

AICTE—QIP Course on Cultures of *Un-desiring*: the Language of Postcolonial Agency and the global capital

Thinkers who foreground the self governed act of desiring as expressing the rhythm of the universe claim that affects of void, lack, silences, are effects of desire, rather than being its emanative source. In other words, for these thinkers, it is the desiring production that generates haecceities that we perceptualise as lack or gap. However, such a claim also invites questions such as whether it could be altogether wrong to suspect that the current western epistemology's determination to promote desiring as the natural existential mode is a disguised urge to redeem and invest in a whole lot of activities that the neoliberal, proto-colonialist machinery legitimizes. These are activities such as top down missionary zeal to baptize the Calibans of the non-west, enslave the indigenous population of a particular continent, activities that the performativity of desiring has precipitated for centuries together. As one might say, linking and connecting hasn't led to break downs, rather it has led to creation of fascist, totalitarian organizations & regimes.

It is true that the Marxian idea of labor may be creatively supplemented by the western epistemic focus on the workings of desire. However, it would not be incorrect to say that the idea of Labor in capitalism shows primacy of networking. This not merely marginalizes the manual labor that the migrant laborers perform in those innumerable sweat shops strewn across Western megalopolis, but also underrates the third world labor. This is a labor that is not so much directed towards linking, connecting, pursuing nomadic lines of flight only to yield a colonial expansionist network, rather it is a labor that expresses sites of capitalist exploitation and undesiring. The work force of the unorganized sectors, the bonded labors, or the contractual tillers of the land represent

these sites. In other words, with its protectionist, accelerationist and capitalist ring desire absolutely cancels what we may call states or cultures of un-desiring or non-production. Moreover, Western epistemology's focus on the immanence of desire leads to a whole sale rejection of independent subject positions and agency. While on the one hand, this could work towards making the west feel relatively less conscientious about its colonial past and neo-imperial present, prompting it to render its colonial history as a production of involuntary and inadvertent response to intensities rather than in terms of its conscious choices. On the other, it could really end up ridiculing the specific contributions that the different individuals had made to the decolonizing movements during the colonial times and are currently making to movements re-shaping democracies. True it is the revolutionary movements or protests may be aesthetically de-familiarized simply as eruptive nomadic forces, but does that gives us the passport to relatively trivialize the visible molar aggregates of sweat and blood or the actual subjectivities which had spearheaded them. Indeed, what will be the shape of the movements across the world and what will be the role of instrumental historical specificities in these movements? What the western episteme calls auto-rejection, an act of forgetting the self, could be appropriate for the denizens of the West, which colonized the entire world, but not for people who have just reclaimed their identities after a long struggle. Lastly the neo-pragmatist materialist resolve to equate desiring production with social production doesn't add up to a plain simple rejection of the Hegelian dialectical framework. Rather the epistemic rejection of this framework nullifies altogether its representation of antagonism as the key constituent of subjectivity and foregrounds the ontopology of the market where one registers the networks of the capital or those myriad connections and disjunction it enables with various assemblages. The question is how desirable is this

epistemic foregrounding of desiring as the groundless ground of our very existence or our being? Should we simply see this turn towards desire in the epistemic world as a kind of Archimedean discovery or is this turn a new move to sustain the capitalist mechanism?

Our course will engage with these observations and attempt to answer the questions which we have posed above while trying to explore the linkages between communication and desire.

Constituents of the dialogic encounter

1. Communication and desire
2. Desire, capital and dead ends
3. The effects of (un)desiring: the void, the lack, the pauses
4. The pro-capitalist mechanics of desire: within the deep interiority of capital
5. The colonial desiring machine and the traumatic postcolonial rupture
6. Redeeming and whitening desire: acceleration, pace, speed and technotronics
7. De vocalizing migrants and the subalterns: the hegemony of the upwardly mobile schizoid class
8. Third world Labor and desire
9. Modes of undesiring: *Homo-Sacer*, bare life and impotence
10. Fascism, right wing and the politics of desiring
11. Desiring vanishing mediators: affectualisation of history and mediations
12. De-centered agency and the reconstructive politics
13. Post colonizing “auto-rejection” and deeply historicizing identity politics
14. Contraction, body without Organs and naturalizing the mechanism of anti-production
15. Undesiring Poverty and deep inequality: de-capitalizing the capital

Lecture Schedule

For

The AICTE/QIP Sponsored Course

On

Cultures of Undesiring: The Language of Postcolonial agency and the Global Capital

