



## GLOBAL STRUCTURES AND CHANGE

(Sociology 01.920.393.02, Spring 2014)

Tu-Th 2:50-4:10 pm, Murray Hall 211

Professor: József Böröcz (<http://borocz.net>)

office hours: TBA; [jborocz@rutgers.edu](mailto:jborocz@rutgers.edu)

There is nothing “normal” or inevitable about the way in which the world is arranged. The globe “as we know it” is a historical product: its current structures used not to exist – they have emerged over time – and they will eventually give way to other structures. The world is not a natural composite of competing and/or cooperating nation-states either. Nor is it an “even playing field” in which individuals (currently just over seven thousand millions of us humans) compete for resources, power and recognition through a gallant and fair “game” so that the “best” win, and those who “lose” are un-deserving. In other words, the world is definitely not “flat.”

The world is, instead, an ever more tightly interconnected hierarchy. It forms a system that produces its own inequalities, injustices, power differentials, cultural forms, conflicts and change. The recognition that there exists such a thing as a powerful global social process has exerted a tremendous impact on the social sciences, including sociology.

This course surveys the state of the art in this new and exciting sociology of the largest social structures humans have ever known. We deal with topics that have a direct and compelling effect on the lives of people everywhere in the world (including the U.S.), but cannot be grasped by means of conventional thinking (which tends to be oriented toward the nation-state or even smaller social units). In this course, you will learn about the cutting edge in sociological work on the world. We interpret transformations of global structures during the roughly 500-year history of world capitalism, and we explore today’s global structures and their potential for change.

*This is a course for advanced undergraduate students.* In designing it, I have assumed that

1. you have an interest in finding out about the world (in this case, literally, the mechanisms that hold together the entire world) as a social process,
2. you have an open and inquisitive mind,
3. you are eager to compare and contrast what you find so that you don’t think you have all the final answers. (Who knows, you may even realize that one never does ;-).) And, because I am deeply optimistic, I have also assumed that
4. you are familiar with the key ideas of the social sciences (therefore I have not budgeted any time to review them in this course).

This consists of readings, lectures, films and discussions. Your main job is to prepare for the discussions by /1/ reading the assigned texts thoroughly and critically, /2/ relating them to the world as you experience it, and /3/ investigating any issues that might arouse your curiosity while doing the above. A word about the films: they are as serious intellectual products as the readings. We are using them as learning tools, not (just) entertainment.

As for the lectures, they build on the readings but *do not repeat or formally review them*. You will be asked to contribute to the discussions frequently, and your contributions will be a significant part of your grade. Therefore it is crucial that you keep up with the schedule of readings (see below) and that you handle the course material with an active and sustained interest.

Like most texts in the social sciences, the assigned readings require a little more attention, concentration and imagination of the reader than a tweet. Hence you should allocate enough time to read and digest what you read. I am almost certain that, at some point, you will feel a need to use online and/or library resources to do follow-up work, to find out things alluded to but not explained fully in the readings. This is part of the normal process of learning, and it is good for you (not to mention: FUN ☺).

The required books have been ordered through the University Bookstore. The readings should also be on reserve in Alexander Library. As the reading list on the last page of this syllabus indicates, some of the readings are available online, check first on the sakai site of the class.

**Grading** will be a judicious combination of non-curved scores obtained from your

- attendance (10%),
- lively, mature, concerned, provocative and constructive participation in the discussions (30%),
- midterm (30%),
- take-home final paper (30%) (to be handed out in class on May 1 and due at 2pm on May 2, under the door of my office (132A, Davison Hall, 26 Nichol Ave, Douglass Campus).

### **Midterm and Take-Home:**

Both the in-class midterm and the take-home final assignment are designed to engage your understanding of the readings and stimulate your creativity. I will most likely ask you to put to use some of the concepts we study, to apply them in some way. I have never used multiple-choice or True/False questions, and it is extremely unlikely that I would do so now.

## Course Schedule

	Tuesdays		Thursdays
1/21	Intro: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- class organization</li> <li>- what is 'structure'?</li> <li>- what is 'change'?</li> <li>- what is 'global'?</li> <li>- basic facts about the world</li> </ul>	1/23	Film-in-class:  <i>The Giant Awakes</i> (BBC, 1998, ~50 min)  <b>Homework for 1/28: What global structures are revealed / concealed in <i>The Giant Awakes</i>? How is the film's narrative problematic?</b>
1/28	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic magnitudes of global inequality, power, authority and exclusion</li> <li>- the globe as a system</li> </ul>	1/30	Film-in-class:  <i>Caravans of Gold</i> (Basil Davidson, BBC & Nigerian TV, 1984, 52 min)  Discussion of 2 films
2/4	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historiography of "backwardness"</li> <li>- "special roads"</li> <li>- the Latecomer's Advantage</li> </ul>	2/6	Discussion & Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Imperialism 1 (Hobson)</li> <li>- Imperialism 2 (Lenin)</li> </ul> <b>Readings: So 1990, ch. 2: 17-37.</b>  <b>(by now you should have read Hochschild up to Chapter 6)</b>
2/11	Discussion & Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modernizationism</li> </ul> <b>Readings: So 1990, chs 3 &amp; 4: pp. 38-87.</b>	2/13	Discussion & Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modernizationism (cont.)</li> <li>- Discussion the implications of chs 2-5 in So</li> </ul> <b>Reading: So 1990, ch5: 91-110</b>
2/18	Lecture & Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dependencia theories</li> </ul> <b>Readings: So 1990, chs 6 &amp; 7: 110-165.</b>	2/20	Lecture & Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dependencia (cont.)</li> <li>- Discussion of chs 5-7 in So</li> </ul> <b>Readings: So 1990, ch. 8: 169-199.</b>

