

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.