The syllabus outlines a college level international relations seminar with a neo-Marxist theoretical orientation. The objective of the seminar is to present an historical and comparative approach to a study of the evolution of the international political economy. Following an introduction explaining seminar objectives, grading, and course requirements, the syllabus is presented in 16 categories—one for each week of the course. Topics are course organization, overview of the modern world system, origins of capitalism, origins of the modern world system (1450-1560), key features of the modern world system, crisis in the system, the mercantilist world system (1600-1800), British dominance (1650-1789), industrial revolution, the French Revolution, adaptations to change, class struggle in the 19th and 20th centuries, revolution and crises, the American world system (1939-?), and the possibility of a socialist world system. For each topic, information is presented on background, required reading, and recommended reading. Readings are selected from the disciplines of economic, social, diplomatic, and political history. Required and recommended references are coded as to whether they represent a typical capitalist or Marxist viewpoint. (DB)
SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This seminar will take an historical and comparative approach to the evolution of the international political economy. The period covered will be 1450-1975. We are concerned with how our world came into being. In the mid-fifteenth century Europe was no more "advanced" or "modern" than other contemporary civilizations such as the Islamic, the Indian, and the Chinese. Yet, over the past 500 years Europeans created capitalism, the nation-state, and the rules of international law and diplomacy which have spread to cover the globe. During this process Europe and its overseas extensions such as the USA became rich and powerful while the non-European world generally became poor and powerless. How did this historical process unfold? Why did it happen the way it did? Can the present world-system be changed? Should it be changed?

Readings will be from the disciplines of economic and social history as well as from more conventional diplomatic and political history. Our aim is to achieve an integrated approach giving equal attention to economics and politics via the readings and in particular during seminar discussions. Special emphasis will be given to the identification of the major structures of the world-system, points and causes of structural change, and conjunctures of forces that produced historical phenomena such as mercantilism, imperialism, bourgeois and socialist revolutions, neo-colonialism and under-development.

The theoretical orientation of the seminar will be neo-Marxist. Discussion of alternative viewpoints will be encouraged.

This seminar should be of interest to advanced undergraduates and graduate students working in the fields of international political economy, international politics and systems, foreign policy analysis, the international relations of regional systems, and comparative politics.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The following are all required textbooks. Please buy them and read them according to the following reading list. The texts are listed in the approximate order in which they will be read.


**GRADING**

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

1) Value position essay, 3-6 pages, 15%.

2) Seminar discussion participation, 15%.

3) Final, take-home examination, 70%.

The grading system is:

- A = excellent, Ph.D. level work (85-100)
- B = acceptable, M.A. level work (70-84)
- C = unacceptable graduate level work (55-69)
- F = try something else level work (0-54)

A student failing to take the examination or to turn in the essays when due without a documented medical excuse will receive a zero grade for the assignment. Incomplete grades will only be given for a similar medical excuse; this is a Graduate School rule which, unfortunately, must be strictly enforced.

**PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS**

Students with a lively, articulate interest in the subject are sought. Participants are expected to write one essay, participate in seminar discussions, and to write a final take-home type examination.

1) **Value Position Essay, 3-6 pages, due at the third seminar session:**

   In a brief, introspective essay, you are asked to explicate your personal feelings about (a) capitalism vs. socialism, (b) violent
vs. non-violent policies, (c) the nation-state as a political-economic organization, and (d) other value questions if you wish. What are your values and why do you think you hold them? How may your values affect what you bring to and get out of this course? Clear, logical writing and reasoning are desired; what your values are is less important than how well you can say what they are and why you hold them. HINT: Read Glenn Paige's essay, "On Values and Science," APSR (December 1977).

2) **Seminar Discussion Participation**, every week during the semester:
   
   Each week we have several required readings aiming to introduce an important topic in the evolution of the modern world-system. Students are expected to have read these materials before the seminar meeting so as to be able to discuss them during the session. Also, each week two or three students will do assigned recommended readings and report on them to the rest of the seminar. In reporting on a reading, give the seminar the key ideas of the author and their relationship to the course materials rather than a précis of the reading.

3) **Take-Home Type Final Examination**, 10-15 pp., to be distributed at the twelfth seminar session:
   
   This examination will cover the required readings only and will involve identification and essay-type questions. In answering the questions, you may consult any sources you like, including class notes, but you may not discuss your answers with other students.

**REFERENCE WORKS**

The following books and multi-volume collections "tell what happened in history" since 1450. You should become familiar with them during the seminar, and they may help in writing your final examination which, at the very least, must correctly treat sequences of events.

**A. General and Political History:**


B. Economic and Social History:


C. Diplomatic and Military History:


8) L. C. B. Seaman, *From Vienna to Versailles* (London: Methuen, 1955), C, not at ASU.


D. Atlases:


JOURNALS

The following journals publish frequently articles and book reviews relevant to the seminar's subject matter.

