

**Topics in Sustainable Development:
Comparative Approaches to Global Injustice and Social Inequality
Fall Module 2 2018
Fridays, 9:00-11:50AM
HS210f Room **TBD****

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University
Sustainable International Development Graduate Program

Module II: Comparative Approaches to Global Injustice and Social Inequality

Spring 2017

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Office Hours: by appointment

University Notices:

1. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

Course Description

SDG Goal #1 seeks “an end to poverty in all its forms everywhere” (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>). Between 2002 and 2012 the proportion of the global population living under the poverty line dropped by half from 26% to 13%. It could fall even further, to 4% up to 6%, assuming a steady economic growth rate comparable to the past 10 or 20 years, and “assuming that growth benefits all income groups of the population” (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>). Reducing poverty thus depends on reducing inequality, both within and among countries. This is

the purpose of SDG #10, which seeks to reduce address disparities based on income but also on “age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status within a country” <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg10>

Beyond the current generation of SDGs, writers and social theorists have long debated the interrelated dynamics of poverty, inequality and social injustice. Beginning with seminal critiques of colonialism and Western domination, the course will trace how these ideas inform the current choices of policymakers and development practitioners who seek to address deeply entrenched social divisions and injustices in their societies. We will use a case study approach – focusing on South Africa, India and Brazil but with reference to other countries in their respective regions – to compare and contrast different understandings and interpretations of the origins of poverty, inequality and injustice, and to assess the relevance of these views to current global models of development policy and practice.

The first three class sessions will explore themes of marginalization, Western domination and post-colonial critiques of development models as seen by classic and contemporary writers. Sessions four through six will delve into the current situation of countries marked by persistent poverty and deep structural inequalities. We will consider policies and programs designed to address these intertwined realities, looking for successful examples from different world regions. Session seven will examine policies and philosophies of development based on conceptions of global justice and equality. As development scholars and practitioners, we will pay special attention to the relationship between academic research, policy formation and program implementation and evaluation as it informs and leads to measurable social change.

Specific Goals:

- To gain knowledge of selected historical and philosophical views of poverty, inequality and marginalization
- To ‘deconstruct’ the underlying politics and philosophies of different development models, especially contrasting postcolonial critiques with Western development paradigms
- To apply a ‘gendered approach’ to questions of poverty, inequality and marginalization
- To understand the relationship between poverty, inequality and marginalization as reflected in diverse country and regional contexts
- To analyze the role and impact of selected institutions, policies and programs working on these issues
- To enable students to conduct research and analysis on the course topics and help students apply the information they learn in the course to a development problem of interest to them.

Core Competency Statement:

This course teaches concepts and skills that have been identified as core competencies for the SID masters degree. Sessions 1 – 7 of the course fulfill the core competencies through readings emphasizing the historical background of development issues (#1) and the interdependence of social, political, cultural and economic systems that shape development outcomes (#2). The reading material and discussions will familiarize students with systems, structures and institutions that shape contemporary development problems (#3). They emphasize the importance of understanding empirical contexts to ground ideas and theories of development (#4) and the relativity of timeframes in which development processes unfold (#8). The course also satisfies the core competency on improving communications (#10), since students will analyze, discuss and write about a range of relevant texts, including policy reports and complex philosophical arguments by theoreticians of global justice and ethicists concerned with the development field.

Sustainable Development Statement:

Starting with classic views of oppression and marginalization, the course examines how poverty and inequality are intertwined in various countries. The course then examines a range of policies and programs that attempt to address these issues, which are central to the sustainable development goal of building equitable, stable and socially cohesive societies.

Race and Ethnicity Statement:

This course examines historical, philosophical and political concepts of poverty, inequality and injustice from a comparative perspective, as seen by thinkers and activists from different intellectual and cultural traditions. It is based on understanding perceptions of race, ethnicity, social class and other markers of ‘difference’ in contemporary societies, how those perceptions lead to bias and social exclusion, and how to assess policies designed to overcome those divisions.

