

Ant 391.

Course: Economies of Anticipation.

**Kaushik Ghosh
SAC 5.142
Off Hrs M 3-5**

Pascal: “We never live, but we hope to live; and as we are always arranging to be happy, it must be that we never are so.”

Keynes: “Successful investing is anticipating the anticipations of others.”

Kafka: “There is hope, but not for us.”

Pascal’s well-known observation was aimed to point to a distinct kind of anxious affect produced by the new temporal politics called Enlightenment. Life under the sign of an emergent capitalism was to be organized as a practice of denial of pleasure in the present for a set of specific (secular) rewards in the future. If, for example, the hyper-rational bourgeois man -- Mr. citizen Scrooge – could extricate itself from the economy of kinship, with all its unpredictabilities and non-rational detours, then he will surely reap the benefits in the future.. For several centuries, this “economy of anticipation,” this “hope of life in the future,” this “modernity,” assumed a certain settledness in terms of this temporality.

This is still the matter of bourgeois life as mass culture today, but only one element that is embedded in a vastly different politics of temporality. Instead of disciplined investment, we have speculation. Instead of Fordism, it is Flexible Accumulation and Finance capital. Instead of a stable, moral present which produces a future of certainty (even if it is one of utopia), we have a turbulent present which is pounded and produced by readings of potentially immediate futures of uncertainty: stock markets, environmental catastrophes, withering mechanisms of welfare and the “emigration” of jobs and investments. It is also an “economy of anticipation,” but here the utopic future of modernity has been reduced to the feeble stirrings of a “cruel optimism”: the hope of a friend and just a job, any job. Not the economy of deferred accretion, or delayed rewards. As the mechanisms of capitalist accumulation have developed into ever greater levels of novelty, preciseness and intensity – bio-informatics and “intimate publics” – the nature of anticipation has changed towards dystopia, catastrophe and feeble hopes of survival.

At least that is how it looks like from the ramparts of the traditional centers of capitalist accumulation: North America and Western Europe. However, in the new emerging centers of accumulation – Asia, to take one instance – the nature of this economy of anticipation is different even if the instruments of accumulation are not always unique. While the postcolonial sense of “lag” has been rapidly answered by an explosion of economic power and accumulation, the anxiety of “arrival” – the recognition of being a global power – is immense. The future here is not of feeble hope, but dreams of reversal and limitless economic and political dominance. The future, however, is also media-ted. One has already seen it elsewhere: a Shanghai, an advertisement or a tourist package. Every place and every body now shimmers with the anxiety of this anticipated but uncertain future. The present has to be assembled under an immense violence of these pressing but (un)attainable futures. Place and locality, selves and communities, nations and economies, are relentlessly dismembered and reassembled to accommodate these futures. Hence we have a surfeit of dispossession, violence, migrations, investments, speculations and restructuring of everything. The old postcolony becomes a new theater of primitive accumulation: a spectacle of seizure of land, bodies, organs and affects. Not only does this call for rethinking on “primitive accumulation” and the nature of capitalism, but also the very logic of “anticipatory temporality” in modernity has to be redrawn. Unlike the cruel optimism of the old centers with their new politics of abandonment, these new economies of anticipation work with enormous state investments and projects of “inclusion,” which define, produce and complement the projects of dispossession.

This course is an introductory exploration into these emergent worlds of multiple economies of anticipation. It is a course on contemporary capitalism looked through the temporal logic of anticipation.

For each class meeting, each of you have to submit a two-page set of comments on the readings. Also, for each meeting two of you will be responsible for presenting the material (beginning from week 3). Details of what this entails will be discussed later. There is a requirement of a final term paper of 20 pages.

Books

- Clough, Patricia and Craig Willse. 2011. *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 - Berlant, Lauren. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 - Sunder Rajan, Kaushik. *Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 - Marx, Karl. *Capital: Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy*
 - Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2011. *Economies of Abandonment*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 - Stiegler, Bernard. *For a New Critique of Political Economy*. Trans. Daniel Ross. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010
 - Foucault . 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics*. Palgrave Macmillan.
 - Povinelli, Elizabeth. *The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy, and Carnality*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 - Harvey, David. *The Enigma of Capital: and the Crises of Capitalism*. Blackwell.
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Readings

Week 1 (Jan 24) Shifting Modernities

Berlant, Lauren. Cruel Optimism (Ch. 4: Nearly Utopian, Nearly Normal)? Pub Cult

Foucault, Michel. From Society Must Be Defended.

Deleuze: "Society of Control"

Rose, "Death of the Social"

Week 2 (Jan 31) Anticipation and Political Economy

Birth Of Biopolitics, Ch 1-3; 2-3 chapters from Security, territory, population

Gallagher

"Neoliberalism in Action: Inequality, Insecurity and the Reconstitution of the Social." Lazzarato

Venn, Couze "Neoliberal Political Economy, Biopolitics and Colonialism A Transcolonial Genealogy of Inequality"

Terranova, Tiziana. "The Nature of Political Economy in

Foucault's Genealogy of Biopolitics."

Miyazaki. 2006. "Economy of Dreams: Hope in Global Capitalism and Its Critiques." *Cultural Anthropology* 21(2).

Bloch, Ernst. The Principle of Hope. (Recommended).

Week 3 (Feb 7) Beyond Biopolitics

Clough and Willse. Beyond BioPolitics (Selected Essays)

Clough, Patricia Ticineto. 2007. "Introduction." In *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, edited by Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean O'Malley Halley. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 4 (Feb 14) Anticipation and Attrition

Berlant, Lauren. Cruel Optimism.

Miyazaki. 2009. "The Temporality of No Hope." In *Ethnographies of Neoliberalism*. Carol Greenhouse, ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Week 5 (Feb 21) **Anticipation and Attrition**

Berlant, Lauren. Cruel Optimism.

Week 6 (Feb 28)

Pvinelli. Economies of Abandonment

_____. Selections from The Empire of Love.

_____. Selected Essays.

Week 7 (Mar 6) **Precarity in Contemporary Capitalism**

Economies of Abandonment (continued)

Week 8 (Mar 20) **Crises of Capitalism: Two Views**

Harvey, David. The Enigma of Capital: and the Crises of Capitalism

Miyazaki. In Global Assemblages.

Week 9 (Mar 27) **Value, Dispossession and Primitive Accumulation**

Marx, Karl. On the Secret of Primitive Accumulation, (Capital Vol 1)

Essays by Jason Reed, Sandra Mezzadra.

Sanyal, Kalyan and Rajesh Bhattacharya. 2011. "Bypassing the Squalor: New Towns, Immaterial Labour and Exclusion in Post-colonial Urbanisation." EPW, vol xlvi no 31:41-48.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. (selections).

Week 10 (Apr 3) **Bio-Accumulation**

Sunder Rajan, Kaushik. Biocapital.

Cohen, Lawrence. 2006. "Bio-operability," in Global Assemblages.

Week 11 (Apr 10) **Bio-Accumulation**

Sunder Rajan, Kaushik. Biocapital. (continued)

Week 12 (Apr 17) **After Political Economy?**

Stiegler, Bernard. 2010. For a New Critique of Political Economy. Trans. Daniel Ross. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Week 13 (Apr 24)

Final Paper: Class Presentations

Week 14 (May 1)

Final Paper: Class Presentations