A. French and European:
   The Journal of European Economic History, 1971 - HC 240'AIJ 6S.

B. British:
   Economy and Society, 1972 - HI E33.
   Journal of World History - 1960 - D 1C22.
   Past and Present, 1952 - 905 P291.

C. American:
   Journal of Economic History, 1941 - 330.5 J86.
   Politics and Society, 1970 - JA 76 A1P63X
   Theory and Society, 1974 - HM 1 T45X
   World Politics, 1948 - D839 W57

READING LIST

Following may be found weekly reading assignments divided into required and recommended readings. The required readings seldom amount to more than 350 pages, which I firmly believe serious graduate students can cover in at most 8-9 hours reading each week. The required readings really are to be read as they will form the basis of each week's seminar discussion and will be reviewed on the final examination. The recommended readings are there for you to sample as your interests dictate. Each week from two to three recommended readings will be assigned to individuals for summary during the second half of each seminar session.

The subject matter of this seminar is truly vast, so this reading list cannot pretend to be a bibliography. Besides the bibliographical reference tools the librarians in Hayden Library will gladly show you, consult:


Please note that for each item on this list I indicate by "C" or "M" whether it represents a Conventional bourgeois treatment of the topic or a Marxist treatment. It is interesting that with one or two exceptions such a classification was easy to make! Students might want to ask themselves why? Also note that if the reading is in the ASU library system its call number and location are given. Finally, with respect to the required readings, please try to read them in the order listed, for it was done with a purpose and should make a more digestable package.

WEEK I -- ORGANIZATION AND ORIENTATION

The instructor will explain the seminar syllabus and reading list, the intended organization and scope of the course, and his orientation to the subject. Students are encouraged to contribute ideas reflecting their interests and expectations, for nothing is fixed and the entire structure herein outlined is open to revision. There are no required readings, but three recommendations.

RECOMMENDED:


WEEK II -- OVERVIEW OF THE MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM

This seminar rejects the distinction between economics, politics, and history established in the 20th century by conventional bourgeois historians and social scientists. Rather, our approach is undisciplinary, the closest current school being undogmatic Marxian political economy which, because it is Marxian, is historical as well as being focused on current problems. We therefore assume that to understand current North-South relations and the differentials between industrial and underdeveloped regions, for example, we must recognize and study the historical origins of "the gap." This gap
between the rich and poor is a structural feature of something we shall call the modern world-system (MWS). The MWS is a social system characterized by an economic division of labor of worldwide scope and an anarchic political order based in the first instance upon competitive nation-states that had its origins in the period 1450-1560. This session of the seminar will provide an indispensable introduction and overview of the MWS. The required readings by sociologists, economists, and a political scientist provide the necessary overview. The recommended readings give views of historians regarding what they do and how it should be done.

REQUIRED:

RECOMMENDED:
WEEK III -- THE ORIGINS OF CAPITALISM

There are various ways of organizing economic activity -- redistributive empires, feudalism, capitalism, socialism. The capitalist mode of production (CMP) has as its essence production for profit in a market. This was not the dominant mode of production in Europe or anywhere else in 1300 nor in East Africa as late as 1850. Clearly, capitalism originated somewhere for certain reasons which we should in principle be able to understand and since its origins it has spread worldwide via mechanism we should also be able to comprehend.

Such comprehension is indispensable, for despite what you have been taught in most other courses you have taken, the history of the MWS is to a great extent the story of the origin and spread of the CMP and its uneven impact throughout the world. The base of the MWS is an international division of labor organized according to capitalist principles. How did capitalism originate and what are its basic principles of organization and operation? These two questions could easily make a semester-long course in themselves. For examples of such courses see the U.R.P.E., Reading Lists, particularly pp. 56-57. We can only introduce this topic here, but we shall return to it time and again throughout the semester.

What you must grasp is that the study of international relations begins with the study of the CMP as it has organized itself internationally throughout the last 500 years of history. Given this premise, students might ask why there is not even one English language textbook on "theories of international relations" that devotes even one chapter to capitalism, its origins, and patterns?

REQUIRED:


RECOMMENDED:

WEEK IV -- THE ORIGINS AND INITIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM, C.1450-C.1560

During this brief period of time, the "first sixteenth century," three events co-occurred that still shape our world today. First, as we saw last week, the CMP became firmly established in key urban areas such as Antwerp and in regions such as the Low Countries even though it was hardly yet the dominant mode of production even in Western Europe. Second, as the result of Portuguese and Spanish explorations, the geographical sphere of European activity expanded greatly beyond Europe proper to include areas as far apart as present day Mexico and Peru on the one hand and Indonesia on the other. Third, the first attempt to achieve hegemony over Western Europe and thus the MWS by Charles V of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire was defeated. This period then is the first formative and expansive stage of the MWS wherein international economic specialization and system-wide balance of power politics emerge. Plus ca change, plus c'est la même chose!

