The Political Economy of Agrarian Change

Economics 797
Tuesday 6.15pm-8pm- Rm 919 Thompson

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Description

This course will mainly cover the political economy of rural change as societies transform from pre-industrial forms to more industrial. In addition it will consider the state of agricultural class relations worldwide in the context of globalization. During the course of the semester we will compare the classical transition as described by Karl Marx in Capital to more contemporaneous changes occurring in the world. We shall also consider how these changes differ in countries that elected a socialist path of development as compared to a capitalist one. In examining this transition we shall be particularly interested in examining issues of class differentiation, the various "modes of production" debates that took place worldwide, the relationship between productivity and size of holding, changes in the distribution of assets, the creation of wage labour, gender roles, institutional changes and the various ways that accumulation takes place. We shall also consider the role of the state in mid-wifing the transition and in trying to manage the tensions created by this process. The course will end by examining whether the classical agrarian question exists in a globalized world. The course will address the questions above by primarily examining a series of debates on the Agrarian question. We will start by reading the end of Capital on primitive accumulation. This will be followed by an examination of the transition from feudalism in Europe, including Kautsky and Lenin's work on Agriculture, followed by an examination of the Japanese transition. We will then turn to Mao's approach as an introduction to the question in the third world. This portion will include examining the Indian Modes of Production Debate, and the Debates in Latin America and Africa focusing on the "Nairobi Debates" in Africa. For the African component given both the state of Africa and the fact that it may not be as common in our curriculum will devote a little more time to questions of transition and African economic history. We will use the last part of the class to look at issues of Land reform today. This will begin with a discussion of the Griffin et al articles and the responses in the Journal of Agrarian Studies, followed by a critical review of the Lipton's new book on Land reform. While the class will attempt to cover all these questions the particular topics will depend on students’ interests.

To the extent possible most of the readings will be available via Moodle or other internet sites. I would recommend you purchase the Lipton Book as it is worth having if you are interested in the topic.
Requirements

1. Term paper 60% of grade
2. Participation and 2 page weekly summaries (10 weeks) 20% of grade
3. Presentation- 20% of grade – Students will do at least two presentations in the semester.

Bibliography

Because this class is designed to reflect students interest in the hope that it contributes towards assisting students in their dissertation preparation and writing – while ensuring that we cover the classics in the debates on agrarian change the schedule of classes and readings will evolve to reflect the students progress and interests.

Classical Transition and Basic Theoretical Framework

Lenin, V. I. i. (1956). The development of capitalism in Russia; the process of the formation of a home market for large-scale industry. Moscow, Foreign Languages Pub. House.
Mao, Z. (1933). "How to Differentiate the Classes in the Rural Areas." from http://csf.colorado.edu/psn/marx/Other/Mao/3310a.htm
http://csf.colorado.edu/psn/marx/Other/Mao/3310a.htm

1 If you are working on a prospectus in this area- A first draft of the prospectus plus a reduction in the number of weekly summaries may be substituted for some of the requirements. Please talk to the instructor to arrange this. By February 26th, you should have agreed upon the topic with the instructor.

**Feudalism, Asiatic Modes and Transition.**


**Marxism and Feminism**


Third World Transitions and Debates

Africa


Ng'ang'a, D. M. (1981). What is happening to the Kenyan peasantry?, Routledge. 8: 7 - 16.


**Latin America**


Kay, C. and P. Silva (1992). Development and Social Change in the Chilean Countryside: From the Pre-Land Reform Period to the Democratic Transition, CEDLA.


**Turkey**


India


China


Thailand


Agrarian Debates Today

Materials specified: Table of contents only http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0617/2006022004.html
Akram-Lodhi, H. "Land, markets and neoliberal enclosure: an agrarian political economy perspective." Third World Quarterly 28(8).


Lipton, M. (2010) Land Reform in Developing Countries, Routledge


Reference Material


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Readings</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 22nd</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Mwangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 5th</td>
<td>Kautsky – The Agrarian Question- Chapters 1-3, 5-6, 8, 12, 15-16</td>
<td>Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5th</td>
<td>Kautsky – The Class Struggle Erfurt Program – Chapter 1</td>
<td>Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5th</td>
<td>Lenin “Review of Die Agrarfrauge.” “Capitalism in Agriculture (Kautsky’s book and Mr. Bulgakov’s article) Collected works vol 4</td>
<td>Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 12th</td>
<td>Also see Agrarian Questions in Russia towards the Close of 19th Century and Agrarian Program of Social Democracy</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 12th</td>
<td>Luxemburg-Chapter 27-29</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19th</td>
<td>NO CLASSES</td>
<td>Osman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26th</td>
<td>Please have an abstract of your proposed paper ready</td>
<td>Osman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5th</td>
<td>Terms of Trade Debates and Transition (Mitra)</td>
<td>Bena</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12th</td>
<td>Indian Modes of Production Debate</td>
<td>Martha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 19th</td>
<td>SPING BREAK</td>
<td>Osman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26th</td>
<td>Latin America – The Agrarian Question (Dejanvry)</td>
<td>Kevin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2nd</td>
<td>The Colonial Economy in Africa</td>
<td>Mwangi</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9th</td>
<td>Land Redistribution and Poverty – The GKI intervention</td>
<td>Mwangi</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16th</td>
<td>Land Reform in Developing Countries – Lipton</td>
<td>Peter</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 23rd</td>
<td>Land Reform in Developing Countries – Lipton</td>
<td>Martha</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 30th</td>
<td>uestion Market led Reform</td>
<td>Peter</td>
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