedgångsfas. Exempelvis ligger industriproduktionen i Sverige idag på en nivå som är lägre än på slutet av 1990-talet, trots en stark befolkningsökning. Det som är intressant med Mandels teori är att han tar in politiska faktorer, och menar att det också måste skapas politiska förutsättningar för att kapitalismen ska gå in en länge uppgångsfas. För att den

nuvarande nedgångsfasen skulle brytas behöver kapitalismen med andra ord genomgå stora politiska omvälvningar, liknande andra världskriget och Sovjetunionens kollaps. Han är dock fortfarande determinist genom att han menar att varje uppgångsfas följas inom 20-25 år av en nedgångsfas, d v s kapitalismen runt år 2050 genomgå en ny strukturell kris.

Jonathan Feldman: "Why the Politics of Design is the Missing Intermediate Variable in Crisis Theory"

Marx and Marxist theorists suggest that economic and environment crises create the possibilities for social change. For Leninists, the intermediate variable between crisis and social change is the political party. For Marx, sometimes the variable is the revolutionary organization of workers as in the Paris Commune. The idea that crises or radical parties automatically create consciousness has been questioned, however. Thinkers like Georg Lucács and parts of the Frankfurt School suggested that "bourgeois hegemony" created barriers to consciousness, although Herbert Marcuse suggested that some subjects could be more immune and proactively exploit the link between crisis and consciousness. As Marcuse explained during the New Left period: "Nothing is more un-bourgeois than the American student movement, while nothing is more bourgeois than the American worker." While some saw ethnic "minorities" as causal agents, others like Paul Goodman warned in 1967 that such groups were often considered superfluous (if not disposable) by elites in the emerging high technology society.

How do we resolve these various debates? In Marxist theory, people are free to choose in circumstances that are given with some Marxists emphasizing determinism (or political economy) and others free choice (or voluntarism). The changes in institutions (structures) creating possibilities for change, the design of how free will expresses itself, what I call "the Politics of Design" can influence the degree to which social movements exploit crisis and effect change. Alternative designs of social movements indicate how social movements themselves (or parties) are *dependent variables*. Alternative designs of production platforms show how subjective shaping of objective conditions create resilient spaces for ecological and economic transformation. I will explain this politics of design and implications for crisis theory.

Ulf Jonsson: "Kampen om mat och vatten – en källa till långsiktig instabilitet och möjligt sönderfall"

Att säkra en någorlunda stabil och säker livsmedelsförsörjning har varit och förblir ett centralt element i den globala geopolitiken under hela den långa kapitalistiska eran. Förespråkarna för en neoliberal livsmedelsordning hävdade att enbart ett system med relativt oreglerad handel kunde en långsiktig livsmedelsförsörjning säkras. Den föreställningen fick en allvarlig knäck under priskrisen 2008/09. Krisen försvårades av kortsiktig spekulation, men det finns mera långsiktiga hot, som kan underminera det globala livsmedelssystemets stabilitet och tillgången på mat för de allra fattigaste.

Vi står inför en situation, där en växande befolkning skall försörjas med krympande arealer, mindre vatten och mindre kemiska insatsvaror. Mitt paper kommer att diskutera hur växande motsättningar kring livsmedelstillgången kan skapa systemhotande kriser och växande geopolitiska instabileter.

Ca-4: "Capitalism in 2050 – Expansion, Destruction, Transition?" [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 11.15–13.00, Hedén

Jamie Woodcock: "Understanding digital labour: between autonomy and automation"

(Ph.D., Cass Business School, London)

This paper focuses on the concept of digital labour and how work is being transformed by new technologies. It therefore engages with the first theme of the conference: Capitalism in 2050. In particular, it draws attention to the contradictions of new forms of work, caught between the possibilities of autonomy and automation. The role of technology is interrogated, along with the shifting balance between labour and capital. In order to explore this phenomenon, the paper draws on a heterodox Marxist approach, taking inspiration from Autonomist Marxism and the disparate tradition of workers' inquiry. Empirical examples are taken from an ongoing multi/interdisciplinary project on digital creativity, covering the entertainment and video games industries. These illustrate key tendencies in the current moment and suggest how these dynamics may unfold in the future. The arguments follows from the pressing need to refresh Marxist(s) theories in relation to the changing nature of work and structure of capitalism. This does not only have implications for academic theory, but also for emergent practices. Digital labour itself has been the subject of a range of different theorisations – some wildly optimistic and others depressingly pessimistic – and the contribution of this paper seeks to chart a critical path through (and potentially point beyond) these conceptual issues. Rather than fixating on the Marxological and dry debates, this paper seeks to engage with a range of sources to rejuvenate and push the theory into conversation with new forms of practice.

Güven Savul: "Can Immaterial Labour be an "Emancipatory Subject"? Some Findings concerning the ICT Sector in Turkey"

(PhD in Labour Economics and Industrial Relations)

This paper aims to critically evaluate the argument of the pioneering role of immaterial labourers as a skilled section of working class by referring to the Turkish data. A significant part of the contemporary literature on working class claims that immaterial labour can have the role as the proletariat in the 19th Century. Such concepts as "immaterial labour", "affectual labour", "digital labour" etc., are used to define the current labour practices,

those which are strongly associated with immaterial commodity production. Especially, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt (2008) claim that there is a significant immaterialisation in the production processes. Negri and Hardt emphasize that the intensification of the digitalized production processes and the number of the labourers who are employed in these fields in the core-capitalist countries paved the way for such claims mentioned above.

On the other hand, there is a remarkable counter-argument about the immaterialisation of the production processes. For example, H., Münkler (2011) criticizes the tendency to focus on the immaterial labour in the core capitalist countries instead of the material labour performing in so-called Third World countries, severely exploited by the capitalists under miserable conditions.

Along with Münkler's perspective, Alberto Toscano (2011) also remains distant to the concepts such as immaterial labour and so on. He underlines that, although the labouring practices have transformed through digitalisation of the production, the logic of exploitation and the real subsumption of capital over labour remain the same as emphasized in Marx's works.

In the light of pro and counter arguments about the immaterial labour concept, this paper will focus on the labourers who are employed in the immaterial activities (like software specialists, coders, character and concept designers etc.) of the ICT Sector in Turkey, and try to understand what the potential capacity of these labourers in taking over an emancipatory role in a rising moment of the class struggle is.

Carina Guyard & Anne Kaun: "Workfulness – Disconnection is the new black"

(Senior lecturers in media and communication studies, Södertörn University)

Telenor, one of the major telecommunication companies in Scandinavia, recently introduced the notion of *workfulness* adapting the well-established idea of mindfulness to the workplace. Developed in collaboration with brain researcher Katarina Gospic, workfulness is aimed at companies that are working in digital connected working environments at high-speed. Workfulness encompasses strategies of disconnection for the employees to enhance focus and efficiency including mobile and e-mail free work hours and technology-free meetings.

The article seeks to investigate the concept of workfulness as part of an emerging trend towards disconnection in digital media industries. While earlier workflow models of companies within the digital economy emphasized increased connection, disconnection has now become a new way to organize the work of stressed laborers.

Drawing on a diverse set of materials ranging from a critical textual analysis of Telenor's workfulness guidebook to the analysis of promotional videos as well as interviews with key persons at Telenor and managers at companies that have implemented workfulness into their workflows, we are investigating how disconnection is constructed as a product that relies on the value accumulation through the dispossession of non-usage. At the same time we are investigating why particularly online technology-intensive companies such as Telenor are forerunners in the field of digital disconnection.

While earlier studies of the digital economy have focused on connectivity rather than disconnection, we suggest that there are new trends emerging that actively incorporate non-usage into the realm of digital economy and value production

Daler Dzhabborov: “Limits of Market economy in context of new society of realm of freedom”

(Senior researcher, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)

Natalia Yakovleva: “Education as basis of new economy: political economy view”

(Researcher, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)

Cri-1: “The Platform for Transnational Social Strike” [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 12.00–13.30, Kata

There is a discussion going on right now in Europe about social strike. In many countries the right to strike is under attack, labour rights are eroding and jobs are becoming increasingly insecure. In early October last year, a meeting was held in Poznan, Poland, which brought together organizations, trade unions and workers' collectives from many European countries. The discussions were about how to overcome the division between those who have the right to strike or not, how to use the strike as a political weapon to capture the diversity of struggles in society and how therefore a transnational social strike can backfire capital across borders and break the chains of production.

The 1st of March this year, actions were coordinated in around twenty European countries. An international action day was held against borders and for migrant rights.

How are struggles in production linked to struggles within circulation and reproduction? Is it possible to organize the non-organisable?

In Paris this autumn in October, it is time for the next step in the process. In Paris where we have seen the resistance against *Loi Travail* reshape the boundaries of traditional organization and the rise of the movement *Nuit Debout*.

Soon, on 21–23 October, another platform meeting is going to be held in Paris – how is it possible for us in Sweden to take part in this process?

More information: [http: //www.transnational-strike.info/](http://www.transnational-strike.info/)

Eleonora Cappuccilli, Precarious disconnections, Bologna, Italy

Alessio Lunghi, Plan C, London, England

Magda Malinowska, Worker’s initiative, Poznan, Polen

Sylvain Alias, Sud Solidaires, Paris, France

Moderators: Sarah Kim and Julia Lindblom, Allt åt Alla Stockholm

(Det är möjligt att ställa frågor på svenska, som översätts till engelska.)