REQUIRED:
WEEK V -- KEY FEATURES OF THE EARLY MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM 1450-1650.

The MWS is not an empty concept, rather it represents observable political-economic structures whose operations have direct consequences for the life of states, nations and other ethnic groups, classes, and individuals. The international division of labor allocates different roles to states -- core, periphery, and semi-periphery. Changes in economic role affect the political balance of power among states. Economic role and power position affect processes of nation-building, class formation, urbanization, and labor control. All of these features can be seen in the first stage of the MWS, from 1450-1660. Note that conventional diplomatic history begins with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Conventional international economic history begins between 1730 and 1780 with the industrial revolution in Britain. Clearly, in this seminar we have adopted an unconventional position that these starting points are off by 200 or 300 years. Students might well ask why there exists this silence about the origins of our world?

REQUIRED:

1) I. Wallerstein, The Modern World-System, pp. 224-357, M.

A theme we shall confront throughout this seminar is the analysis of rather short periods dominated by a particular pattern of forces. Common terms for this concept are "epochs" or "ages," usually "golden ages" of specific countries. We shall use the term "conjuncture" to represent this idea. Thus the conjuncture of the first period of the MWS from about 1450 to 1560 was one of economic and geographical expansion in combination with Spanish-Habsburg attempts to achieve political hegemony over the system. The conjuncture during 1560-1650 was one of slowed population growth, economic contraction and religious-ideological warfare of system-wide scope with no dominant state. This was also the period of the first bourgeois revolution,
that of the United Provinces between 1568 and 1648, which for the first time firmly put in state power a capitalist class, thus leading to the "Golden Age" of the Netherlands, c.1600-1700, when this small country was the commercial giant of the MWS to the chagrin and envy of most of the rest of the core. What then was the nature of this crisis and how were the Dutch able to profit from it?

REQUIRED:

RECOMMENDED:
1) Sir George Clark, War and Society in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), C, 172.4 C 5933.
4) Geoffrey Parker, "The Emergence of Modern Finance in Europe, 1500-1700," in ibid., pp./527-594. HC240 F582.

WEEK VII -- THE MERCANTILIST WORLD-SYSTEM, 1600-1800

These two centuries saw few technological breakthroughs, except for the earliest beginnings of industrialism in Britain. Hence, it was more
a period of consolidation of the economic and geographical achievements of the first period and a struggle for core primacy among the Dutch, English, and French. In their struggles for hegemony these states openly coordinated economic, political and military policy in pursuit of power and profit. Mercantilism is the general concept we use to refer to this policy. We ought to understand how this system operated, for neo-mercantilism is a hotly debated doctrine in IPE today.

REQUIRED:


2) Violet Barbour, Capitalism in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), entire, C, not at ASU.


RECOMMENDED:


WEEK VIII -- BRITAIN'S DRIVE FOR MASTERY OF THE WORLD-SYSTEM 1650-1789

In the mid-seventeenth century Britain lagged far behind the Netherlands in commercial activity and equally far behind France in population and military strength. By the time of the French Revolution Britain had far surpassed both rivals in commerce and empire and her navy was unrivalled. Britain's achievement of dominance was the result of wars against the Dutch and then against the French, often in alliance with the Dutch. The story of the rise in British power is particularly instructive for the British. achieved this without clear economic or financial advantages over her rivals, British industrialism beginning only in the 1780's. While the causal mechanisms are complex, the relationship between British achievements in this period and her subsequent industrialization cannot be ignored.

REQUIRED:

1) Ralph Davis, The Rise of the Atlantic Economies, pp. 268-316, C.


RECOMMENDED:


WEEK IX -- THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN THE WORLD-SYSTEM

The twin revolutions, the industrial revolution in Britain c.1780-c.1830 and the French Revolution 1789-1815, transformed the world-system in multifaceted ways. Because of the accumulation in Europe of the preceding 300 years and the vastly increased economic, political, and military power available to European states as a consequence of these revolutions, it would be possible to reorganize the world system on a truly global scale. These two revolutions along with the initial period from 1450 to 1550 were the most decisive periods so far experienced by the system. Let us first look at industrial capitalism, so important to international relations in every way it is hard to believe it is less than 200 years old.

REQUIRED:


RECOMMENDED:


WEEK X -- THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT

The ideas of the French Revolution and the global struggle involved in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars profoundly shaped the modern world-system of the nineteenth century and beyond. Nationalism, liberty, equality, mass citizen armies, world leadership for Britain and economic retardation for the continent of Europe are all among consequences of longer or shorter duration. To what extent changes in the world system represent a cause of the Revolution and how the ensuing wars shaped the system for the future will be considered in this session of the seminar.

