



CULTURE AND GLOBALISATION (IR115)

Course duration: 54 hours lecture and class time (Over three weeks)

LSE Teaching Department: Department of Anthropology

Lead Faculty: Professor Matthew Engelke (m.engelke@lse.ac.uk)

Pre-requisites: None

Course Content:

Globalisation is one of the most important dynamics of contemporary social life. The world is increasingly interconnected, and some pundits even talk of life in a 'global village'. But what does globalisation really entail? And what are the cultural forces that shape it? This course explores these key questions, largely from the vantage point of anthropology—the social science that has done the most to help us understand culture. We begin by considering the relationship between the culture concept and globalisation, since it is so often a concern with culture that animates the debates about globalisation. Is a 'clash of civilisations' inevitable in our globalised world? Does the emergence of a 'global village' spell the end of cultural difference?

As an introductory course, students need not have a background in anthropology. After considering the basic tenets of the culture concept in relation to globalisation, the lectures move on to consider a number of related topics, including: economic development and transnational corporations; the influence of globalisation on tourism; the role of cultural knowledge in the 'global war on terror'; human rights; cultural identity in a geo-political perspective; and global media networks. There will also be a lecture on the London Olympics (of 1948 and 2012) and how they reflect on globalisation.

Readings for the course are organised around a set of important anthropological pieces, but also include perspectives from sociology, political science, media studies and journalism. The readings are complemented by interactive on-line exercises as well as the discussion and analysis of film, news clips, and other media sources. The class also takes a field trip to Tower Hamlets, East London, to complement readings in the course on globalisation and migration.

Readings:

All of the readings will be available on-line, either in an e-pack (listed as **EP** below), or via the LSE library electronic collections.

Course structure

- Twelve 3-hour lectures (broken into two segments, with a short break in between)

- Twelve 1.5-hour discussion sections

Assessment

- Formative work (2 pieces); this is unmarked but allows students to gauge their progress and strengths and weaknesses. Exact details of formative work to be confirmed at the start of the course
- One exam (worth 50% of the course grade; covering materials in lectures)
- One assessed essay (worth 50%; 2000 words; due 30 June; addressing the culture concept—details confirmed at the start of the course)

Course Outline:

June 20th Day 1, Lecture 1: The Culture Concept

In this lecture we introduce what anthropologists generally mean when they refer to “culture” and how it relates to current interests in globalisation. By then moving on to more recent perspectives on world history, such as “the clash of civilisations,” we set the groundwork for the course as a whole.

Required reading

- Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Globalization”, **EP**
- Adam Kuper, “Culture Wars”, **EP**
- Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Available on-line via the LSE Library at <http://www.jiscjournalarchives.ac.uk/openurl.html?ref=proquest/1086/1086-1993-072-03-000006.pdf>

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June 21st Day 2, Lecture 2: Culture and Social Evolution

This lecture begins by addressing the idea of social evolution and how it has influenced our understandings of development and civilisation. Connecting back to issues raised in the first lecture on the clash of civilisations, here we move on to consider the practice of labelling societies as “civilised,” “barbaric,” or “primitive.” These discussions are then applied to the case of a development project in rural Uganda run by *The Guardian*.

Required reading

- E.B. Tylor, excerpts from *Primitive Culture* **EP**
- Arturo Escobar, “Anthropology and Development.” Available on-line via LSE electronic journals <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2451.1997.tb00040.x/epdf>
- Various blog postings, the Katine Project, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine> (to be confirmed in lecture)

June 22nd Day 3, Lecture 3: Cultural Relativism

One of the most difficult issues raised by globalisation is the extent to which we should accept (or even adopt) the ideas and lifestyles of others. As the discipline that did the most to develop and articulate the principles of

cultural relativism, anthropology provides a good lens through which to understand these issues. In this lecture we focus in particular on debates about whether the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is indeed universal, or, as some argue, culturally relative.

Required reading

- Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim women really need saving? Reflections on cultural relativism and its others." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/doi/10.1525/aa.2002.104.3.783/epdf>
- AAA Executive Committee, "Statement on Human Rights." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/662893.pdf>

June 23rd Day 4, Lecture 4: Global Flows

Another way to understand the universalism vs. relativism debate is to ask if globalisation, as represented in such documents as the UDHR, is making different cultures more alike. This question of "cultural homogenisation" has been central to globalisation theory from the start. In this lecture we examine some of the key anthropological interventions on this topic, turning in particular to the idea of "global flows."

Required reading

- Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." Available via LSE at <http://tcs.sagepub.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/content/7/2/295.full.pdf+html>
- Leslie Skair, "Sociology of the Global System", EP
- Ian Condry, "Japanese hip-hop and the globalisation of popular culture", EP

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June 24th, Day 5, Lecture 5: Families in Flux: Kinship, Migration, and the Movement of People

Part of what distinguishes globalisation from other conceptions of "world systems" is the scale of movement—migrations and travels at unprecedented levels. In this lecture, we focus on one of the most important effects of such movements, which is how it reconfigures the family and personal networks.

Required reading

- Katy Gardner, "Desh-Bidesh: Sylheti Images of Home and Away." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals page, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2804433>
- Katy Gardner and Kanwal Mand, "'My Away is Here': Place, Emplacement, and Mobility among British Bengali Children." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals page <http://www.tandfonline.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/1369183X.2012.677177>

June 27th Day 6, Lecture 6: Commodities and Commercials (More Global Flows)

Commodities and media texts circulate at rates much faster even than people, with digital technologies making it possible to transmit information, ideas, and even desires in an instant. In this lecture we focus on the questions posed to globalisation theory by two key examples of this: food and advertisements.