Cri-2: "Kritiska teorier, plattformar och rörelser" [på svenska]

Lördag 15 oktober, 11:15–12:30, Beskow

Adrián Groglopo: "Teoriernas geopolitik och den liberala kunskapshegemonin: den svenska modellen" (under konstruktion)

(PhD i sociologi, Göteborgs universitet)

– – Uppdaterat abstract. – –

Svensk social kritisk teori har i de senaste decennierna följt den produktion av USA:s – och i mindre utsträckning Englands – social teori i frågor som berör ras/etnicitet, kön/sexualitet och klass. Detta behöver analyseras utifrån:

1) kapitalismens senaste fas, dvs den nyliberala med start efter Sovjets unionens fall, som erövrade den globala marknaden via transnationella företag, en aggressivare roll av de globala juridiska-ekonomiska mega-institutioner som Världsbanken och IMF att "utveckla" sydländer med nya lån och "Adjustment programs", dvs en omladdning av de beroende förhållanden mellan Nord och Syd; USA:s energi intressen i den globala syd som visades genom krig och ockupation av nya territorier, samt försvagning av arbetarnas rättigheter runt om i världen, särskilt i den globala syd. Detta innebär att på det ekonomiska fältet sker en mängd privatiseringar av offentliga resurser och services; på det politiska fältet introducerades politisk teknokrati som överförde den praktiska makten till politiskt sakkunniga, lobbyister och administration (däri en utveckling av New Public Management i statliga institutioner) och/eller åtstramningspolitiken; på fältet kunskapsproduktion inom högskolor och universitet introducerades en ny vision om makt som en individuell fråga mellan individer och där sanningen beskrevs som relativ, till förfoga för olika tolkningar. Denna punkt behöver specificeras av följande delar:

a) Det hävdar att det finns bara olika tolkningar om vad som är sann. Detta var en introducerande av postmodernism som epistemologisk grund för samhällsvetenskapen, där makten inte längre kunde placeras på konkreta institutioner. Makten var ständig flyttande. Michel Foucault intar en viktig plats i den svenska samhällsvetenskapliga kanonen. Han till skillnad från marxisterna som är intresserade av att veta vilka som utövar makten, tar Foucault plats som den filosof som är intresserad av hur makten utövas. Tolkningen av Foucault som utgår från en postmodernistisk epistemologisk grund, bidrar till individualisering av maktrelationer och förmörkar den borgliga statens och ideologins centrala roll i hur makten konstitueras och konkretiseras, dvs. det skapar en decentralisering av subjektet från det kapitalistiska systemet och imperialistiska intressen. Frågan om imperialismen och kapitalismen förskjuts till en annan nivå av analys.

b) Detta görs under en tid där media får en mer central plats i maktens korridorer men också med vissa ekonomiska och politiska intressen (privatiseringar av media institutioner). Frågan om sanningen ligger nu på och fördelas ständig via dessa mediekkanaler. Allt annat

är rent tolkning. Som du kan välja efter egen smak. Som ni vet, om det sägs tusen gånger per dag via media så skapas det en sanning kring frågan, dvs. det spelar på att skapa konsensus. Och som vi vet blir den som har ”sanningen” och säger den många gånger så skapas också ideologi.

c) Detta skapade ett politiskt vakuum där olika grupper som historiskt blivit förtryckta på olika sätt började organisera sig på en civil samhällsnivå. Det är mest den feministiska rörelsen som politiserar och försöker omvandla detta politiska vakuum. Inom feminismen som kunskapsfält görs också en delning av ”olika vågor”, där den marxistiska feminismen placeras som en analys som inte längre är tillräcklig progressiv för den konstruerade ”linjära utvecklingen” av västerländsk tänkande som anammas i den feministiska teorin. Här sker en delning i feministisk teori: en poststrukturalistisk, en positivistisk och en postkolonial. Den marxistiska feminismen blev därmed en god och sympatisk analys som placerades som en kvarleva i feministisk teorins historia. Trots det omformuleras marxism inom postkolonial feministisk teori, nästan på samma sätt som marxismen omformulerades under postkolonial teori, dock med vissa problem.

d) Postkolonial teori i Västvärlden: Med en om-konfigurering av social kritisk teori efter Sovjetunionens fall började med krystad frammarsch introduceras vissa av de författare och tänkare som hade setts av etablissemangen i Europa och USA - ett decennium tidigare - som våldsbejakare (märk att antikoloniala och antiimperialistiska intellektuella som C.R.L. James, Frantz Fanon, Aïme Césaire m.m. var högaktuella bland vissa grupper, t.ex. the Black Panthers i USA men även i andra antiimperialistiska rörelser i Sydländerna – Latinamerika, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Egypten, Moçambique, Congo m.m. - under 60- och 70 talet). För att kunna bli framtagna som teoretiska resonemang i både USA och Europa behövdes en reell av-marxifiering och en avpolitisering av dessa tänkare. Den främsta fall blev Frantz Fanon som avkläddes av sitt politiska grund och ställningstagande. Trots att Frantz Fanon gjorde en omformulering av den europeiska marxistiska teorin till en av sydländernas koloniala tillstånd (det gjorde också Ho Chi Minh, men han blir censurerad/diskvalificerad i postkolonialteori för sitt ställningstagande mot USAs imperialismen – det pågår under den tiden en medveten propaganda för USAs viktiga ställning i den postkalla krigets värld. Nu är USA den enda goda aktören i världen), blir i Europa den figur som debatteras och citeras flitigt inom kritisk social teori. Hur kommer det sig att tio år tidigare hade han bannlyst i europeiska akademiska miljöer? Hur blev den processen av avpolitisering och av-marxifiering av hans person och av hans texters? Han visades endast som en intellektuell som avkläddes rasismens och det koloniala förtryckets psykologi och diskursiva metoder. Punkt slut. (Hans politiska manifest - Jordens fördömda – blir knappast debatterade i akademiska miljöer, utan den dissekerades med utdragna citat med inget politiskt ramverk). Det blev en s.k. vit-tvättning eller för-borgligande av texter som under en tid av antikolonial och antiimperialistisk kamp (som också inbegriper klasskamp) betydde frigörelse från klass/ras och könsförtryck. Vissa texter som dem av Frantz Fanon kunde renodlas i Europa - för och av - den borgliga progressiva intellektuella klassen som omfamnar vissa grunder i marxismen, men som inte vågar stå för det i sitt intellektuella arbete. Inget ont i det. Det är känt att marxismen inom vetenskapen har marginaliserats/bearbetats av borgerligheten sedan 90-talet som en ”extrem” ideologi som

inte har en plats i deras institutioner som producerar teori, dvs. inom universitetet. Postkolonial teori har också varit selektiv. Så länge det handlade om författare som inte betonade klasskampen var allt ok. Rasism och även sexismen kunde tas upp. Men teoretiker som också ingår i den antikomoniala och antiimperialistiska kampen under 1900-talet fick inte vara med, t.ex. Ho Chi Minh, Võ Nguyên Giáp, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse Tung och även Vladimir Lenin, Yasir Arafat, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Patrice Lumumba, Thomas Sankara; och många andra som även fanns tidigare än alla dessa namn t.ex. Jose Mariategui, Simon Bolivar, Jose Martí, W.E.B Du Bois, Rosa Luxemburg, Flora Tristan, Deodora Roca, Camilo Torres m.m. Så det har blivit en selektiv introducering av post-kolonialism som tar avstamp i texter som användes av anti-imperialistiska och antikomoniala rörelser i s.k. tredje världen, som avpolitiserades för att i samma väva renodla dem i ett Europa och i detta fall Sverige, där rasism präglar samhällsorganisering, kunskap och politik, men utan att beröra kapitalismens nya formering av klass-subjekt genom ras/kön. Post-kolonialismen blir i så fall en ren läsning av kategorier och maktförhållanden som inte utmanar den kapitalistiska produktionsförhållanden, varken i Sverige, Europa eller i resten av världen. Och den undviker framför allt en analys av de fortsatta imperialistiska krig som förs i demokratins namn runt om i den globala syd.

e) Det är symptomatiskt den marxistiska tystnaden som har präglat svenska universitet under 90- och 2000-talet. Om man läser litteratur producerade innan den tiden präglas många samhällsvetenskapliga studier av en marxistisk anda. Det har funnits nästan en total rensning av marxistiska texter och läromedel i svenska universitet, särskilt inom grund utbildningar. Marx blir inte ens en del av den vetenskapsteoretiska grunden som erbjuds av svenska vetenskapsteoretiska författare. Om det görs då blir det inom ett potpurri av vetenskapsteoretiska inriktningar. Välj själv eftersom det är en fråga om tolkningar, eller?

f) Intellectuella från grupper som sågs som de andra i samhällets rasistiska hierarki har försök återskapa maktteorier som kunde lyfta fram - i denna tid av postmoderna kunskapsfilosofier och positivismens maktordning - en förståelse av maktrelationer som utmanade rasistiska teorier inom feminism, positivism och den europeiska marxismen, och som utmynnade i frågan om intersektionalitet. Skapande av identitets politik utifrån kapitalismens nyliberala metod genom att atomisera grupper och villkora solidariteten mellan dem är förmodligen en aspekt som har producerat vad vi idag kallar identitetspolitik (där kön och ras används som markörer för etablering av särskilda grupper och deras politiska strävan). Identitetspolitik som vi känner till den - dvs. motståndsskapande genom kön, ras/ethnicitet och sexualitet - behöver inte vara på andra sidan socialismens politiska projekt. Oavsett vad marxisterna anser om den politiska kampen som förs idag utifrån s.k. identitetspolitik, är det ändå ett sociologiskt faktum. Ett faktum i den politiska verkligheten, men också ett faktum av motstånd som kan ses som ett symptom av ett politisk eurocentrisk marxism som förlorat politisk och kunskapsmässig kraft sedan Sovjetunionens fall. Intersektionalitet, lika mycket eller ännu mer än postkolonialismen, har också behandlats av en postmodern regim som bara tjänar konstruktionen av nya borgliga klasser som inte utmanar kapitalismens omvandlingar. Det är därför av stort intresse, eller borde vara, en om-konfigurering av social kritisk teori, som intersektionalitet, med grunder i marxistisk epistemologi. Det är av stort behov inom social kritisk teori en förståelse av både en

marxistisk intersektionell analys - inte en liberal som utgår och konstruerar kategoriers regimer - och en förståelse av en marxistisk analys av nyliberalismens civilisatoriska projekt, som går ut på att söndra allianser och solidaritet mellan grupper. Det är dags att den europeiska marxismen lämnar sin dogmatiska och ekonomistiska linje – den eurocentriska politiska identiteten - och inkluderar den globala syds (som Boaventura de Sousa Santos beskriver den: alla de som i den globala syd eller nord som har blivit offer för kolonialismen och imperialismen) analyser som även utmanar den globala och lokala kapitalismens olika metoder.

