

Agenda #4, February 28, 2008

Session 4. The Socialist Compass

1. Civil society, social power and socialism

- The supremacy of civil society can mean the supremacy of oppressive interests. (Ricardo)
- Atomization of civil society: does this block socialism? Isn't civil society bourgeois? (Edo) Ideological/political heterogeneity of civil society: does this render social power incoherent? (Santiago)
- alternative concepts of civil society – eg Gramsci (María)
- The relation of economically powerful actors to civil society associations: how does this affect “social power”? (Rodolfo) Relation of social classes to the three forms of power, especially social power (Santiago, Pablo)

2. Socialism and the working class

- Shift from empowering workers to social empowerment (Wes, Rodrigo)
- Abandoning the classical subjects of socialism (Ricardo)

3. Ownership and rights

- What is “social ownership”? (Julian) how is it distinct from “private ownership” (Guillaume)
- How should workers coops be understood – social ownership? (Guillaume, Rodrigo)
- What are socialist property rights (Tod)
- Relationship of social ownership to state ownership (Rodolfo)

4. The market

- What is the role of markets in real utopian socialism? (Charity, Pablo)

5. The state

- Conceptualization of the state and state power (Catherine, Ruth)
- Conceptualization of power itself (Wes, Molly)
- The state as a contested, contradictory arena (Maria)
- The nation-state, the scale of the state and social power (Charity)

6. Political parties

- Relationship to associative democracy (Sung-Ik)