Gender Perspective Statement:

By definition, the concerns of both women and men (as people who do not define themselves in binary gender terms) in development need to be considered both independently and together, recognizing that different societies employ diverse approaches to gender relations. Students will learn how to incorporate a gender lens into broader discussions of poverty, inequality and injustice. They will also investigate whether specific national policies lead to discriminatory practices that impede women’s full participation in society, or condone stigmatization and violence against individuals or groups with diverse sexual preferences and gender identities.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance at all sessions
2. Prompt arrival

3. Preparation of all readings
4. Participation in class discussions and small group work, and leading class discussions as requested
5. Timely submission/presentation of assignments
6. Class exercises and presentations
7. Helpfulness to other students.

Your **Grade** will be calculated as follows

1. Class attendance and participation (12.5%)
2. Group presentation (12.5%).
3. Research Proposal (25%) – A minimum of **2 pages** based on preliminary research for the final paper. Proposal is due in Week 4. Guidelines for the research proposal will be distributed. (Single spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins.)
4. Final paper (50%) - Each student is required to submit a **6-7 page** final paper on policies, organizations or programs that address poverty and inequality. Due during the final week of class. (Single spaced, 12pt font, 1" margins.)

Writing assignments not submitted by the announced deadline will **NOT** be accepted. Students will receive a zero (0) for the missing assignment. No make-ups will be permitted.

Class Schedule and Readings:

PART I: THE COLONIAL ROOTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Week 1: Classic Writers on Colonialism

This class will introduce powerful, original voices that described exploitation and injustice in pre- and post-independence periods in Africa and Latin America.

Required:

Galeano, E. (1973). *Open Veins of Latin America*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Read: Foreward: Isabel Allende, pp. ix-xvii

Chapter 1, "Lust for Gold, Lust for Silver," pp. 2-59

Chapter 5, "The Contemporary Structure of Plunder," pp. 205-262

Nkrumah, K. (1963). *Africa Must Unite*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger.

Read: Introduction, pp. ix-xvii

Chapter 1 – "The African Background," pp. 1-8

Chapter 2 – "The Colonial Imprint," pp. 9-19

Chapter 12 – "Reconstruction and Development," pp. 97-106

Chapter 18 – "Neocolonialism in Africa," pp. 173-193

Fanon, F. (2004). *The Wretched of the Earth*. (Richard Philcox, Trans.). New York: Grove Press. (Original work published 1963)

Read: Foreward: Framing Fanon, by Homi K. Bhabha, pp. vii-vliiii
Chapter 1 – “On Violence,” pp. 1-52

Recommended:

Rohter, L. (2014). Author Changes His Mind on 70s Manifesto. *The New York Times*. May 23, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/24/books/eduardo-galeano-disavows-his-book-the-open-veins.html>

Biney, Ama (2008), The Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah in Retrospect. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2008, pp. 129-159.

Frantz Fanon – Meridian BBC World Service, November 24, 2016.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VJRCFzw_Y4

Week 2: Post-Development Theories and Critiques

This class will introduce the school of post-colonial and post-development critiques of Western development models. Students will learn how critical approaches to development have emphasized a primary link between historical systems of injustice and inequality and the challenges of development today.

Required:

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Read:

Chapter 1, “Introduction: Development and the Anthropology of Modernity,” pp. 3-20

Chapter 2, “The Problematization of Poverty: The Tale of Three Worlds of Development,” pp. 21-54.

Esteva, G. (1992). “Development.” In Wolfgang Sachs, ed. *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*. London: Zed Books. 6-25.

Escobar, A. and Esteva, G. Post-Development @ 25: on ‘being stuck’ and moving forward, sideways, backward and otherwise, *Third World Quarterly*, 38:12, 2559-2572, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2017.1334545

Recommended:

Ziai, A. (ed) (2007). *Exploring post-development theory and practice, problems and perspectives*. Milton Park and New York: Routledge.

Read:

Ziai, A. Introduction, “Development discourse and its critics: an introduction to post development,” pp. 1-17

Escobar, A. Chapter 2, “‘Post-development’ as concept and social practice, pp. 18-32.