REQUIRED:


RECOMMENDED:


WEEK XI -- IMPERIALISM - INFORMAL AND FORMAL 1815-1914.

In the view of many the nineteenth century, particularly during the last quarter (1870-1900), represents a fundamental turning point in the history of the modern world-system. It was roughly between 1870 and 1900 that Europe and the United States in a frenzy of Imperialism, gained control of colonies throughout most of the Third World -- Africa, Asia and the Middle East. But was this new imperialism a break with the past, or did it represent little more than the likely consequence of 400 years of European contact and the vastly changed balance of forces created by the European dual revolutions? We will look at these and related questions in this session of the seminar. Again, this is not a mere exercise in history, for your views on the causes of European imperialism form the basis of your attitudes toward the Third World today.
REQUiRED:


RECOMMENDED:


WEEK XII -- ADAPTATIONS TO CHANGE IN CORE AND PERIPHERY.

Between 1750 and 1850 Britain became the first industrial society and thus began the transformation of the modern world-system. For the development of the MWS, the rise of industrialism led to profound change in all features of the system, but three are of particular significance. First, the productivity of labor was vastly augmented, thereby creating the need for export markets and sources of raw materials. Second, beginning in the 1830s railroads created a revolution in land transportation technology vastly reducing the costs of bulk land transport. Third, in the 1870s steel and steam replaced wood and sail in ocean shipping, greatly lowering costs and greatly increasing speed and capacity of ocean freight. Soon thereafter refrigerated shipping made possible the long-distance transport of highly perishable goods.

These technological changes and the revolutionary qualitative change in the CMP represented both challenges and threats to the regions of the MWS. For core and semi-peripheral states there was the need to catch up to industrial Britain or risk being peripheralized. In the periphery and among weaker semi-peripheral areas, the question was how best to participate in this rapidly expanding world-economy. Both formal colonies and regions subject to informal control responded by producing agricultural and mineral exports and by accepting manufactured imports. Thus, between 1850 and 1914, in response to market forces, political influence and control, and domestic class alignments, the international division of labor we know today was largely formed.

REQUIRED:


RECOMMENDED:


**WEEK XIII -- CLASS STRUGGLES IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES.**

As Hobsbawm argues, the dual revolution brought to economic and political power the bourgeoisie. But as Marx stressed and as Hobsbawm would readily agree, the bourgeoisie to exist presupposes the existence of their contradiction -- the proletariat. "Class struggle" is not normally a core element in graduate programs in economics or political science, much less international relations! Yet it represents the primary element in domestic violence since the beginning of the 19th century at least and if we recognize how "role in world-system" is a class-like concept, class struggle is at the root of much international conflict as well. In this session of the seminar we shall focus on class struggles in France and elsewhere during the 19th and 20th centuries.

**REQUIRED:**


3) ________, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, any edition.


**RECOMMENDED:**


**WEEK XIV -- TWENTIETH CENTURY CRISES AND REVOLUTIONS.**

As we saw during week VI, there was a great crisis in the early modern world-system during the seventeenth century. We now know that this period of crisis marked the final phase of the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Western Europe. It can be argued that the twentieth century equally represents a period of crisis, marking perhaps the first stage in the transition from capitalism to socialism. Not only has this century so far seen unprecedented amounts of violence involving two global wars and innumerable other wars, it has seen two certain major revolutions -- the Russian and the Chinese -- and many others as part of the anti-colonialism struggle. We too are living in a period of transition in which the tensions and contradictions of the capitalist world-system are ever more apparent. Consideration of these ideas will occupy the final sessions of the seminar.

**REQUIRED:**


**RECOMMENDED:**


WEEK XV -- THE AMERICAN WORLD-SYSTEM 1939- 

As we have seen, within the core of the world-system power relations may be more or less balanced. The middle half of the 20th century was a period of imbalance wherein the United States was the economic, political, and military leader. While open to controversy, the perspective of this course considers the 1970's as a period of change to a more balanced core with the U.S. no longer being clearly dominant over all other states in all three areas. This is a rather important change for it is likely that a transition from one mode of production to another cannot occur when there is a hegemonial power committed to the former mode.

While we shall discuss this issue during the seminar, we shall be primarily concerned in this session with how and why the U.S. behaved differently or similarly to earlier dominant core powers -- Venice, Spain, Netherlands and Great Britain.

REQUIRED:


2) Geoffrey Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary History, pp. 153-232, C, not at ASU.


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RECOMMENDED:

1) David Horowitz, Empire and Revolution, pp. 182-258, M, HX 518 s867

WEEK XVI -- TOWARD A SOCIALIST WORLD SYSTEM?

Can the present capitalist world-system be changed? Should it be changed? What options are open to individual states within the system? What sort of world will your children live in? What role can you play as a student and citizen in shaping this world?

REQUIRED:

RECOMMENDED:


