SOCIAL CHANGE:
A Graduate Seminar
in Historical Sociology

Tuesdays, 9:30-12:10
Davison Hall 128
Rutgers University, Spring 2019
(16.920.572.01)

Convened by Böröcz József
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office hours: TBA
This is a graduate reading seminar probing the intellectual foundations of the comparative-historical sociology of social change and, more specifically, of modernity, by mapping on each other two narratives: /1/ the—for lack of a better term—“scholarly” language of the social sciences and /2/ intellectual production treated, since the west European Enlightenment, as something different from the above, labeled “fiction.”

The course addresses some fundamental conceptual issues of comparative historical research and surveys some of the best studies on various aspects of social change available in English, paying special attention to notions of teleology, coloniality, and their particularly noxious product, Euro-centrism. It works through discussions of the issues emerging from the readings, and József’s occasional summaries of contextual and/or background information. Class discussion—a scholarly, intellectual give-and-take—is thus the most important component of this course. You are required to come completely prepared, including a thorough, “quality-time” reading of the texts, and a mature, constructive, active and intellectually exciting agenda. There will be occasional, short “homework”-style assignments, some of which may not show up in this syllabus.

You are required to prepare a one-page summary of the key points of each week’s films and readings and upload them to sakai.rutgers.edu, by 6 pm on the Monday preceding each class meeting. These outlines will serve both as tools to start the discussion and as items in a collectively produced archive of the ideas from this class for later reference.

Grading—an uncanny manifestation of the urge, so characteristic of modernity, to quantify the un-quantifiable—will be based on a judicial combination of /1/ your contribution to constructing the class as an creative intellectual space, /2/ your short assignments, and /3/ your paper.

For your paper, develop a maximum 5000-word study on a topic that falls within the broadly conceived subject matter of the course. Book reviews are unacceptable. I will be happy to consider alternative genres as long as their choice is well justified (documentary video, photo-essay, etc.). The ideal project will relate some unique empirical material to theoretical issues relevant to social change in a creative way. Submit a title-plus-150-word topic statement to me as soon as possible, but no later than the class on March 12. Do use my office hours to discuss possible topics and approaches. You may submit your outline via email (see my address above). We shall use the last two classes for a mini-conference of the projects, to receive comments/suggestions/criticisms. The final version of the paper is due 5 pm, May 2, 2019. Submit it by email to me at jborocz@rutgers.edu.
January 22:

Intro: Class Organisation +
Basic Issues in Social Change

Film-in-class:

*The Danube Exodus*
(Dir.: Péter Forgács, Hungary, 1998)
The Eurowhite Man Knows Be(a)st

January 29: The Eurowhite Man Knows Be(a)st

FILM: I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO
(dir.: Raoul Peck, USA, 2016)

Kipling, Rudyard. 1890. “The Mark of the Beast.”


**FILM: I AM CUBA**
(Mikhail Kalatozov / Mikheil Kalatozoshvili, USSR-Cuba, 1964)
February 19:

Empire, Coloniality and Histories for Valid Persons

FILM: BATTLE OF ALGIERS (Gillo Pontecorvo, Italy-Algeria, 1966)


February 26:

**Denial of Co-Evalness**


Recommended:


**FILM: EVEN THE RAIN**

(Dir.: Iciar Bollain, Spain, Bolivia, 2010)

*Charles Darwin (1837)*


FILM: SYRIANA (Dir.: Stephen Gaghan, USA, 2005)
March 12:
Identities: Invention, Tradition, Nationalism

FILM: PATHER PANCHALI
(Dir.: Satyajit Ray, India, 1955)

Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger (eds.) 1983. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Only the following chapters:
- “Introduction: Inventing Tradition” by Eric Hobsbawm (1-14)
- “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914” by Eric Hobsbawm (263-308)


- "Whose Imagined Community?" Pp. 3-13
March 26: Memory and Social Change under State Socialism


FILM: MAN OF MARBLE (Dir.: Andrzej Wajda, Polish, 1977)
April 2:
Post-state-socialisms


FILM: GOOD BYE LENIN!
(Dir.: Wolfgang Becker, Germany, 2003)
April 9: Microhistory: Reconstruction of Life Worlds 1


FILM1: WE ARE YOUNG, WE ARE STRONG (Dir.: Burhan Kurbani, Germany, 2014)

FILM2: ROCKING THE NATION (Dir.: Bori Kriza, Hungary, 2007)
April 16: Microhistory: Reconstruction of Life-Worl ds 2

FILM: THE RETURN OF MARTIN GUERRE
( Dir.: Daniel Vigne, 1982)

April 23: 
**Subjecthood / History**


FILM: LAGAAN. ONCE UPON A TIME IN INDIA
( Dir.: Ashutosh Gowarker, India, 2001)


FILM: BEFORE THE RAIN
Dir.: Milcho Manchevski, Macedonia, 1994