Week 3: Gender, Decoloniality and 'Comunalidad': Social Struggles for Emancipation
This session continues our work on radical critiques of development. We pay particular attention to women's roles in fighting oppression and in sustaining traditional practices and knowledge, as seen in the experience of indigenous communities in Oaxaca, Mexico. We explore the concept of 'comunalidad,' which counters notions of individual rights and actions as the basis for social organization. We ask how these ideas should affect our thinking about development and social justice.

Required:

Icaza, R. and Vazquez, R. (forthcoming). "The Coloniality of Gender as a Radical Critique of Developmentalism" In Harcourt, Wendy, ed. *The Palgrave Handbook on Gender and Development: Critical engagements in feminist theory and practice*.

Icaza, R. (forthcoming). "Social Struggles and the Coloniality of Gender" In Shilham, R. and Rulazibwa, O. *Handbook on Postcolonial Politics*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Kaller-Dietrich, M. "Comida: A narrative mirror for the universal concept of nutrition," pp. 180-193. In Ziai, A. (ed) (2007). *Exploring post-development theory and practice, problems and perspectives*. Milton Park and New York: Routledge. Pp. 181-194.

Campoy, Pablo (n.d.). "Listening to Comunalidad". Unpublished paper.

Recommended:

Nussbaum, M. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Read: Introduction: Feminism and International Development, Sections I-VI, pp. 1 -33

PART II: FROM THEORY TO POLICY AND PRACTICE

Week 4: Case Studies: South Africa/Africa

This class explores South Africa, the first case study in the course. We begin with selections by Steve Biko, a murdered journalist and one of South Africa's great freedom fighters. We keep Biko's themes in mind as we review contemporary data on economic and social inequality, and analyze the country's failure to overcome the legacy of apartheid.

Required:

Biko, Steve (2002). *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Originally published 1978).

Read: Introductory material and sections 1 (Biographical Summary), 5 (Black Souls in White Skins), 6 (We Blacks), 11 (White Racism and Black Consciousness), 18 (Our Struggle for Liberation) and 19 (On Death).

https://books.google.com/books?id=l6HOxfMR6UUC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Jauch, H. and Muchena D. (eds) 2011. *Tearing us apart: Inequalities in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg and Windhoek: OSISA and LaRRI. Available online:

<http://osisa.org/books/economic-justice/regional/tearing-us-apart-inequalities-southern-africa>

Read: Introduction, pp. 1-12

Chapter 4, "Inequality in South Africa"

"Over the Rainbow." *The Economist*. (2012). Retrieved from:

<http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21564829-it-has-made-progress-becoming-full-democracy-1994-failure-leadership-means>

"'Black economic empowerment has failed': Piketty on South African inequality." *The Guardian* Feb 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/06/piketty-south-africa-inequality-nelson-mandela-lecture>

Recommended:

Gordimer, N. (2013). *The Barrel of the Apartheid Gun*. Retrieved from: <http://www.guernicamag.com/features/the-barrel-of-the-apartheid-gun/>

Gordimer, N. (1981). *July's People*. New York: Viking Press.

Mandela, N. (1994). *Long Walk to Freedom: the Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Various newspaper and magazine articles about current economic, political and social issues in South Africa. See Latte page.

Week 5: INDIA/ASIA

This class focuses on India/South Asia, the second case study. As in the previous session, we will ground our inquiry in writings by a voice rising from an oppressed group. We read a famous text by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a Dalit known for his fight against untouchability, accompanied by an analysis by Arundhati Roy, a well-known Indian novelist and writer. We will then examine the current state of poverty and inequality in contemporary India.

Required:

Ambedkar, B.R. (2004). *The Annihilation of Caste* (1936) Retrieved from: <http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/ambedkar/web/index.html>

Read: Sections 1, 2 & 3; Appendix 1 (“A Vindication of Caste by Mahatma Gandhi” and “Appendix 2: A Reply to the Mahatma”)

For an annotated online version, see:

<file:///Users/joandassin/Desktop/Comparative%20Approaches%20copy/Social%20Exclusion%20-%20Final%20Syl%20&%20Sources/MSE%20%7C%20The%20Annihilation%20of%20Caste%20-%20Dr.%20B.%20R.%20Ambedkar.webarchive>

Roy, Arundhati (2014). *The Doctor and the Saint*. 2014. See video:

https://archive.org/details/ArundhatiRoy-TheDoctorAndTheSaint-2014_328

Dev, S.M. (2016). *Economic Reforms, Poverty and Inequality*. Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai, March 2016.