Required reading

- James Watson, "McDonald's in Hong Kong", EP
- William Mazzarella, "'Very Bombay': Contending with the Global in an Indian Advertising Agency." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals page
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/cgi-bin/fulltext?ID=120178753&PLACEBO=IE.pdf&mode=pdf>

June 28th Day 7, Lecture 7: The Politics of Identity

Globalisation has created whole new configurations of how people identify themselves, and how they use those identities to advance their political and social agendas. In this new scheme of things, having a "cultural" identity can be an incredibly valuable tool, especially for minority populations living in politically hostile conditions: the Amazonian rainforests, the Kalahari desert, the hills of Guatemala. In this lecture, we look at how cultural identity plays a role vis-à-vis national politics and international group-rights movements, focusing in particular on the ways in which Rigoberta Menchu, a Guatemalan activist, was propelled onto the global stage.

Required reading

- Richard Handler, "Is Identity a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?", EP
- Rigoberta Menchú, excerpts from *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (Chapters 1 & 16) EP

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June 29th Day 8: Classes in the morning (on lecture 7) but no lecture in the afternoon (to give students time to finalise the assessed essay)

*****THE ASSESSED ESSAY IS DUE BY 2 PM ON DAY 9 (Thursday 30 June 2016)*****

June 30th Day 9, Lecture 8: Corporations and Neo-Liberalism

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to claims of neo-liberalism's rise—an argument weakened but not defeated by the global financial crisis. In this lecture, we explore the meaning of neo-liberalism and its relation to processes of globalisation, looking in particular at the increasing importance of corporations and any challenge they pose to the power of the nation state. We then turn to some classic anthropological discussions on economic relations—moving from "the neo-liberal to the neo-lithic."

Required reading

- David Harvey, "Freedom's Just Another Word", EP
- Carla Freeman, "Designing women: Corporate discipline and Barbados' off-shore pink-collar sector", available online via the LSE electronic journals:
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/doi/10.1525/can.1993.8.2.02a00030/epdf>

July 1st Day 10, Lecture 9: The Olympics and Globalisation

The Olympics have been to London—three times. We all think of 2012, of course, but they were last here in 1948, just after the Second World War. These two London Olympics allow us to address not only changes to the culture of sport, but the extent to which those changes are linked to the dynamics and processes of globalisation. This lecture delves into these details, and presents an anthropologically informed analysis of the Olympic games as both a global event and global spectacle.

Required reading

- Maurice Roche, “Mega-events and Modernity Revisited: Globalization and the Case of the Olympics.” Available on-line
<http://web.ebscohost.com.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=112&sid=b0507418-d870-4453-86d2-06ba9c1b3ce0%40sessionmgr112>
- John Short, “Globalization, Cities, and the Summer Olympics.” Available on-line
[http://zw4gk5cr3l.scholar.serialssolutions.com/?sid=google&aunit=JR&aunit=Short&atitle=Globalization,+cities+and+the+Summer+Olympics&id=doi:10.1080/13604810802478888&title=City+\(London,+England\)&volume=12&issue=3&date=2008&spage=321&issn=1360-4813](http://zw4gk5cr3l.scholar.serialssolutions.com/?sid=google&aunit=JR&aunit=Short&atitle=Globalization,+cities+and+the+Summer+Olympics&id=doi:10.1080/13604810802478888&title=City+(London,+England)&volume=12&issue=3&date=2008&spage=321&issn=1360-4813)

July 4th Day 11, Lecture 10: Globalisation, Cultural Knowledge, and the War on Terror

Recent shifts in the nature of modern warfare have led to an emphasis on the importance of cultural knowledge. The idea of counter-insurgency, which has roots in the colonial policies of the British Empire, have become central in the “war on terror” campaigns in such countries as Iraq and Afghanistan. In this lecture we connect our lessons on the culture concept to this controversial development in military policies.

Required reading

- Montgomery McFate, “The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture” (Available on-line
<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/jfq/1038.pdf>)
- Roberto Gonzalez, “The Myth of a ‘Gentler’ Counterinsurgency”, EP

July 5th Day 12, Lecture 11: Remotely Global: Tourism and the Exotic Other

In this lecture we expand on the themes raised in lectures 1 and 2, looking at how the increase in cultural tourism among “exotic” or “primitive” others helps us understand the sinews of world connection, through such matters as money, education, and trade.

Required reading

- Film, “Cannibal Tours” (1987), directed by Dennis O’Rourke (to watch in lecture)
- Erik Silverman, “After *Cannibal Tours*.” Available on-line via the LSE e-journals at https://muse-jhu-edu.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/journals/contemporary_pacific/v025/25.2.silverman.pdf

- Edward Bruner, "The Maasai and the Lion King: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Globalization in African Tourism." Available on-line via the LSE electronic journals, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3094939>

July 6th Day 13, Lecture 12: Anti-Globalisation and Alter-Globalisation

Needless to say, as the course will have shown thus far, globalisation has not gone unchallenged in the academy or on the streets. To conclude this course we use some of the major critiques of globalisation as a way of summing up what we have covered and suggesting how students might apply and further their studies.

Required reading

- Joseph Stiglitz, "Globalism's Discontents", EP
- Robert Howse, "The End of Globalization Debate." Available on-line via <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/40042702.pdf>

July 7th Day 14: Classes in the morning; no lecture (for exam prep)

July 8th Day 15: Exam

Credit Transfer: If you are hoping to earn credit by taking this course, please ensure that you confirm it is eligible for credit transfer well in advance of the start date. Please discuss this directly with your home institution or Study Abroad Advisor.

As a guide, our LSE Summer School courses are typically eligible for three credits within the US system and 7.5 ECTS in Europe. Different institutions and countries can, and will, vary. You will receive a digital transcript and a printed certificate following your successful completion of the course in order to make arrangements for transfer of credit.

If you have any queries, please direct them to summer.school@lse.ac.uk