Mikael Bernardini: "Marxism av och för förtryckta – förklarande och frigörande teori för en kämpande rörelse som alternativ till bl.a. intersektionalitet"

(Doktorand i straffrätt, Göteborgs universitet)

Följande bidrag behandlar teori, teoretikerns position och förtryckta gruppers gemensamma kamp mot kapitalismen som vägen till verklig frigörelse. Syftet är att visa på ett kämpande marxistiskt alternativ till bl.a. intersektionalitet/identitetspolitik.

Intersektionell analys synliggör utsatta grupper, men missar att diskriminering är de styrandes sätt att splittra grupper inom arbetarklassen som alla förlorar på kapitalismen. Till skillnad från marxismen manar inte intersektionell analys/identitetspolitik till gemensam kamp för bättre levnadsvillkor eller mot det som är förtryckets grund, kapitalismen.

Identitetspolitiken kan tänkas vara en produkt av rådande samhällsförhållanden där traditionella arbetarorganisationer skapat, eller bevarat, ett samhälle med ökande klassklyftor, maktlöshet och försämrade välfärd. En realitet som särskilt slår mot de grupper som framförs i de intersektionella perspektiven. En alternativ förklaring är att vissa s.k. marxistiska perspektiv inte har involverat alla förtryckta grupper, en involvering som är avgörande för ett samhälle fritt från förtryck.

Vad gäller en frigörande marxistisk teori bör teoretikerns position, privilegier och byråkratisering diskuteras. En privilegierad person drivs inte till att bryta med systemet utan försvarar sin position och anammar teorier som legitimerar positionen. Tidiga analyser av privilegier och byråkratisering har gjorts av bl.a. Karl Marx och Rosa Luxemburg. De pekar på att privilegier i form av höga statliga positioner och högre löner jämfört med vanliga arbetare leder till byråkratisering. Något som därefter resulterat i försvar av kapitalismen. De traditionella arbetarorganisationernas högsta företrädare lever numer lyxliv, vilket kan förklara deras gynnande av näringsliv, närmanden till krigsförande organisationer, ökande klassklyftor samt svek gentemot de mest utsatta grupperna. Privilegier kan samtidigt vara nyckeln till varför bl.a. Syrizas ledning svek sina vallöften.

Marxister utan privilegier kan bli en naturlig del av de grupper inom arbetarklassen som förvägras privilegier – grupper som på grund av sin prekära situation är tvungna att göra sig av med kapitalismens förtryckande bojar. Det är en viktig lärdom för framtida vänsterkoalitioner och partier.

Stefan Schedin: "Ideologiska skiften och klasspolitik"

(Fil.dr. i sociologi, Göteborgs universitet)

Under 2000-talet har det skett viktiga ideologiska förskjutningar i svensk opinion, med en tydlig politisk mobilisering runt familjen, nationen och traditionella värden. Teman som brukar hänföras till den så kallade liberala-auktoritära politiska axeln, till skillnad från den vänster-högerskala som alltid spelat en avgörande roll i svensk partipolitik. Det har bland annat inneburit att frågor om arbete, bostäder och resursfördelning fått mindre utrymme i samhällsdebatten, medan andra ämnen – främst flyktingpolitiken – alltmer dominerat den politiska agendan. Här ska understrykas att landets flyktingmottagande och den så kallade flyktingkrisen troligen spelat mindre roll för de ideologiska förändringarna. Visserligen är såväl auktoritära som invandringsfientliga åsikter framträdande hos det snabbast växande partiet under senare år, men åsiktsförskjutningarna är som sagt äldre än så och dessutom har SD:s valframgångar skett samtidigt som flyktingmotståndet faktiskt minskat. Det är givetvis angeläget för progressiva krafter att finna förklaringar till de ideologiska förändringarna, inte minst för möjligheten att åstadkomma en politisk mobilisering utifrån klassiska vänsterståndpunkter.

Här torde en klassanalys vara en fruktbar utgångspunkt. I den aktuella undersökningen studeras därför sambanden mellan social klass och politiska åsikter på såväl höger-vänsterskalan som den liberala-auktoritära dimensionen och vilka politiska frågor och attityder som fått minskad eller ökad betydelse under perioden. Studien använder sig av ISSP-data (International Social Survey Programme) från enkätstudier med representativa urval av invånare i Sverige, som också gör det möjligt att mäta attitydförändringar över tid. Resultaten relateras till institutionella och strukturella samhällsförändringar, framför allt sådana som kan hänföras till politiska beslut rörande arbetsmarknad, välfärd och fördelningspolitik.

EC-1: "Eco-Socialism and Climate" [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 15.15–16.45, Sandler

Ionnis Rigkos: "Democracy, the Autonomous Struggle for Achieving Sustainability"

(Master in Human Ecology, Lund University)

This is a transdisciplinary PhD project, a critical research, that deals with the question of how and why the civilizations of modernity construct social realities that fundamentally and institutionally are socio-politically unequal, unsustainable and that ecologically reproduce unequal exchange of human, social and environmental resources and information. Moreover, it tries to position an alternative pathway for radical and democratic transformation through a critical reformulation of "the project of autonomy" connected with the struggle for the commons. This PhD project is both theoretical and practical; a

qualitative and quantitative analysis of primary and secondary data collected from a case study in Skouries of Halkidiki, Greece. Thus, this project aims not only to develop the struggle of democratic movements, but also to expose the endless possibilities humanity have, to re-imagine an autonomous present that can lead to a sustainable future. Following the conferences' plan, I can trace my primarily focus on the main sections of "Capitalism 2050", "Eco-socialism and Climate" and "Critical theories, platforms and movements".

Elmar Flatschart: "The socio-ecological crisis and the state: Lessons from the German state-derivation debate"

(Ph.D., Lecturer at the Department of International Development, University of Vienna)

Eco-Marxism is certainly amongst the most vibrantly debated expansions of 'original' historical materialism. It brings nature into a very 'socially-oriented' paradigm and as such helps us to understand how debates about natural limits are socially mediated and indeed relevant for what is best grasped as a combined societal and ecological crisis.

The German scholarship on these issues is rich and especially draws on the Frankfurt-School tradition and its theorization of society-nature relations. It elucidates the peculiarity of the 'logic of mediation' between substance and form in modern patriarchal Capitalism and is able to link them to sophisticated crisis-theoretical accounts as the work of Ulrich Brand, Christoph Görg or Elmar Altvater has shown.

While this scholarship shares with the broader German debate a special attention for economic form-analysis, it has not yet sufficiently endeavoured to link form-analytical state theory with questions of the socio-ecological crisis.

In my paper, I will argue that a closer look at the German state derivation debate and its assumptions on the form-induced limits of state intervention are of very great interest for studies of the combined societal and ecological crisis. This considers the fact even the most sophisticated Eco-Marxist accounts of the relation between 'substantial' and 'formal' aspects of crisis tend to externalize the state/the political. It is seen as an agent of salvation that can bring about change or is at least approached as a (neutral) terrain for struggles about environmental and economic issues. The German state derivation debate has convincingly shown that is necessary to see the state as expression of the political form, which is itself closely related to the economic form (and as we would say: the broader society-nature relations it facilitates).

Although the political realm produces the impressions of contingency and manipulability, the state is not 'outside' of the crisis, but it is part of it. As such, it is liable to systemic limits that are the result of the form-genesis and thus yielding activity limits for emancipatory transformation. I will argue that this can fruitfully be applied to issues of the combined societal and ecological crisis like the question of the (form-immanent) possibility of a transition to a non-fossil energy system.

Davor Mujezinovic: “Marxist ecological economics in theory and practice: industrial metabolic rifts and unequal ecological exchange”

(Doctoral student, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University)

This presentation will be based on my PhD project, which deals with the global stream of e-waste and the social and environmental consequences of the same. My intention is to present the theoretical framework I am using, which represents an advancement of currently existing models of Marxian ecological economics. As such it builds mainly on the work of Burkett and Foster on the development of Marxian ecological economics, but also more generally on critical approaches to political ecology and environmental conflicts, such as those of Martinez-Alier.

As Foster, Burkett and others have shown, elements crucial to understanding the nature of capitalism, such as the drive towards growth, the source of profit as well as other mechanisms and forces that are endemic to it, are missed by mainstream ecological economics. This shortcoming weakens both the explanatory and predictive power of the theory. A synthesis with the concepts, tools and categories of the Marxian tradition allows for an expanded and more accurate analysis. Yet there are areas of such a Marxian ecological economics that remain underdeveloped.

I intend to outline my development of a socially and politico-economically embedded Material Flows Analysis, based on a materialist dialectic approach, which hence combines Marxist and industrial economic approaches to the study of metabolism and bridges a major gap in the existing research. I also include the kind of combination of unequal ecological exchange and metabolic rift analysis that was first suggested by Foster and Hollman, which in my framework is more fully developed with a clear practical application in mind. Lastly, I maintain a continuous focus on class relations in order to highlight the ecosystem as a site of class struggle.