2/25	Lecture & Discussion:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- world-systems analysis</li> <li>- discussion of chs 8-10 in So</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings: So 1990, chs 9 &amp; 10: 200-260.</b></p>	2/27	<b>IN-CLASS MIDTERM</b>
3/4	Lecture & Discussion:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The Long Sixteenth Century”</li> <li>- the first period of colonialism</li> </ul>	3/6	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century</li> <li>. modern colonialism</li> <li>. scientific racism + global industrial capitalism</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Böröcz &amp; Sarkar 2012, Colonialism, 1-5.</b></p> <p><b>By now you should have read Hochschild up to Chapter 13!</b></p>
3/11	Film-in-Class:  <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1965, Algerian-French-Italian) part 1.	3/13	Film-in-Class:  <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1965, Algerian-French-Italian) part 2. <p><b>Reading: Böröcz &amp; Sarkar 2012 ”Empires”, 1-4.</b></p> <p>Discussion of film and the Colonialism and Empires readings</p>
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
3/25	Film-in-Class:  <i>Lumumba</i> (Raoul Peck, 2000) part 1.	3/27	Film-in-Class:  <i>Lumumba</i> (Raoul Peck, 2000) part 2. <p><b>Reading: Hochschild: entire book!</b></p> <p>Discussion: Colonialism as a collective experience—colonizer and colonized</p>

4/1	<p>Lecture and Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the 20<sup>th</sup> century</li> <li>- wars for the re-division of the world</li> <li>- state socialism as a project and a geopolitical fact</li> <li>- the end of colonialism</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Böröcz, 2009: Chapter 3 (Segments to Regions), 65-110.</b></p>	4/3	<p>Discussion and Data Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- economic inequalities</li> <li>- unequal exchange and “uneven development”</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: UNDP 2013: 144-147.</b></p>
4/8	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can the system be fixed?</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Böröcz, 2005.</b></p>	4/10	<p>Film-in-Class:</p> <p><i>Syriana</i> (Stephen Gaghan, 2005), part 1.</p>
4/15	<p>Film-in-Class:</p> <p><i>Syriana</i> (Stephen Gaghan, 2005), part 2.</p> <p>Discussion of film</p> <p><b>Reading: by now you should have read chapters 1 (Food, Sociality and Sugar) and 2 (Production) in Mintz 1986, Sweetness and Power</b></p>	4/17	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- role of commodities in producing and maintaining the system</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Mintz 1986, chapters 3 (Consumption) and 4 (Power)</b></p>
4/22	<p>Lecture &amp; Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- geopolitics after the Cold War and other wars</li> <li>- how size matters (the US, the EU and the rest)</li> <li>- war: global structures and change</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended reading: Böröcz 2009, chapter 4 (Elasticity of Weight)</b></p>	4/29	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- global migration</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Portes and Böröcz, 1989, 606-630.</b></p>
4/29	<p>Summary &amp; wrap-up</p>	5/1	<p>Summary &amp; wrap-up TAKE-HOME ASSIGNMENT handed out</p>

**Readings:**

- Böröcz, József. 2005. "Redistributing Global Inequality: A Thought Experiment." *Economic and Political Weekly* (Mumbai, India), February 26.
- Böröcz, József. 2009. *The European Union and Global Social Change: A Critical Geopolitical-Economic Analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Böröcz, József and Mahua Sarkar. 2012. "Colonialism." *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*. Ed. Helmut K. Anheier, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Victor Faessel. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012. 229-234. *SAGE Reference Online*. Web. 22 Mar. 2012.
- Böröcz, József and Mahua Sarkar. 2012. "Empires." *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*. Ed. Helmut K. Anheier, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Victor Faessel. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012. 476-480. *SAGE Reference Online*. Web. 22 Mar. 2012.
- Hochschild, Adam. 1998. *King Leopold's Ghost: The Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Mintz, Sidney. 1986. *Sweetness and Power. The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin Books.
- So, Alvin. 1990. *Social Change and Development. Modernization, Dependency, and World-System Theories*. Sage Library of Social Research 178.
- UNDP. 2009. *Human Development Report 2009*. New York: United Nations. *ONLY THIS BRIEF SECTION*:
- . Tables: ONLY pp. 144-147.  
<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/philippines/docs/HDR/HDR2013%20Report%20English.pdf>

**The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by individual instructors. You may use laptop computers in the classroom, but **USE OF THE INTERNET IN THE CLASSROOM IS PROHIBITED UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED BY THE PROFESSOR.** Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, encouraged.**

**If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Instructors may specify other consequences in their syllabi. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml>.**

**The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances**