

**Agenda for Discussion. Session #2. Goran Therborn
September 22, 2011**

1. State power

- How should we understand this idea? What is the difference between *class* power and *state* power? (João)
- Is it legitimate to define the class character of state power by its *effects* (Lindsey, Ayca)

2. Contradictions

- How should we understand contradictions in Therborn's framework? Do they originate inside or outside the state? (Emmanuel, João)
- Can contradictions lead to systemic transformation? How? (Emmanuel)
- Is Therborn's theory to transformation basically ruptural? (Yotaro)
- Therborn vs Offe's analysis of crisis (Taylan)

3. Forms of variation of the capitalist state

- How should we think about Therborn's account of the monopoly capitalist state? (João)
- How do we theorize the variation across national capitalist states – like Germany vs US? (Taylan)
- Public/Private boundary: How should we think of the changes in recent years, eg in the public university. (Bob)

4. Taxonomy & explanation

- Therborn gives us an elaborate taxonomy of organizational forms, but does he really provide *explanations* (Michael)

5. The socialist state

- The treatment of the USSR undermines Therborn's theoretical account of the socialist state.
- What mechanisms would be needed for the collectivity of the masses to effectively control the cadres (and thus discard them if they fail to be integrated with the masses)? (Kathryn)
- Given that there is a state in socialism, how could it possibly "wither away" in a transition to communism within Therborn's framework? (Mitch)

6. Miscellaneous issues

- In what ways would Therborn's analysis be strengthened through a theory of emotions and politics? (Matt)
- How can we integrate the problem of ideology into the account of class rule through the state? Does this help explain how labor parties can be a format of representation of the bourgeoisie? (Ayca)
- How would the account of the state be different if more systematic attention was given to the subordinate classes? (Aliza)