Lauri Lahikainen: “Climate Change and the Irresponsible Elite: Epistemological and Practical Perspectives”

(Doctoral student, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tampere)

According to a Richard Heede (2014) two thirds of Greenhouse gas emissions can be traced to only 90 companies. These companies are hierarchically structured, many of their senior decision makers know each other, and one person may serve in the board of more than one of them. These people through their connections and financial resources, can also influence the policies of nation states. However, the global elite have done very little to use their influence positively in the climate change mitigation efforts. Some of them have even funded think tanks that produce climate denialist propaganda.

Recent research suggest that the elite tend to take environmental problems less seriously than others, be averse to systems thinking, be unconcerned with long term consequences and empathize less with distant others. In terms of environmental virtue ethics and epistemology, the elite tend to have vices rather the virtues needed for being responsible

agents concerning climate change. Since high achievers tend to be respected and imitated, many non-elite individuals may be vulnerable for similar corruption.

In my paper I will suggest that Marxist and Gramscian concepts can illuminate the contradictory position of the elite, where despite having most resources and the best access to knowledge the elite position seems to form bad doxastic agents. Marx argued that a capitalist is “capital personified [and] capital has one single life impulse, the tendency to create value and surplus-value.” In performing the imperatives of capital and viewing the world through that imperative, the capitalist will have to disregard as "externalities" the pernicious effects of accumulation on the planet. This is intensified in financial capitalism, where economic decisions are further removed from their material effects. Gramscian hegemony theory, in turn, can help us understand how the perspective of the elite gets disseminated and taken up in society at large, and how it can be opposed. The criticism of the elite epistemology may also show, through “the labor of the negative”, what alternative ways of knowing might look like.

EC-2: Interactive session – “Corporate Conquistadors and Earth Defenders: Strategies of Dominance and Modes of Resistance around Extractivism in Latin America” [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 15.15–16.45, Beskow

(Maddy Ryle, Communications Director, The Democracy Center, Cochabamba/San Francisco)

Extractivism - whether in its original or 'neo' forms - remains the central feature of most Latin American economies. Energy extraction in turn drives mineral extraction, and governments in the region keen to attract FDI continue to open up new areas to exploitation. The past decade of now-disappearing 'leftist' governments in the region has done nothing to shift this dynamic or present real alternatives to the established paradigm of economic development, despite the heavy social and environmental toll that a hyper-extractive global economy wreaks on dispossessed communities and their territories. Accumulation of capital and power by transnational corporations looking for new land and markets to exploit is at the heart of this situation. Meanwhile the region has become one of the most dangerous on the planet for those resisting extractive projects. Join Maddy Ryle from the Bolivia-based Democracy Center for an interactive session in which we will explore, through the stories of some of these earth defenders, the strategies that corporations are using to tighten their influential grip over extractive policies in the region and bulldoze through the concerns of local populations.

Med-1: “Digital labour, Marx and Dallas Smythe” [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 15.15–16.30, Palme

In 1977, almost 40 years ago, Dallas Smythe published his seminal article “Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism”, in which he introduced the notions of audience labour and the audience commodity.

This session asks: What is the relevance of “audience labour” for the political project of Marxism and the analysis of online participants and user generated content in the age of commercial social media such as Facebook, YouTube and Google? Does it matter for Marxism as a political project if the analysis of digital capitalism is based on the concepts of surplus-value or rent?

Accepted papers:

Sara Bannerman: “Reimagining Crowdfunding: Towards the democratization of capital in music”

(Ph.D., Department of Communication Studies and Multimedia, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario)

Crowdfunding, the act of soliciting funding for a particular project through an open call, often (but not necessarily) through an online platform, is promoted as a tool for mobilizing the small-scale funds necessary to create more opportunities to more people—fostering more widespread grassroots production amongst those who might not otherwise have access to the necessary start-up capital to carry out their projects and ventures (Bannerman, 2013). Crowdfunding, it is claimed, shifts capital allocation from “the province of a relatively small and entrenched minority” to something guided by and available to “the collective wisdom of our now 7 billion people” (Lawton & Marom, 2013, 1). At the same time, crowdfunding is critiqued for contributing to the casualization of labour, reducing resources and supports available to creators (Agrawal, Catalini, and Goldfarb, 2013).

This paper focuses on crowdfunding of musical projects, and examines empirically the claims just outlined: does crowdfunding make capital more widely available in the context of musical production? It focuses on musical projects funded through crowdfunding platform Kickstarter (<http://www.kickstarter.com>), launched in 2009.

In the context of crowdfunding cultural production or projects, the question of whether crowdfunding makes capital available to those who might not otherwise have access to it is open to empirical verification. This paper sets out a conceptual framework for, and begins, this analysis. Situated within the field of critical media and information studies (Fuchs, 2011), it analyzes the power and domination structures of the media by: 1) drawing on critical social theory; 2) conducting empirical research situated within the critical and

transformative paradigms; and 3) articulating alternatives that challenge relations of domination in cultural funding generally, and crowdfunding in particular. It asks:

- Does crowdfunding significantly democratize access to financial capital for musicians?
- Does crowdfunding make accessible cultural and social forms of capital to the musicians who make use of it?

Taking the answers to these questions into account, this paper discusses alternative crowdfunding models, including both the real and the possible, as part of a project of imagining and reimagining alternatives for communal production.

Marcos Dantas: “Digital labour, Marx and Dallas Smythe”

(Prof. Dr., Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)

Assuming the audience labour hypothesis, my paper will discuss that this audience labour power occupies his time producing, in immediate interaction (time tending to zero limit) with workers directly employed by any media firm, an "environment" that is necessary for the communication between the advertisers and their markets. Examples: the time segment "sold" by TV channels to advertisers, or keywords auctioned by Google.

Because those time or space don't have the material qualities of the commodity-form, the retention of the value created by that labour relationship will only be possible if the unit of capital can "enclose" the environment. Each TV channel must to control an exclusive electromagnetic frequency band; the copyright ensures the Google exclusivity control over his website, and so. So the "owners" of the "enclosure" may impose a right of access to advertisers firms and charge for it. Theoretically, it is a model to create *differential rents* very similar to that discussed by Marx in *The Capital*, Book III, Section 6. I call it *informational rents* because we have to consider an very important difference from the rent of land studied by Marx: this is not about to monopolize any natural resource, but to monopolize the value directly created by both paid and absolutely unpaid live work tied in this relationship.

Med-2: “Exploitation 2.0: Class and Exploitation in the Digital Age” [in English]

Sunday 16 October, 10.00–11.15 and 11.30–12.45, Sandler

Capitalism is a dynamic, dialectical system that changes in order to maintain its fundamental structures of exploitation. The rise of the computer, digitisation and the Internet's role in the economy and society has brought about changes of class structures.

This session asks: How have class and exploitation changed in the age of digital media? How can we analyse unpaid activities on commercial platforms with the help of class and other concepts such as the multitude and exploitation? What is the role of conflicts and struggles between users and the owners of corporate Internet platforms (such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, LinkedIn, Weibo, Amazon, Pinterest, Tumblr, Flickr, etc.). Can peer production and non-commercial, alternative online media challenge capitalism? What are the implications of digital Marxism and media Marxism for Marxist theory and socialist politics?

Panel A (Med-2A, 10.00–11.15)

Derek Hrynyshyn: “The audience commodity and class consciousness”

(Ph.D. in Political Science, Department of Communication Studies, York University, Canada)

New work on the theory of audience labour has provided very powerful analyses of the political economy of social media, but what remains under-theorized are the implications of this theory for an understanding of class consciousness. This paper examines the process of production of the audience commodity in order to distinguish different forms of audience labour, and the ways that these different types of activity are related to different forms of consciousness belonging to those engaged in the work of being part of the audience for different forms of media.

By considering both the material and intellectual processes by which ‘audience labour’ is produced as commodity, and by comparing its commodification by mass media to that by social media, it is possible to identify multiple varieties of this media commodity which can co-exist simultaneously. This implies that different kinds of audience labour power are produced and set to work by capital to create value in different forms. These differences can help to understand both the varied relationships between communications media and those participating in different forms of audience labour, and the different forms that the consciousness of the workers might take. Such an analysis is a necessary part of any attempt to understand the possibilities for construction of a counter-hegemonic agency within an informational capitalist structure of social power.

Michèle Martin: “Communication as Circulation: A political economy of digital systems of communication”

(Professor emerita, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada)

In our information society, the extreme velocity of circulation of capital and commodities based on such technologies as Internet and drones, has led to an exponential accumulation of capital. The paper will use Marx’s theory of circulation of capital and that of velocity attached to it to explain the relationship between circulation and accumulation of capital, and surplus value based on new types of exploitation.

The concepts of space and time, as well of private and public interests, discussed by Marx in *Grundrisse*, will be used to explain how the development of new media and electronic systems of communication and transportation are indispensable to the acceleration of the process of circulation of capital, which, in turn, is essential to the process of realisation and accumulation. As such, these systems reproduce the characteristics of the process of circulation/exchange of the market in addition to that of the production of commodities. Accordingly, they entail the capitalist and public interest of the society. The paper will show that, in electronic systems of communication developed in capitalist society, the public is opposed to the private, and, at the same time, constitutes its complement. The paper concludes that a complementary antithesis between these public and private aspects are inherent to the systems of digital communication and shapes the modes of communication produced by them and imposed on society.

Martin Spence: “Beyond the ‘Fragment’”

(Writer and former Assistant General Secretary of the media and entertainment union BECTU, Great Britain.)

There is a current of Marxist/Marxian discussion which privileges ‘digital labour’ – whether paid workers or unpaid ‘prosumers’ - as a leading fraction within labour as a whole. While different authors within this current have different emphases, recurrent themes include the disappearance or irrelevance of the working class, and of value, as traditionally conceived; the rise of new class agencies sometimes expressed as constituting ‘the multitude’; the potential of the internet to enable new forms of non-commodified free association; and consequently, the strategic significance of digital labour. Authors working within this framework often seek theoretical ballast in the autonomist concept of ‘immaterial labour’; and in the ‘Fragment on Machines’ in Marx’s *Grundrisse*, including its discussion of value and its reference to ‘general intellect’.