Note: The schedule is tentative. The timings of the lecture may be altered keeping in mind the convenience of the speakers

Venue: SN Bose Auditorium

Time: 11 am to 5 pm

13-03-2017

11.00 am Inauguration

11.30 am Key note address/opening lecture **by Prof Aditya Nigam, CSDS, Delhi**

“Theory, Capital and Global South”

12.30 Tea-break

12.45 Discussion session/interaction with Prof Nigam

1.15 To 2.45 pm Lunch break participants may have their Lunch at Guest house or wherever they wish.

3.00pm Lecture by Prof Aditya Nigam

“After Utopia: Modernity, Socialism and the Postcolony”

4.00 To 4.30pm Discussion session/Interaction with Prof Nigam

4.30 pm High Tea/tea with Snacks

14-03-2017

11.30 am Lecture by Prof Dwaipayan Bhattacharya, JNU

“Revisiting a Marxist Government: Minorities, Marginalisations and New Possibilities”

12.30 am Tea Break

12.45 Discussion session/interaction with Prof Dwaipayan Bhattacharya

1.15 To 2.45 pm Lunch

3.30 pm **Participant Colloquia on the basis of their experiences of the lectures to be monitored by Dr. S S Das and Dr. A S Purakayastha**

4.30 Pm High Tea/tea and snacks

15-03-2017

11.30 am Lecture by Prof Ranabir Sammadar, Calcutta Research Group

“Materiality of politics”

12.30 am Tea-break

12.45 am Discussion Session/interaction with Prof Ranabir Sammadar

1.15 to 2.45pm Lunch

3.00pm Lecture by Prof. Ranabir Sammadar

“Rise of the new political subject”

4.00pm Discussion session/interaction with Prof Ranabir Sammadar

4.30Pm High Tea/tea with snacks

16-03-2017

11.30 am Lecture by Prof. Rajarshi Dasgupta, JNU

“The Ascetic Modality of Communist self”

12.30pm Tea Break

12.45pm discussion session/Interaction with Prof. Rajrishi Dasgupta

1.15-2.45 Lunch

3.30 pm Lecture by Prof Maidul Islam

4.30 High Tea/tea with snacks

17-03-2017

11.30am Lecture by Prof Rajarshi Dasgupta

“Rhyming Revolution: The people in communist art and literature”

12.30 pm Tea Break

12.45 pm discussion session/interaction with Prof Rajrishi Dasgupta

1.15 to 2.45pm Lunch

3.00pm Lecture by Prof Ajay Gudavarthy, JNU

“Debates in critical theory: locating their relevance in India”

4.00pm Discussion session/interaction with Prof Ajay Gudavarthy

4.30 High Tea/tea with Snacks

18-03-2017

11.30 am Lecture by Prof Anup Dhar, Ambedkar University

“Marxism and Spirituality”

12.30 pm Tea Break

12.45 to 1.15 pm Discussion session/interaction with Prof Anup Dhar

1.15 pm to 2.45 pm Lunch

3.00 pm Lecture by Professor Anjan Chakraborty, Calcutta University

“Postcolonial Economy in Transition: Globalization and Development”

4.00 pm—4.30pm Discussion Session

Interaction with Prof Anjan Chakraborty and Prof. Anup Dhar to be initiated by Prof. Ajay Gudavarthy

4.30 pm High Tea/tea with snacks

19-03-2017

11.30 am

“Capital in the Twenty first Century and Rethinking Marxism” - Joint Lecture by Prof. Anjan Chakraborty and Prof Anup Dhar with special reference to their recently edited special issue of the *Rethinking Marxism* journal

12.30 Tea Break

12.45—1.15 pm Discussion session/interaction

1.15 pm to 2.45 pm Lunch

3.00 pm to 4.00

Prof Ajay Gudavarthy on

“Agency in postcolonial democracy”

4.00 pm to 4.30 pm Discussion session/interaction with Prof. Gudavarthy

4.30 pm High Tea/tea with snacks

20-03-2017

11.30 am Lecture by Prof Jean Dreze

“ Postcolonial State, Governance and Responsibilities: Liberalisation and Changes in Social Policy in India”

12.30 am Tea Break

12.45 to 1.15 Discussion session/interaction with Prof. Dreze

1.15 to 2.45 pm Lunch

3.00 pm—4.00pm Valedictory

4—4.30 pm High Tea/group Photograph

