

## **Sociology 306a/553a, EPE 337a: Empires and Imperialism**

Monday 3:30-5:20 pm  
493 College Street, Room 208  
Instructor: Peter Stamatov  
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Today, we live in a world of nation states, a world in which each nation has—or aspires to have—its “own” state. Yet this global dominance of the idea of the nation state is of relatively recent provenance. For the most of human history, political power has been organized in forms more complex than the simple formula “one nation/one state.” In this course, we will discuss empires, the institutional manifestation of this complex organization of political power.

Empire, imperialism, colonialism and postcolonialism are concepts frequently evoked in public and academic discourse, mainly to refer to the period of European overseas expansion from the fifteenth century on. One aim of this course is to place this European imperialism and its consequences in a larger comparative context. We will do so by considering the historical predecessors of modern European imperialism in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, as well as “contemporaries” of European empires in other parts of the world. With this foundation, in the second half of the course we will discuss and evaluate representative works drawn from the rich literature on modern imperialism and colonialism.

### Requirements and Readings

- 1) Regular attendance, careful reading of the assigned texts, and engaged participation in class.
- 2) Abstention from laptop use. While laptops are an indispensable productivity tool, their use in the class room creates a sterile atmosphere with everyone glued to their screen instead of engaging with the discussion. In order to facilitate a more vibrant discussion, you are therefore asked to take notes the old-fashioned way. Please contact me if this is a problem for you and we will work out an alternative solution.
- 3) Once in the semester, you are required to write and post on the class website by 12 pm on the Friday before the class a short, one- to two-page paper highlighting the most important theoretical and empirical issues raised by the readings assigned for this week. The purpose of the paper is to initiate the in-class discussion.
- 4) A mid-term paper of approximately 5 pages due by 3 pm, October 26.
- 5) A term paper of approximately 10-15 pages due by 3 pm on December 11. The questions for the mid-term and term papers will be distributed well in advance before the due date.

The following books are required and are available at the Yale Bookstore (tel. 203-777-8440, <http://www.yalebookstore.com>), as well as through the numerous internet-based booksellers. In addition, copies will be reserved at the Bass Library.

Abernethy, David B. *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires 1415-1980*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Curtin, Philip D. *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Mann, Michael. *Incoherent Empire*. London: Verso, 2003.

The rest of the readings will be available through electronic reserves.

## COURSE OUTLINE

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August 30 Introduction and Course Overview

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September 9 Definitions: Empire, Imperialism

Pagden, Anthony *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500-c.1800*, Chapter 1.

Porter, Andrew. *European Imperialism, 1860-1914*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1994, Chapter 1

Eisenstadt, S. N. *The Political Systems of Empires*. New York: Free Press, 1963, pp. 3-5, 10-24.

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September 16 The Emergence of First Empires

Mann, Michael *The Sources of Social Power*, Vol. 1: *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986: Chapter 5, "The First Empires of Domination," pp. 130-178, and Chapter 8, "Revitalized Empires of Domination," pp. 231-249.

Kuhr, Amélie "The Achaemenid Persian Empire (c. 550-c. 330 BCE): Continuities, Adaptations, Transformations, in Susan E. Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, pp. 93-123.

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September 23 The Roman Model

Koebner, Richard, *Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966: Chapter 1: "'Imperium': The Roman Heritage," pp. 1-17.

Mann, *Sources of Social Power*: Chapter 9, "The Roman Territorial Empire," pp. 250-300.

Woolf, Greg "Inventing Empire in Ancient Rome," in Susan E. Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, pp. 311-22.

Recommended: Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*, Chapters 1 and 2.

September 30

American Empires

Grillo, R. D. *Pluralism and the Politics of Difference: State, Culture, and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998: Chapter 3, "Pragmatism against Morality: Ethnicity in the Aztec Empire"

Rostworowski, María and Craig Morris, "The Fourfold Domain: Inka Power and its Social Foundations," in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, Volume III: *South America*, ed. F. Salomon and S. B. Schwartz, 769-863. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 (Available as an e-book through the Library's catalog)

October 7

European Empire after Rome

Muldoon, James. *Empire and Order: The Concept of Empire, 800-1800*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, pp. 15-20, and "Conclusion: Empire and State"

Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, Chapter 6: "States, Empires, and Political Imagination," pp. 153-203.

John Moreland, "The Carolingian Empire: Rome Reborn?," in Alcock et al., *Empires*, pp. 392-418.

October 14

Contiguous Empires in Asia and Europe

Grillo, *Pluralism and the Politics of Difference*: Chapter 4, "Pluralism in a Patrimonial Bureaucracy," pp. 75-96

Taylor, A. J. P. *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918: A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, Harper, 1965: Chapters 1: "The Dynasty," Chapter 2: "The Peoples," pp. 9-32, and Appendix, "The Political and Ethnographical Structure of the Habsburg Monarchy," pp. 262-69

October 21

The European Expansion Overseas

Abernethy, David B. *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires 1415-1980*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, Read especially carefully Chapters 2 and 10.

Brady, Thomas A. Jr. "The Rise of Merchant Empires, 1400-1700: A European Counterpoint." In *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, edited by James D. Tracy, 117-61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

RECESS

October 26: MID-TERM PAPER DUE

October 28

The Political Economy of Empires and Imperialism

Porter, *European Imperialism*, Chapter 3.

Curtin, Philip D. *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.  
Douglass C. North, "Institutions, Transaction Costs, and the Rise of Merchant Empires," in Tracy (ed.) *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*

November 4

Empires as Cultural Phenomena

Stoler, Ann Laura. "Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 1 (1989): 134-61.  
Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978, Introduction and Chapter 1.  
Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, Introduction, pp. 3-32

November 11

Decolonization

Strang, David. "Global Patterns of Decolonization, 1500-1987." *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1991): 429-454.  
Crawford, Neta C. "Decolonization as an International Norm: The Evolution of Practices, Arguments, and Beliefs." In *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention*, edited by Laura W. Reed and Carl Kaysen, 37-61. Cambridge, Mass.: Committee on International Security Studies, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993.  
Jackson, Robert H. "The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations." In *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, edited by Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, 111-138. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

November 18

A New Imperial Age?

Mann, Michael. *Incoherent Empire*. London: Verso, 2003, Introduction and Chapters 1 to 4.

RECESS

December 2

Final Discussion

December 12: TERM PAPER DUE