My paper analyses, and rejects, this current of thought. Coming from a Marxist humanist position, and based on my experience as a trade union official representing digital workers in film, broadcasting and web design, it questions the theoretical value of the concept of ‘digital labour’; analyses ‘immaterial labour’ as a post-modern rather than Marxist concept; and argues that despite the power and originality of the *Grundrisse* overall, the ‘Fragment on Machines’ is a flawed passage, vulnerable to misinterpretation, which cannot bear the theoretical burden which some would place upon it.

Panel B (Med-2B, 11.30–12.45):

Rodrigo Moreno Marques: “Cognitive capitalism or polarization of knowledge? Voices from Silicon Valley unveil the beautified image and some myths of the immaterial production”

(Prof. Dr., FUMEC University, Belo Horizonte)

What is the role of information and knowledge in the socioeconomic dynamics of the 21st century? To face this problem, firstly, as a theoretical approach, the cognitive capitalism and the polarization of knowledge frameworks are confronted. However, the new frontiers of the Political Economy do not reveal a single path to apprehend the role of information and knowledge in the contemporary world. The lack of consensus is a stimulus to cross the limits of the theoretical universe, aiming at confronting the academic discourses with the voices of those who live the reality represented in the theories. Accordingly, during the second semester of 2012, an empirical research was developed in the Californian region of Silicon Valley, where semi structured interviews were conducted with some representatives of the local workers. The discourses of those that directly deal with the sphere of labour at Silicon Valley expose some contradictions in their educational system, where the polarization of knowledge becomes an instrument that strengthens socioeconomic inequalities. The voices from Silicon Valley unveil the beautified image and some myths of the immaterial production.

J. Z. Garrod: “The real world of the decentralized autonomous society”

(Doctoral student, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada)

Although it is still in early stages, many commentators have been quick to note the revolutionary potential of next-generation or Bitcoin 2.0 technology. While some have expressed fear that the widespread application of these technologies may engender the rise of a Terminator-style Skynet, others believe that it represents the coming of a decentralized autonomous society (DAS) in which humans are freed from centralized forms of power through the proliferation of distributed autonomous organizations or DAOs. Influenced by neoliberal theory that stresses privatization, open markets, and deregulation, Bitcoin 2.0 technologies are implicitly working on the assumption that 'freedom' means freedom from the state. This neglects, however, that within capitalist societies, the state can also provide freedom from the vagaries of the market by protecting certain things from commodification. Through an analysis of (1) class and the role of the state; (2) the concentration and centralization of capital; and (3) the role of automation, I argue that the vision of freedom that underpins Bitcoin 2.0 tech is one that neglects the power that capital holds over us in both organizing the structure of our lives, and informing our idea of what it means to be human. In neglecting these other forms of power, I claim that the DAS might be a far more dystopian development than its supporters comprehend, making possible societies that are commodities all the way down.

Arwid Lund: “A Critical Political Economic Framework for Peer Production”

(Ph.D., Library and Information Science, Uppsala University)

Peer production can, seen as a political strategy, look like a version of the autonomist Marxist's exodus. Projects of peer production constitute an *outside to capitalism* that is commons-based and built around the copyleft license. There is a difference between being useful to society and being social necessary. Value is a social relation, it is not the work

that constitutes the value, but the social construction of valorisation in the in the market exchange between people. Therefore it is important how peer production is looked upon by outsiders as well as insiders, and if there exist alternative versions of valorisation.

This paper examines the relation between peer production and capitalism on a systemic and theoretical level. It helps us to contextualize peer production historically and structurally as well to gain perspectives on the conditions surrounding peer producers' perceptions and valorisations of their projects in relation to capitalism. The performative function of Marxism is here of some interest.

Terranova holds that peer production investigates the possibility of creating a commons-based economy with its mode of production, but not necessarily antagonistically in relation to capital. She stresses that the *evolutionary* idea is central to what she calls the P2P principles, which are often put up against Marxism's *antagonistic* interpretation of social production.

It will be shown how Marxism and closely related theories can improve our understanding of peer production's growth within a crisis-prone capitalism. Marxism is a more dynamic theoretical alternative than the P2P perspective and takes both antagonism and evolution into account.

Peer production projects (PPPs) like Wikipedia has been seen as an ad-free and non-commercial safe haven within capitalism, but Marxist theory points to the potential realism of other functions and interpretations that potentially are not as easy for capital to co-opt. Marxist interpretations of the relation between capitalism's inside and outside, theories of coexisting historical modes of production, analyses of cognitive capitalism, and Marxist crisis theory will be drawn on to make this point.

UC-1: "Intersectionality in working on socio-ecological transformation" [in English]

Sunday 16 October, 13.00–14.15, Sandler

Lutz Brangsch (*Dr., Institut für Gesellschaftsanalyse der Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Berlin*)

Judith Dellheim (*Dr., Institut für Gesellschaftsanalyse der Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Berlin*)

Frieder Otto Wolf (*Honorary professor in Philosophy, Free University of Berlin; Fellow at Institut für Gesellschaftsanalyse der Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Berlin*)

Analysing the different crises – humanitarian, ecological, financial, economic, food, energy, resources, EU crises –, on the one hand, and the reactive struggles of different emancipatory social movements, on the other hand, we – as critical scientists dealing with these crises – are facing a special type of intersectionality problem constellation: A complexity of crises met by an intersectionality of societal agencies. This constitutes a

major challenge for the political left wing: How to help and to foster intersectional struggles to converge into political power capable of transforming states and societies. This will neither be achieved by a mere „pluralism“ of separate issues and movements, nor by a reductionist politics attempting to reduce all struggles to one “main contradiction” or issue that has to be fought out by all.

In order to meet this challenge, we are using the critique of political economy in a Marxian tradition, although in a specific way which avoids economic or class struggle reductionism. Specifically, we identify the role of capitalist oligarchies with their societal alliances as a real connecting factor behind the multiplicity of societal power as production and consumption structures – and begin to reconstruct the ways in which emancipatory agencies are, in turn, interconnected and interdependent in strategically significant ways, at least potentially. For this purpose we address three areas of common struggles which provide a basis for understanding the modalities of political convergence:

- (1) the area of political struggles for defining and implementing binding standards for economic and processes and societal life, with regard to democratic, social and ecological concerns;
- (2) the area of defending the public sphere and of struggling, in this very process of struggle, for its radical democratization, with a particular emphasis upon solving debt issues, stabilizing public finance; and
- (3) the area of active struggles against destructive “development projects” (TTIP, TISA etc.) and in favour of a socio-ecologically constructive development, which have already begun to unfold in a local and in a regional dimension.

As an over-arching idea for politically integrating these struggles we are taking up and developing the conception of socio-ecological transformation: In a process of action-reflection-research we invite agencies – presenting own ideas and conceptions – to elaborate together with us a specific type of political program based on common interests and activities, marking the beginning and the progressive development of a co-operation in solidarity consistently dealing with social and global problems while minimizing the pressure on the biosphere. This will contribute, in turn, to the debate on sustainability “from below” aiming to strengthen the agencies of socially and ecologically sustainable development for realizing it.

UC-2: “Alienation: what is it good for?” [på svenska och engelska / in Swedish and English]

Söndag 16 oktober, 13:30–16:45, Erlander
Sunday 16 October, 13.30–16.45, Erlander

We propose two sessions (1,5 hour each) with presentations and a discussion concerning the concept of alienation. The first session would provide a general introduction and the historical genealogy of the concept. The second session would focus on contemporary issues regarding alienation around labor, economy and social movements.

panel 1: Utanförskapets alienation [Swedish] (13:30–15:00)

deltagare/participants: Li Eriksson, Majsja Allelin, Johannes Björk, Tobias Davidsson

Panel 2: Variations of alienations [Swedish/English] (15:15–16:45)

deltagare/participants: Erik Bryngelsson, Astrid Grelz Andersson, David Payne, Gustav Strandberg

Content and Theme

The notion of alienation has in recent decades suffered a strange fate. On the one hand, it remains a term used in everyday language to designate certain affective states (e.g. ‘isolation’, ‘disorientation’ and ‘indifference’) as well as collective experiences of marginalization, exclusion and political disenfranchisement. On the other hand, as a critico-analytical category, alienation has fallen into theoretical disreputation. A period of sustained interest from Marxists during the first part of the twentieth century has given way to a general dissatisfaction with the category, now often regarded as insufficient in both describing class exploitation and understanding developments in capitalist relations of production. Our overarching aim will be to provide a genealogical excavation of the concept in order to examine its continued analytical relevance as well as its uncharted potential in the political articulation of a contemporary anti-capitalist discourse.

In light of the political and theoretical landscape that has emerged from the 1960s onwards, i.e. the hegemony of neoliberal policies and the concomitant systemic changes neoliberalism has brought with it (New Public Management, immaterialization of labour, reification of time and personal relationships etc.), we claim that the concept of alienation needs to be rethought.

This does not mean that we simply aim to “update” the concept of alienation, re-applying the category to what is new and distinct about neo-liberal discourse. Rather, the task is to rethink the term from within and against the fertile history of Marxism, accentuating those aspects of the Marxian/Marxist interpretation of alienation that are still at work today, but also re-articulating them with other (Pre-Marxian and Post-Marxist) theoretical elements and phenomena that can contribute to a thoroughgoing critique of the present. If all aspects of our lives are fully subsumed under capitalist relations, alienation would then be nothing

but an empty concept, unable to account for internal differences within social structures or for the possibility of emancipatory change.

The questions we hope to address are: in which ways are we alienated today and what would it mean not to be alienated?

