

## Sociology and Anthropology

### *Transnational Flows, Structures, Agents and the Idea of Development* *July 4 - 15, 2005*

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### Course syllabus

Globalization has superseded development, authors of globalization claim almost consensually. The practice and theory of development have long attracted criticism for their arrogance, cultural insensitivity, their homogenization and essentialization of the part of the world that is in need of development, the unilinear and teleological foundations of developmental thinking, and in general for the poverty of developmentalist imagination. The final eclipse of developmental thinking came with globalization and regionalization that overwrote the unit of development, the nation, and challenged the potential of the (nation) state to act as its major agent. It is certainly true that processes such as the virtualization and deterritorialization of economic activities, the denationalization of economic space and specific institutional arenas, the emergence of transnational legal regimes and the explosion of global media flows have eroded this potential of the state. Yet, instead of “posting” development this course will focus on how the unbundling of development, the nation state and citizenship reconfigures the very idea of development. We understand development as related to the ‘public good,’ as a concentrated large-scale effort to improve the welfare of citizens, to promote a better and more just society even if it is inscribed on a more fragmented social body. The flow of ideas concerning what constitutes good life and through what means it should be achieved, how good society should be arranged and run are abundant and no less arrogant than earlier however different and perhaps smaller-scale they may

be. A critical examination of the standards of ‘welfare’ and the prescriptions for its accomplishment are one task of the course.

The course is not an exercise in defining and mapping globalization. It examines some strategic sites that condition transnational flows of commodities, labor and ideas and looks at how ‘development’ is promoted in these sites by actors, such as supranational organizations, foreign governments, NGOs, INGOs, and private capital along with the reconfigured nation state. Development since its ambition is to improve things is an intervention of sorts into the everyday life of citizens, thus perceived as external. The course gives priority to interventions with a transnational dimension.

In selecting the topics, we made a concentrated effort to bring theory and empirical work together. We invite both academics and professionals, practitioners who reflect on their own praxis, or let others do it and are willing to engage in a dialogue.

## Topics

### **I. Modernity, development, capitalism, and globalization**

1. Correcting an insufficiency perceived in comparison to others—the evolutionary assumptions and arrogance of development/modernity theories (*Judit Bodnar*)
2. Globalization and uneven development—framing the problem (*Judit Bodnar*)
3. Development, post-development, and their critics (*Kaveh Ehsani*)
  - a. The Regimes of Development, Globalization, and Post-Washington Consensus: Market versus Plan, Market versus State as New Paradigm?
  - b. Defining Poverty as a ‘Problem’
  - c. The Power Relationship at the Core of Development Discourse and Practice: Questioning the Economy and Technopolitics

### **II. Strategic encounters of transnational flows and developmental ambitions**

4. Transnational biopolitics, subjectivity, development and the humanitarian industry (*Vinh-Kim Nguyen*)
  - a. The social impact and local politics of transnational networks of NGOs, discourses, and Bretton Woods institutions: Politics, bodies, and desire
  - b. Their mode of operation: Circulation, subjectification, publics
  - c. Theorizing the networks: Biopower, multitude, sovereignty

5. Global Governance and Development – Regimes of Standards and Numbers  
(*Gerhard Anders*)
6. Global politics, economics and the environment (*Patrick Bond*)
  - a. Global economic and political turbulence
  - b. The commodification of the environment and resistance
  - c. Politics and economics in Africa
7. Transnationalization of corruption, the globalization of (anti)corruption discourse and reconfigured state sovereignty (*Ivan Krastev*)
8. Encountering the states in transnational migration (*Ayşe Çağlar*)
9. Towards a transnational civil society: Global feminism, local identities and modern Muslim women (*Norma Moruzzi*)