

## **Sociology 701- Comparative Historical Sociology**

**Professor Richard Lachmann**

Spring, 2021: Tuesdays 3:00 to 5:50 on-line

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 to 2:30 and by appointment

Office: Arts and Sciences 360

E-mail: RL605@albany.edu

Course Assignments: Students must e-mail to me and to the other members of the seminar a two-page comment on each week's readings by Monday at 5pm each week. Each person will be allowed to miss two out of the eleven required comments.

Additionally, each person registered for this course will need to write a fifteen-page paper addressing one of the issues covered in the seminar readings or relating a theme of the course to his or her own independent research. A 2-page prospectus for that paper is due in class, Tuesday, April 9. Students will present and discuss their research projects in the last two class sessions. The paper is due by e-mail on Tuesday, May 19. Note: I am perfectly willing to give you an incomplete and let you finish the paper over the summer.

Readings: All the readings are on e-reserve except Lachmann for February 9 and Mann and Wainwright for March 2, which I will e-mail to you. Please be aware, there are numerous items on e-reserve for this course besides those you will be reading. Those are items I used in past years and might use again. It is easier to keep them on-line than to have to resubmit them to the library each time I use them.

**February 2-** Introduction to the course

**February 9-** Overview of Historical Sociology

Richard Lachmann, What is Historical Sociology? (I will e-mail you a pdf of this book.)

### **Part I: Comparative Analyses of Political Economy**

**February 16-** The Logic of Capitalist Competition and Crisis

Robert Brenner, "The Boom and the Bubble," pp. 5-43 in New Left Review #6, November-December 2000. [on e-reserve as "The Boom and the Bubble"]

Brenner, "Postscript," pp. 285-312 in The Boom and the

Bubble. [on e-reserve as "Brenner, Postscript to the paperback edition"]

Giovanni Arrighi, "Hegemony Unravelling," in New Left Review #32, March-April 2005. [on e-reserve as "Hegemony Unravelling"]

Giovanni Arrighi, "Hegemony Unravelling, II," in New Left Review #32, May-June 2005. [on e-reserve as "Hegemony Unravelling II"]

## **February 23-** Forms of Power

Michael Mann, The Sources of Social Power, volume 3: Global Empires and Revolution, 1890-1945, chapters 1, 5, 6 and 13, pp. 1-16, 129-207, 398-422. [on e-reserve as "Sources of Social Power volume 3"]

## **March 2-** The Political Ecology of Global Capitalism

Mike Davis, Late Victorian Holocausts, Preface and chapters 1, 5, 9 and 10, pp. 1-59, 141-175, 279-340. [pp. 1-59 and 141-175 on e-reserve as "Davis Preface" and pp. 279-340 as "Origins of Third World"]

Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright, Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future. Chapters 2, 5-8, pp. 25-49, 99-197.

## **March 9-** The Working Class in the World System

Beverly Silver- Forces of Labor, pp. 1-179. [pp. 1-74 on e-reserve as "Silver, Introduction," pp 75-123 as "Labor Movements," and pp. 124-179 as "World Politics"]

## **Part II- States in a World System**

### **March 16-** Ideology and Imitation

James Scott, Seeing Like a State, chapters 2, 4, 6, 7, and 10; pp. 53-83, 103-146, 193-261, 342-357. [pp. 53-83 and 103-146 on e-reserve as "Scott- Seeing, cities, people and languages," pp. 193-261, 342-357 as "Soviet Collectivization"]

**March 23-** Democracy as a World Movement

John Markoff, Waves of Democracy, pp. 1-141; maps pp. 143-155. [pp. 1-12 on e-reserve as "Modern Democracy," pp. 13-69 as "States, social movement challengers, pp. 71-99 as "Markoff, Pendulum Swings," pp. 101-155 as "Semidemocracy"]

**March 30-** Fascism

Michael Mann, Fascists, Chapters 1, 2, and 10, pp. 1-91, 353-75. [pp. 1-91 on e-reserve as "Mann, A sociology...", pp. 139-206 and pp. 353-75 are on Blackboard as "Mann fascists conclusion"]

Gotz Aly, Hitler's Beneficiaries, chapters 1, 2, and 13, pp. 13-72, 310-25. [pp. 1-35 on e-reserve as "Gotz the dream...", pp. 36-72 and 310-25 are on Blackboard as "Aly"]

Dylan Riley, Civic Associations and Authoritarian Regimes in Interwar Europe: Italy and Spain in Comparative Perspective, American Sociological Review, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 288-310.

**April 6-** one day university break, no class

**April 13-** Imperial Politics and the End of Colonialism

**Paper prospectus due at the start of class**

Hendrik Spruyt, Ending Empire: Contested Sovereignty and Territorial Partition, Introduction and Chapters 1, 4, and 6, pp. 1-38, 117-45, 176-203. [pp. 11-87 on e-reserve as "Spruyt Introduction," pp. 117-45 as "Spruyt Britain," and pp. 176-203 as "Spruyt Portugal."]

**April 20-** The Transformation of War

Martin Shaw, The New Western Way of War, pp. 1-145. [pp. 1-28 on e-reserve as "Shaw, Introduction," pp. 29-70 as "Theories of the new," pp. 71-97 as "Rules of War," and pp. 98-145 as "Iraq"]

**Part III: The Political Economy of Culture**

**April 27-** A World System of Literature and Prestige

Pascale Casanova, The World Republic of Letters, pp. 1-172.

[pp. 1-44 on e-reserve as "Casanova, Introduction," pp. 45-81 as "Invention of literature," pp. 82-125 as "World Literary Space," and pp. 126-72 as "Fabric of the universal"]

**May 4-** Overflow week

**May 11-** Discussion of Paper Topics

**May 19- Paper due** (Note: I am perfectly willing to give you an incomplete and let you finish the paper over the summer.)

"The Four Questions," AKA "How to Read" [written by Maurice Zeitlin]

In the classes to come, I would like your reading to be organized according to the following four questions.

The questions are:

1. What does the author want to know?
2. Why does the author want to know it?
3. What does the author think the answer is?
4. How does the author find out?

Each one of these questions can be elaborated into series of further queries.

1. What does the author want to know?

1.1. The originating question. That is what the author really wants to know? This often takes the form of a broad theoretical issue.

1.2 The central question. This is a question that states the problem or agenda of this particular study, and links that question to the originating question.

1.3 The specifying questions. These are the sets of issues or specific relationships that the author must examine in order to answer the author's central question.

2. Why? (What is the rationale for the author's study?)

2.1 The author needs to be able to explain why finding an answer to the central question matters intellectually. Generally this part of the study takes the form of a 'review of the relevant literature' in which the author situates the study with respect to what other important scholars have argued.

3. What is the author's 'working hypothesis' or general argument?

3.1 What is the author's tentative answer to the central question?

3.2 What is the author's tentative answer to the specifying questions?

3.3 What have others suggested that these answers are?

4. Sources and methods. What did the author do (what materials were collected, and how were they analyzed) in order to answer the central question?