UC-3: "Människan under kapitalismen och psykologin i motståndets tjänst" [på svenska]

Lördag 15 oktober, 13:15–15:00, Hedén

Socialistiska psykologer i Skåne: Andrea Malesevic, Sabina Gusic, Sima Wolgast, Johan Åhlin, Mattias Norlinder, Hedda Skyllbäck, Adam Hultqvist

Två sessioner à 45 min var, beskrivning av innehåll följer nedan.

Del ett: "Att förstå människan under kapitalismen; Vad gör kapitalismen med oss som psykologiska subjekt?" (13:15–14:00)

"Kapitalismen är ett socialt system som livnär sig på och reproducerar befolkningars sinnessillstånd" skriver Mark Fischer (2011) i sin bok "Kapitalistisk realism". Vi hävdar vikten av att undersöka det han kallar "privatisering av stressen" och det kollektiva förnekandet av att psykiska problem kan tänkas ha sociala orsaker och lösningar. Fischer liksom flera andra teoretiker menar att kapitalismen alltmer rör sig mot en exploatering av människors affekter och kognitioner. Vi är intresserade av att undersöka och samtala kring relationen mellan den senkapitalistiska ekonomin och de alienerade mänskliga relationerna. Psykisk ohälsa diskuteras utifrån ett historiematerialistiskt perspektiv. Med hjälp av marxistisk och psykologisk teori ämnar vi diskutera hur produktionsförhållandena avgör hur de mänskliga relationerna utvecklas strukturellt, interpersonellt och intrapsykiskt. Vi behandlar marxistiska begrepp som alienation, varufetischism, dialektik, sociala fabriken, och korsbefruktar dessa med psykologiska teorier om affekt, trauma, dissociation och internalisering. Främst två teoretiska ansatser är i fokus. Den ena är Klaus Ottomeyers analys av hur kapitalismens logik alstrar mänskliga relationer präglade av konkurrens, misstänksamhet och stelhet. Arbetsdelningen och bristen på "materiella bindemedel" människor emellan beskrivs vara grogrund för själslig ohälsa. En annan teoretisk utgångspunkt är dissociationsteorin. Dissociation är ett försvar som kan beskrivas som splittring av medvetandet när vi utsätts för stark traumatisk stress. Vanligen integrerade funktioner, så som identitet, relationsupplevelser och affekter blir fränkopplade från varandra vilket medför psykiskt lidande. Dessa mekanismer diskuteras i förhållande till den kapitalistiska ekonomin, en slags dissociation genom kapitalismen.

Del två: "Att förändra samhället – psykologiska strategier för socialistisk samhällsförändring" (14:15–15:00)

Under denna del kommer vi analysera och granska samhället utifrån ett interpersonellt, organisatoriskt och institutionellt perspektiv och föreslå åtgärder utifrån detta. Här kommer olika teorier och metoder användas för att granska och analysera beteenden som upprätthåller det kapitalistiska systemet, händelser i både produktionsfären, konsumtionsfären och reproduktionsfären. Fokus på existerande forskningsstöd för samhällsförändringar såsom bl.a ekonomisk omfördelning (exempelvis Alain Topors studie med ekonomiskt stöd kontra terapi eller medicinering inom psykiatri), arbetstidsförkortning, despecialisering av professionella yrkesgrupper osv. Utöver detta kommer vi diskutera möjligheter till allmänningar som miljöer för interaktion och identifikation utanför arbetet.

UC-4: "Capitalist State, Labour, and Beyond" [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 15.15–16.30, Hedén

Esben Bøgh Sørensen: "Capitalism and labour"

(Doctoral student, Department of Philosophy and the History of Ideas, Aarhus University)

This paper will explore the role of labour in capitalism by combining a social historical approach to the concept of labour with recent discussions within the critique of political economy.

In contrast to the Weberian standard narrative, recent critical studies indicate that the changes in ideas of labour in early modernity were based more on political and economic changes in that period than religious ideas. Drawing on the work of Robert Brenner and Ellen Meiksins Wood, this paper suggests that it was the emergence of capitalism in England in the 16th-17th Century that caused the unique transformation in the concept of labour that is still prevalent today. The paper suggests that this was due to specific social form that labour assumes in capitalism.

The paper will explore the relationship between capitalism and labour by drawing on recent discussions within the critique of political economy. Specifically, it will discuss the concept of "impersonal" or "objectively mediated" social relations of domination as developed by the Neue Marx-Lektüre as well as Moishe Postone's notion of the centrality of labour to the impersonal form of domination in capitalism. In capitalism, labour becomes an abstract principle that replaces traditional and personal ties as the dominant form of social mediation. It comes to be regarded primarily in economic terms as an effort that is only deemed worthy if validated on the market.

The paper will conclude that in capitalism, labour increasingly becomes a one-dimensional economic and abstract principle that in an objective way dominate our lives. Therefore, in order to challenge capitalism, it is necessary to understand and challenge the

specific social form that labour assumes in capitalism and how this is reflected in dominant ideological, political, and economic thought.

Mathias Hein Jessen: “The Corporate State: State, Ideology, Corporation”

(Post doc, Department of Business and Politics, Copenhagen Business School)

Today it has become commonplace to claim the demise of the sovereign, democratic nation-state due to globalization, neoliberal policies and the increasing power of transnational entities (UN, EU, IMF, WTO, The World Bank) and multinational corporations. This was recently exemplified by the overturning of the Greek OXI-referendum by the Troika, which was seen as the proof of the loss of national sovereignty in face of economic interests.

Such a view, however, prevalent in both public discourse and political debates on the left, rests on a misguided conception of the nature of the state and the sharp demarcation between state/corporation and the political/the economic. To Marx(ism), the state is an ideological construct which serves to manage the common affairs of the ruling class and a central part of this ideological construct is the state as a political entity separate from the economic sphere. These demarcations are fundamental to the functioning of state power, capitalism, neoliberalism and the upholding of existing political and economic power relations, but are continually reinforced and perpetuated by the constant claims of the encroachment of economic and corporate interests on the political-democratic-sovereign state.

This paper claims that the state is itself a corporate entity which through history has achieved a privileged position in our political understanding as the repository of sovereignty and the sole legitimate claimant to political allegiance. In doing so, it has excluded all other corporate bodies and collective entities as legitimate claimants on political authority. This paper argues that we must understand the corporate nature of the state in order to repoliticize intermediate corporate bodies and collective entities both to understand how the political and economic system functions today, but also because they represent political alternatives beneath, beside and beyond the (liberal, capitalist) state.

Jara Handala: “Communising and the Need for the Mode of Ruling Concept: From Ruling through Anti-Ruling to Integral Living”

(Non-academic, Koblenz, Germany)

1) It is perverse that Marxists, given their preoccupations and intent, have significantly under-conceptualised the political dimension of human living. This can be rectified to an extent by building on the ruling class concept. Just as a scientific understanding of economic life requires the mode of production concept, that of political life needs the mode of ruling concept. This improves upon Mouzelis’ mode of domination concept, as demonstrated, in part, by Therborn’s account of subjugation and qualification. The latter forms the basis of a typology of sub-modes of ruling, freeing analysis from both an

unwarranted focus on power and the constrictions of frameworks such as hegemony/domination, consent/force, consensus/legitimacy/force, false/true consciousness.

2) The principal political practical imperative is control – of access to valued entities, and over the quality of relations. Human political history is a management struggle, the management of control. The continual capitalising of people's lives is opposed by their communising, the anti-force. The mode of ruling idea allows recognition that, in political terms, communising is developing anti-ruling at the expense of ruling, with the former harbouring a dynamic of re-ruling and de-ruling, and de-ruling itself hosting a dynamic of co-governing and self-governing. This complements Marx's largely economic remarks on the Gotha programme. Freedom is lived less as freedom-from, emancipation, and more as freedom-to, liberation. De-ruling is the only political process and form with the capacity to realise, through communising, the universal class for-itself. As each of these necessary dynamics marks a phase in the prospective history of communising, they provide a meta-strategic framework. This contrasts with talk of seizing power, smashing the state, and the leading role of the party.

3) If systematic exploitation and oppressions can be ended, the hitherto content of ruling, that is, governing-over, then politics is reduced to co- and self-governing, namely to participation in deciding, implementing, monitoring, and back to devising, revising and deciding. This is the sublation of the mode of ruling as the mode of governing, and, in using forms of the latter, everyone becomes a governor, manager, administrator. With the sublating of ruling as governing, of alienation as authenticity, the universal class for-itself comes into being and the integral is its form, and so the form of communist society. In being anti-ruling, scientific communists are anti-political; it makes them integral, not political.

4) An unnecessary conceptual barrier is relying on politics and political theory – a practical and epistemic narrow conception of governing and governing theory, this an aspect of integral living and integral theory. Scientific communists should become accustomed, where appropriate, to formulating ideas in terms of governing rather than politics, and ruling rather than the less general such as power and hegemony. Discourse concerning the three modes of ruling, governing, and integral living is a reminder of the aim and purpose of emancipatory and liberatory activity.

Link to paper: <https://thrutheeyesofcorpses.wordpress.com/2015/11/18/whats-the-nature-of-politics-an-argument-for-the-mode-of-ruling-concept/>

UC-5: "Neoliberalism and Crisis" [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 13.15–14.45, Sandler

Jorge Enrique Forero: "Postneoliberal governments in Latin America and Buen Vivir ("Good Living"): Tensions within a counterhegemonic process"

(Doctoral student, International Center for Development and Decent Work, University of Kassel)

Reducing the political centrality of organized labor, the neoliberal stage of capitalism generated also an increase of political struggles in peripheral societies. In fact, the genealogy of the "alter-globalization movement" –the first articulated manifestation of antineoliberal struggle- led us directly to the insurrection of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation –EZLN- in Mexico.

A mayor feature of antineoliberal resistance has been a a proliferation of subjects, struggles and claims, that in their most radical versions define themselves as "anticapitalist". Here, the negative definition implies the postponement of the positive moment, which means, the enunciation -and construction- of the political project.

But this context created a fertile field in Latin America for leftist governments that tried to expand popular participation and new visions of development in defiance of neoliberal hegemony. Different versions of Buen Vivir came to contest those perspectives that privilege economic growth over other dimensions of social life, becoming a major ideological field of political dispute.

The governments of the XXI Century Socialism -in Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela- nationalized their main natural resources and redirected the extractive rent to strengthening their State apparatus, providing health, education and focalized subsidies to specific sectors of the population. On the other hand, they have sustained the predominance of capitalist mode of production, maintaining an economic structure based on the production of commodities for the world market, generating social and ecological conflicts, and stirring radical opposition from the main social movements of their own countries.

In this paper, we offer some insights to understand the class struggle behind these political processes, incorporating the analysis of correlations of forces as a major feature to understand the way it shaped the Latin American political scenario during the transition to the XXI Century.

Søren Mau: "The Ideology of Crisis"

(Doctoral student, Department of Philosophy, University of Southern Denmark)

Crisis is the concept through which contemporary Europe understands itself. At least since 2008, this concept has functioned as a kind of prism through which contemporary political struggles understand themselves.

In this paper, I will examine how the concept is used in the context of the contemporary economic crisis in Europe. My claim is that the creation of consensus about the word 'crisis'

as an adequate diagnostic term makes certain acts more plausible than others – in other words, that the use of the concept of crisis is a technique of power. However, the use of this technique is not unequivocal: on the one hand, institutions like the EU, IMF and WTO mobilize the concept in the attempt to legitimize austerity policies. But on the other hand, several anti-austerity movements also operationalize the concept of crisis in order to criticize and counter the neoliberal crisis regime in Europe. The concept of crisis thus seems to delineate a field of ideological struggle, in which institutions and social movements struggle over questions such as: who or what is the crisis a crisis of? What does the crisis reveal? What consequences should be drawn from the crisis? Who or what is responsible of the crisis?

In this paper, I will – by way of a Marxist theory of ideology – examine the ideological space constituted by the use of the concept of crisis in Europe since 2008. In order to do this, I will also identify the fundamental structure of the general concept of crisis, thereby disclosing the reasons why precisely this concept is able to function as a kind of reservoir of legitimacy. This analysis reveals that the concept implies certain understandings of modality, temporality and morality, and that these conceptual elements have a clear connection to the origin of the concept of crisis in ancient law, medicine and theology.

Carl Wilén: "On the relation between the French and the Haitian Revolution: Contribution to the Critique of Politico-Juridical Forms in Marx"

(Doctoral student, Dept. of Sociology and Work Science, University of Gothenburg)

The French Revolution declared the rights of man and of the citizens in 1789. Yet, the implication was not an immediate abolishment of slavery within the French colonial empire. However, in 1791 the slaves at an island called Hispaniola took to arms and initiated what was to be entitled the Haitian Revolution – the only revolution in history executed by slaves that has succeeded with establishing a state claiming sovereignty and with abolishing slavery within its territory. In 1789, the French part of Hispaniola was called Saint Domingue. Saint Domingue was a small part of the colonial system and at once the most profit generating in the world. By implication, the slaves did not only turn their weapons at their French owners but also at a well-established commerce with sugar, tobacco and black slaves. The political ideas of 1789 encouraged the slaves in their struggle at the same time as the economic current and its politics were running in the opposite direction of abolition. The conflict-ridden relation between the two events has led scholars to deep conflicts over the problem of historical continuity and discontinuity: are we to understand the Haitian revolution as a break against, or as a prolongation of, the French Revolution? The overarching aim of this article is to construct a theoretical defence of a third position arguing that the relation ought to be understood as one of radicalization containing both difference and unity. The theoretical argument will be constructed through a reading of Marx on the problem of politico-juridical forms. The result of this reading is that if we are to reach the third position on the relation between the French and the Haitian Revolution, we also have to accept the later Marx' implicit self-critique that indicates a shift from his earlier understanding of liberal rights as merely illusions. Lastly, the unity of the historical

problem and the theoretical argument presuppose a number of qualifications on the relation between Hegel and Marx and of the concepts of form, ideology, and class.

Keywords: the French and the Haitian Revolution, Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, the critique of right, liberal political categories, form, ideology, and class.

Sergey Bodrunov: “New quality of material production and changes in production relations and labour”

(Ph.D. of Economic Sciences, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)

[abstract to be received]

UC-6: “Movements, Power, Hegemony and Agency” [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 13.45–15.00 and 15.15–16.30, Kata

Part A (UC-6A, 13.45–15.00):

Elena Lange: “What Marx's Critique of Vulgar Economics Can Teach us Today”

(Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies, University of Zurich)

'Value', Marx famously contended in the section on fetishism in the first chapter of Capital 1, 'does not have its description branded on its forehead; it rather transforms every product of labour into a social hieroglyphic.' While before and in Marx's time, classical political economy had a profound interest in the question of value and its distribution as 'wealth' within society – regardless of its ahistorical and inspecific views of labour under capitalism – in the last decades, neoclassical and Keynesian economics, as well as 'economics' as an academic subject, has ignored the task of explaining the social origin of 'the accidental and ever-fluctuating exchange relations between the products' that as prices constitute their primary object. Regular academic textbooks on 'How the economy works' will generally be silent about the character of labour that produces 'wealth', and quite often also about the origins of 'profit'.

Marx's self-imposed task was to develop a theory of surplus value ('profit') that would acknowledge the basis of equivalent exchange. His great intervention was the concept of 'abstract labour' that can only be understood in delineation from the classical economics' concept of labour. While he delineated his idea from classical theories of value, he however much stronger refuted the 'vulgar economic' idea that surplus value and capital came from the circulation of commodities or were a 'fruit' of capital itself. According to Marx, vulgar economy does nothing but 'interpret, systematize and turn into apologetics the notions of agents trapped within the bourgeois relations of production.' My paper will look more closely at some 'vulgar' economic theories that still inform today's understanding of how capitalism works and present Marx's deconstruction of them, based on his theory of (surplus) value and exploitation.

Paul Rækstad: "Human Development, Practice, and Prefigurative Politics"

(Ph.D. in Philosophy, University of Cambridge)

This paper explores how Karl Marx's conception of practice can inform, and be informed by, the experiences and theorisations springing from the New Democracy Movement. It argues that Marx's conception of human development and practice gives us a unified and compelling way to think about the self-educational and self-emancipatory effects of prefigurative struggles for social change. It is thus a contribution to developing and using Marxist tools for creating a better world.

It begins with an overview of Marx's theory of practice (sometimes called 'praxis') through an analysis of his conception of human 'powers' (Kräfte) and 'needs' (Bedürfnisse), and consciousness, and how they interact through the human life process. With this in place, I go on to connect this conception to work done by people like Michael Lebowitz and John Holloway on the importance of developing revolutionary subjects and their capacities for living and acting differently, and to the claims about the importance of affective politics in the work of thinkers like David Graeber and Marina Sitrin.

Next, I distinguish three different senses of prefiguration that are important, noting, in particular, the importance of a narrower conception of prefigurative politics focusing on specific organisational and institutional forms on the one hand, and a wider conception of prefigurative politics, which further emphasises a certain kind of ethical and moral consistency, on the other.

The third and final part of the paper presents five arguments, drawn from a Marxist account of revolutionary practice, for the necessity of prefigurative practices: (1) it's important for developing revolutionary subjects with the right powers and capacities; (2) for developing subjects with radical needs; (3) and for developing revolutionary consciousness. Prefigurative politics, far from being contrary to Marxist thought properly understood, is rather required by it.

Xiang Wan: "Rethinking and rebuilding Marxist theories of history: An approach based on interpersonal relationships"

(Ph.D., Lecturer of Modern History, Xi'an Jiaotong University)

Historical materialism, once considered to be a universal interpretation to social development by the Left, became under harsh criticism not only because of the failure of Soviet Communism but also for its atomist understanding of human beings as well as the ossified theory of five types of social formations, now almost obsolete among historical theorists. Classical interpretation of historical materialism, centered on the interrelationship between productive forces and relations of productive forces, embodies interpersonal relationships in the socioeconomic milieu, yet neglects the diversity of interpersonal relationships and the complexity of ownerships ensued from it. Therefore, an inevitable oversimplification of interpersonal conflicts into class struggle, as well as a widespread impression of economic determinism, has overshadowed the vivid theoretic treasure trove of Marxist theories of history.

A tentative research of the works of Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and others, this paper is aiming at providing an interpretation of Marxist theories of history based on the study of interpersonal relationships. I will scrutinize the private vs. public dimensions of interpersonal relationships, just as the antithesis between sex and gender, love and marriage, family and kinship, clan and race, as well as the duality of personal dependencies in class societies: how slaves and serfs behaved in private and public with regard to their relationships to their owners. These diversified forms of interpersonal relationship are fundamental to the circulation of productive means, as demonstrated in the works of Karl Marx and Marxists on history.

The conclusion is, then, the driving force of human history is interpersonal relationships – at most public spheres it manifests in the way of class struggle. Yet the diversity of interpersonal relationships calls for much more elaborate Marxist theories of history, which Karl Marx started for us in the most striking manner.