<http://www.igidr.ac.in/pdf/publication/WP-2016-009.pdf>

Dreze, J. and Sen, A. (2011). “Putting Growth in Its Place”. *Outlook India Magazine*, 14 November 2011. <http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/putting-growth-in-its-place/278843>

Recommended:

Da Haan, A. & Thorat, S. (2010). Addressing Group Inequalities: Social Inclusion Policies in China’s and India’s Rural Transformation. *Paper for International Conference ‘Dynamics of Rural Transformation in Emerging Economies.’* New Delhi.

Various newspaper and magazine articles about current economic, political and social issues in India. See Latte page.

Week 6: Brazil/Latin America

This class explores the third case study of the class, focusing on Brazil/Latin America. First we will look at selections from the writings of Abdias do Nascimento, a founder of the black movement in Brazil. Abdias was a leading voice in debunking the ‘myth of racial democracy’ in Brazil. We will also look at economic and sociological data assessing the state of inequality and poverty in the country, as well as affirmative action and social protection policies aimed at reducing Brazil’s social and economic disparities.

Required:

Nascimento, A. (1989). *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre? Essays in the Genocide of a Black People*. Dover, Massachusetts: the Majority Press. Selections.

Affirmative Action in Brazil: Slavery’s Legacy. *The Economist*, April 26, 2013.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/americasview/2013/04/affirmative-action-brazil>

Slavery's Legacies. *The Economist*, September 10, 2016.

<http://www.economist.com/news/international/21706510-american-thinking-about-race-starting-influence-brazil-country-whose-population>

Holmes, R., Hugen-Zanker, J. and Vandermoortele (2011). *Brazil's Story: Social protection in Brazil: Impacts on poverty, inequality and growth*. London: Overseas Development Institute: London.

http://www.developmentprogress.org/sites/developmentprogress.org/files/brazil_social_protection.pdf

Recommended:

Cornia, G.A. & Martorano, B. (2011). Democracy, the New Left and Income Distribution: Latin America over the Last Decade. In Valpy FitzGerald, Judith Heyer and Rosemary Thorp (Eds.), *Overcoming the Persistence of Inequality and Poverty* (pp. 172-199). New York: Palgrave.

Marx, A.W. (1988). *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States and Brazil*. Cambridge, U.K., New York: Cambridge University Press.

Telles, E.E. (2004). *Race in Another America. The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil*. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Various newspaper and magazine articles about current economic, political and social issues in Brazil. See Latte page.

PART III: Reconciling Perspectives: Development and Social Justice

Week 7: Postcolonialism and Development

This last class considers whether it is possible to reconcile postcolonial critiques with development policy and practice as practiced by Western-based organizations. What are the implications of radical critiques of the prevailing development models for aspiring development professionals? We consider these issues in the context of the relationship of poverty and inequality in today's globalized economy, as well as in light of the United Nations' Sustainable Development goals.

Required:

Simon, D. (2006). Separated by common ground? Bringing (post) development and (post) colonialism together. *The Geographical Journal*. Vol. 172, No. 1, March 2006. 10-21.

Sharp, J. and Briggs, J. (2006). Postcolonialism and Development: New Dialogues. *The Geographical Journal*. Vol. 172, No. 1, March 2006. 10-21.

Oxfam: *An Economy for the 1%* (18 Jan 2016). Briefing Paper 210.

https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp210-economy-one-percent-tax-havens-180116-en_0.pdf

Sustainable Development Goals: #10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

Alvaredo, F. et al. *World Inequality Report 2018*. Executive Summary.

<https://wir2018.wid.world/files/download/wir2018-summary-english.pdf>

Recommended:

Ziai, A. (2011). Postcolonialism and Development: Disparate Tales Reconsidered.

Development and Change, 19 October 2011. 42 (5) 1297-1305.