History 471

Contemporary Societies: The History of Capitalism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America

2:30 - 4:00 MW, Spring semester 1994
Meisner

Today, in the era of "the new world order," it is an almost universal belief that a capitalist market economy will solve the economic (and other) problems that afflict the world. One of the aims of History 471 is to test that belief by examining chapters in the actual history of capitalism in the economically underdeveloped lands where most of the world's people live. Another aim of the course is to understand capitalism -- a global system, everyone agrees -- in global historical perspectives, rather than focusing on capitalism's Western European and North American "core."

The first part of the course (Weeks I-VI) will provide some of the essential historical and theoretical background for the study of the history of capitalism in the modern world. This will include a consideration of Karl Polanyi's classic study on the nature of the market (in The Great Transformation) and Eric Wolf's innovative Europe and the People Without History. Capitalism will also be considered from the perspectives of Marxism, Russian Populism, modernization theory, and world systems theory, among other theoretical approaches.

The bulk of the course (approximately the next eight weeks) will be a comparative inquiry into the history of capitalism in China, India, and selected countries in Africa and Latin America. No prior knowledge of the histories of these countries is presupposed. The course will conclude with an attempt to draw some preliminary generalizations about the place of the "non-Western" world in the changing world capitalist order and the future of capitalism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

History 471 will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-4. As a general (but not rigid) rule, formal lectures will be delivered at the Monday meetings whereas the Wednesday sessions will emphasize discussions based on assigned readings, perhaps preceded by brief and informal mini-lectures. Ten course lectures will be offered by distinguished guest scholars. Guest lecturers from other institutions are funded and sponsored by the Harvey Goldberg Center for the Study of Contemporary History.

Formal requirements:

1. Timely completion of the required readings and regular participation in scheduled class sessions.

2. A final take-home examination based on lectures, readings
and discussions. For students who regularly attend and participate in class meetings, the final exam can be waived at the discretion of the instructor.

3. A short essay (due on or before March 9) consisting of your reflections on one or more of the theoretical approaches to capitalism considered in the first six weeks of the course.

4. A seminar-type paper (about 15 to 20 pages in length) due on May 11. The topic should be decided on in consultation with the instructor relatively early in the semester and no later than the last class meeting before spring break (March 23). The paper can take a variety of forms -- a broad interpretive or theoretical essay, a comparative inquiry into capitalist development in two or more countries or regions, or a research-type investigation of a specific problem or question relating to the history of capitalism in a single country or region. The final paper, whatever the topic, should reflect the knowledge you have gained from the course readings, lectures, and discussions. Please submit a draft (or at least an outline) of the paper by April 6 if you would find it helpful to have critical commentary and suggestions before you prepare the final version.

Enrollment is limited to the number of students who can be accomodated in a colloquium-type format.

The following books are available for purchase (all in paperback editions):

Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Beacon)

Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (California)

Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Beacon)

R. H. Tawney, *Land and Labour in China* (Beacon)

Peter Evans, *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil* (Princeton)

John Iliffe, *The Emergence of African Capitalism* (Minnesota)
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Schedule of Lectures, Discussions, and Readings

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND (January 24 - March 2)

M Jan 24  
An Introduction to the Inquiry  
Definitions of Capitalism

W Jan 26  
Capitalism and "the end of history"

M Jan 31  
Marxism and Capitalism: the celebration and the critique

W Feb 2  

M Feb 7  
Theories of Imperialism (Tom Lutze, UW History Dept.)

W Feb 9  

M Feb 14  
Capitalism and the Commodification of Land and Labor. Lecture followed by discussion of Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation, chs. 5, 6, 14, and 15.
Discussion of Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, chs. 3-10 (pp. 33-129).

World Systems Theory and its Critique

Discussion (cont.) of Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, chs. 11-18 (pp. 130-219).

Marxism and Modernization Theory: A Critique of Economic Determinism


**INDIA AND CHINA**

Capitalism in India Since Independence: Results and Consequences (Prof. Porus Olpadwala, Cornell University)


The Abortiveness of Capitalism in Traditional China

Imperialism and Capitalism in Modern China

M Mar 21  The Pre-1949 Chinese Economy
W Mar 23  Bureaucratic Capitalism in Communist China

Read: (prior to the March 21 lecture)
R.H. Tawney, Land and Labour in China

March 26 -- April 4  Spring Recess

LATIN AMERICA AND AFRICA  (April 6 - May 2)

W Apr  6  Capitalism and Slavery in Latin America (Prof. Francisco Scarano, UW History Dept.)
           (tentative)
M Apr 11  Free Trade and NAFTA: A Latin American Perspective (Prof. Robert Pollin, Univ. of California, Riverside)
W Apr 13  Capitalism in Brazil: A consideration of the theory of "the development of underdevelopment"
M Apr 18  Capitalism and Populism in the Third World (Prof. Catherine Lynch, Case Western Reserve University)
W Apr 20  Capitalism in Brazil" A discussion of the theory of "dependent development"
           Read: Peter Evans, Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State and Local Capital in Brazil, chs 1 and 6 (and as much more as you can manage)

M Apr 25  Capitalism and Women in the Third World (Prof. Marilyn Young, New York University)
SOME FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

W May 4  Capitalism and Democracy: Political Implications of Late Developing Capitalism (the case of Japan)

Read: Moore, Social Origins, chs 5 and 8.

M May 9  On the Transition from "Socialism" to "Capitalism" (Dr. Lin Chun, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) (tentative)

W May 11  The Future of Capitalism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America