Part B (UC-6B, 15.15–16.30):

Alpesh Maisuria: “Class Struggle in Cultural Formation in Contemporary Times: A Focus on the Theoretical Importance of Antonio Gramsci and the Organic Intellectualism of Russell Brand and Pablo Iglesias”

(Senior Lecturer in Education studies, University of East London)

In this presentation, I posit the argument that strategies for class struggle need to be sensitive to cultural formations, which change temporally and spatially over time. I highlight the importance of Italian revolutionary Marxist Antonio Gramsci’s attention to culture and hegemony as aspects of mounting and then sustaining class struggle for revolutionary social transformation. I animate culture and hegemony in class struggle using examples of the organic intellectual work of Russell Brand and Pablo Iglesias. Brand and Iglesias are important as examples of how a momentum of consciousness for praxis can emerge through working at the level of cultural formation to appeal to the masses. Finally, drawing on the example of Cuba where direct democracy has been used to update the revolution, I make the simple yet profound point that voting does not necessarily mean representation. I conclude by suggesting that for critique of the neoliberal status quo to be effective for social transformation, it needs to be accompanied by visions of an alternative world as feasible, this is a world that can exist.

*This presentation draws from the following paper: Maisuria, A. (2017) Class Struggle in Cultural Formation in Contemporary Times: A Focus on the Theoretical Importance of Antonio Gramsci and the Organic Intellectualism of Russell Brand and Pablo Iglesias. In McLaren, L and Monzo, L. (2017) (eds.) Revolution and Education Special Issue Knowledge Cultures Journal, Addleton Academic Publishers. 5(1)

Mikkel Flohr: “An Existing Untruth’ – Marx’s Critique of Political Theology”

(Doctoral student in Political Theory, Roskilde University)

The question of state power cannot be ignored today. Whether contemporary social movements seek to evade, contest or capture state power, they all have to contend with it, making an analysis of the state acutely necessary. However, most contemporary conceptualizations of the state are marred by political theology, that is, the essentially religious conception of the state as a sovereign subject that transcends and determines society from without. In spite of the descriptive limitations and normative implications of this conception it remains predominant within both the popular imagination and political theory. In Karl Marx’s preparatory notes for his unfinished Critique of Hegel’s Doctrine of State, he identified Hegel’s political philosophy as the summation of this tradition of ‘political theology,’ which was to be the subject of his projected critique. However, the manuscript was never finished nor published during his lifetime. The aim of this paper is to reconstruct and reevaluate Marx’s manuscript in light of his explicit intent of criticizing political theology, which has so far been ignored in the literature. The paper argues that the contradiction between state and society that derives from the implicit transcendent-theological lineage and structure of political theory/theology, can be overcome via the (post-)Hegelian resources of Karl Marx’s unfinished manuscript. Marx’s resolution emphasizes the primacy of society in regards to the state, without therefore resorting to abstract negation, as most prior critiques have done. Rather he suggests that it is precisely the social significance of this idea and concomitant practices that constitute the earthly existence of the modern state: political theology may be untrue, but it remains an “existing untruth.”

Arto Artinian: “Political Struggle and the Intermediary Spaces of the Operational Level of Politics”

(Ph.D. in Political science, Borough of Manhattan Community College – City University of New York)

Close to a century has passed since Antonio Gramsci introduced his war metaphors in the study of revolutionary politics and capitalist hegemony. In the intervening years, the revolutionary turbulence of the twentieth century, and capital’s successful counter-offensive, have re-established liberal hegemony over the immediate horizons of the politically possible. The combined experiences of the last century have produced a field of political struggle of vastly increased complexity. Among the most significant ones can be listed the extension of total war to political struggle in general, and the appearance of a new, intermediary, layer of struggle, that occupies the spaces of everyday life between the tactics of immediate experiences, and the strategic dynamics of capital’s social reproduction as a whole.

This paper starts from the premise that fundamental questions of political struggle, power and hegemony are best approached as war-like conflicts. Similar to war since Gramsci’s time, political struggle takes place most decisively at the intermediary space between the

tactics of street politics and the strategic dynamics where capitalism is itself reproduced as a system of social formation, what I am calling the operational level of politics. The paper aims to conceptualize this intermediary, operational level of class conflict as the key space where the patterns and ideas of everyday life are subject to contestation and control. In other words, operational politics conditions ideological space, thus playing a decisive role in political struggle and the maintenance of hegemony.

On the left we have often written about the role of tactics and strategy, but the operational level has so far been absent from our analysis. This paper is an initial effort of conceptualising this overlooked, but core facet of politics today, and in doing so to help articulate a new dimension in the praxis of political struggle.

UC-7: "Kapitalism, nyliberalism och arbete" [på svenska]

Lördag 15 oktober, 13:45–15:00, Palme

Tobias Davidsson: "Marx och Foucault – Att analysera reproduktionen av kapitalförhållandet som styrningsrationalitet"

(Lektor, Institutionen för socialt arbete, Göteborgs universitet)

I detta paper vill jag fördjupa den teoretiska kombination av Marx och Foucault som jag började utveckla i min doktorsavhandling om det offentliga understödets historia. Särskilt vill jag undersöka den eventuella komplementariteten mellan å ena sidan ett marxistiskt perspektiv på den borgerliga statens rättsförhållanden vad gäller arbetskraftens cirkulation, å andra sidan den foucauldianska maktanalysen.

Robert Kurz har anmärkt att frihet och jämlikhet i kapitalistiska samhällen begränsas till utbytets sfär (cirkulationen). Kapitalistisk produktion, å andra sidan, följer befallningens och lydnadens princip. Cirkulationens frihet å ena sidan och produktionens ofrihet å andra sidan är inte att uppfatta som en motsägelse, snarast är de formellt beroende av varandra. Arbetarna är ofria i produktionen just för att de dessförinnan utövat sin frihet som varuägare på marknaden genom att sälja sin arbetskraft, en frihet som i sin tur är ett resultat av tvång och ofrihet. På detta vis (re)produceras kapitalismens konstitutiva kapitalförhållande.

Foucault identifierar tre "nivåer" i sin maktanalys: (1) makt som strategiskt spel är ett allestädes närvarande inslag i mänsklig interaktion och strukturerar fältet för andras möjliga handlingar; (2) styrning betecknar en systematiserad, reglerad och reflekterad maktform som manövreras av en specifik form av rationalitet; (3) dominans är en särskild typ av maktrelation som är såväl stabil och hierarkisk som fixerad och svår att förändra. Denna term reserveras för asymmetriska maktrelationer där underordnade individer och grupper har begränsad frihet och mycket litet manövreringsutrymme. Dominansförhållanden är effekter av styrning, vilket intar ett slags förmedlande position mellan strategiska spel och dominantstillstånd.

Om denna maktmodell tillämpas på reproduktionen av kapitalförhållandet möjliggörs en empirisk analys av de praktiker och styrningsrationaliteter som upprättar och reproducerar lönearbetsrelationen vilken i denna begreppsapparat förstås som ”makt som dominans”.

Johan Alfonsson: ”Behovsanställda – En alienerad reservarmé”

(Doktorand, Institutionen för sociologi och arbetsvetenskap, Göteborgs universitet)

Syftet med artikeln är att presentera en bild av hur, den på arbetsmarknaden växande gruppen behovsanställda alieneras i sitt arbete och i vardagen på grund av anställningsformen. Behovsanställda är en grupp som präglas av stor rörlighet och tvingas, likt Marx industriella reservarmé, att på grund av undersysselsättning alltid stå redo att hoppa in och arbeta och att jaga arbetstimmar för sin försörjning, något som påverkar flera aspekter av deras liv. På grund av anställningsformens utformning tvingas behovsanställda, vilka kan vara både timanställda direkt av arbetsköparen eller hyras in via bemanningsföretag, att ständigt vara redo att bryta upp och byta arbetsplats. Detta leder till att deras sociala relationer i arbetet drabbas och de blir förfrämligande i relation till andra anställda. Behovsanställdas eviga jakt efter timmar och behov av att vara standby, redo att hoppa in och arbeta försvårar upprätthållandet av sociala relationer även utanför arbetet. De tvingas planera sina dagar efter möjligheten att få arbete och på så vis är de ständig potentiell arbetskraft, vilket bidrar till att fritidens frihet till viss del överskuggas av ett potentiellt sms om arbete som de måste ta. Situation bidrar till svårigheter med att upprätthålla gränsen mellan arbete och fritiden och den förras instrumentalitet spiller över på den senare. Vidare bidrar behovsanställdas prekära ekonomiska situation till svårigheter med att veta huruvida de kommer kunna betala räkningar och köpa mat, detta leder till en situation där framtidens potentiella osäkerhet placeras i nuet, vilket leder till att livet allt mer liknar en ekonomisk kalkyl där framtidens möjliga ekonomiska utsatthet måste beaktas och deras liv blir på så vis till viss del förtingligat. Artikelns material utgår från intervjuer med behovsanställda och är en del av min pågående doktorsavhandling som undersöker behovsanställdas villkor.

Gustav Borsgård: ”Skolutbildning och nyliberalism”

(Doktorand i litteraturvetenskap, Umeå universitet)

I mitt paper beskriver jag översiktligt hur globala ekonomiska förhållanden och nyliberal politisk rationalitet har påverkat utbildningsväsendena i världens OECD-länder under de senaste decennierna. Med särskilt fokus på den svenska skolans utveckling från och med marknadsiseringen under 1990-talet använder jag marxistisk teori för att analysera ett utbildningsväsende alltmer präglad av New Public Management och en mål- och resultatfetischism där resultaten från internationella kunskapsmätningar som PISA tillmäts en närmast upphöjd betydelse inom utbildningsdiskursen, vilket bland annat får konsekvensen att elever kommer att betraktas som medel för att förbättra statistiken snarare än som värdefulla mål i sig själva. Jag resonerar vidare om vad den nyliberala politiska rationaliteten innebär för skolan ur demokratisynpunkt när mellanstatliga ekonomiska

organisationer som OECD utövar inflytande över svenska förhållanden och när utbildningens samhälleliga förändringspotential reduceras för att i stället förpassa lärare till effektiva leverantörer av enkelt mätbara kunskaper.