

The Marxist Literary Group Institute on Culture and Society 2013

Deadline extended-- Now accepting proposals until March 15

Call for Papers

The Marxist Literary Group's annual Institute on Culture and Society (MLG-ICS) will convene this year in Columbus, Ohio, June 24-28, on the campus of the Ohio State University. This year's ICS special topic will be "Marxism and Representation." The topic was chosen not only for its general theoretical interest, but also for its pertinence in considering the shift in political possibilities brought about by the global economic crisis and growing political unrest throughout the world. As some claim, it is precisely the political potential of our present moment that charges theoretical questions about representation with renewed practical urgency: If any attempt to construct a Marxist politics has to contend with the inherited representational forms taken by social antagonisms, then our own historical moment demands that we engage with problems of representation articulated by both emerging political movements and academics. What strategies of revolutionary self-representation become possible in the aftermath of the postmodern 'crisis of representation'? How do new social realities and existing cultural forms affect these representations? What kind of emerging economic, social and political practices contain the seeds of a radically-other society? How do movements engage with what seems to many radical critics to be a crisis of radical political imagination?

Meanwhile, the global scale of capitalism's ongoing crisis and political upheaval creates a different set of representational problems for Marxism. As Fredric Jameson puts it, the stretching of social relations onto a global scale makes subjective experience incommensurate with scientific knowledge of the systematic functioning of capitalism. Therefore, any experience of the system has to be mediated by an aesthetic object. If so, what kinds of representational strategies can be used to capture both the systemic nature of capitalism and the desires that underpin individual experience? What forms of political representation are flexible enough to accommodate different spatial scales? How can workers who burn down factories in Bangladesh communicate with rioters in London? Which representational practices are flexible enough to speak to wholly different socio-cultural contexts and their respective spaces of political resistance?

The Institute on Culture and Society is run in consecutive sessions, and the discussion is most fruitful when participants stay for the entire Institute. Housing is available on campus, and every effort is made to keep the cost of attendance low. Graduate student participation is subsidized by the Marxist Literary Group. Proposals are welcome for traditional panels, individual presentations, roundtables, film screenings and Performances.

While talks pertaining to the chosen topic are encouraged, submitters should not feel limited by it. Every year, MLG is happy to host presentations relevant to all aspects of historical, political, and theoretical Marxism.

Confirmed speakers at this year's institute include Michael Hardt, Paul Smith, Barbara Foley, Eugene Holland, Jason Read, Jane Winston, Kanishka Chowdhury, Kevin Floyd and others.

All proposals except panel proposals should be a maximum of 250 words in length, and should include title, author, and author's affiliation. Panel proposals should include for each proposed paper a 250-word abstract, including title and affiliation, as well as a title and 100-word rationale for the session itself. Please send submissions (plain text or commonly used file format) by March 15, 2013 to mlg.ics.2013@gmail.com.