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| **Global Sociology 2:**  **Global Inequality and Local Conceptions of the Future**  (Summer Semester 2021) |  |
| Course Outline | |

## Concept

In the social sciences, with few exceptions, empirical research either focusses on patterns of social inequality within a country or on patterns of social inequality between countries, with the exception of historical sociology, global sociology and international migration research which have increasingly started to focus on intersectionality and the entanglements of social inequality and migration between countries. Regardless, most of this research still focusses on a few countries of the Global North (e.g. the US, Western Europe and China) and the perspective of these entanglements from the receiving country, i.e. typical research questions would be how a country of immigration like the US or Germany would perceive which types of immigrants and how they would be integrated into the receiving society. Recently, research has called for delinking and decentering the debates on social and global inequality. This course follows this call by turning the logic around and focusing on the perspective on people living in the emigration countries and specifically asks:

**How does both a person’s positioning within their own society and the positioning of the society within the world system influence a person’s perception of social inequality, social justice, their aspirations and conceptions of the future? How do these the local conceptions of the future reproduce/express historically grown global inequalities?**

In order to better structure the discussion, we have divided the world roughly into ten **groups of countries**. Criteria were (on a very general level) both different positions in the world system (concerning economic and political power) and certain similarities both in their political economies, structures of and discourse on within-country social inequality (concerning race, gender, class, age, rural-urban or regional divides) and cultures (including practices of language):

1. The USA and other Anglo-Saxon Countries
2. Latin America
3. The Caribbean, the Pacific, and other Small Island Countries
4. Western Europe
5. Eastern Europe, Russia and Central Asia
6. North-Africa and the Middle-East
7. Sub-Saharan Africa
8. Southeast Asia
9. China and other East Asian Countries
10. India and other South Asian Countries

Note that there is often an elective affinity between culture, positioning in the world system and geographical proximity, e.g. in the case of Latin American or Western European countries. However, this need not always be the case, an example being the small island countries scattered around the world and mostly being “forgotten” (Boatcă). Another example are the Anglo-Saxon countries which do not only comprise the United States and Canada in North America, but also the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland.

For each group of country, one speaker will be invited who can either talk about a specific country of the group (e.g. Germany as a representative for Western Europe) or a set of countries from this group or the region as a whole. While we would prefer empirically grounded talks, theoretical contributions are also welcome. Empirical analyses can be based on qualitative, quantitative or historical methods. The sessions will take place via **Zoom** (we will send a Zoom link a week before the talk) and last about 90 minutes. Therefore, talks can be **30 – 75 minutes** (the rest of the session will be used for discussion).

While speakers can talk on social inequality as a whole, i**f possible, we would prefer them to focus on people from one profession** in order to make discussions more comparable, namely **from the groups of low-skilled service workers such as domestic workers, careworkers and related professions (e.g. maids, nurses, cooks, gardeners etc.)**. These professions were purposefully selected because in most societies, they count as “unskilled work” and give “career options” for women and the poor both within the country but also for emigration to another country. As in most societies, these jobs are at the very bottom of the social ladder, there would be several options of social upward mobility: marriage, a better-valued and better-paid job within the same society or emigration (i.e. doing the same job at a better salary elsewhere). As many options are open, these professions provide a good starting point for discussing which of these many options are actually perceived as options, which of the perceived options are actually taken and why this is so.

While speakers can structure their talks as they deem fit and also add and drop issues, it would be great, if they could address some or all of the following issues:

1. **Theoretical Perspective**: Which social theory is used for framing the argument?
2. **Country’s Position in the World System**: How was the country entangled in the world system in the past, and what position does it have in the world system today? How does it rate e.g. concerning the GDP per capita (PPP) and the HDI? What relation does the country have to major global players (e.g. USA, China, Russia) both politically and economically in the past and present? How large is immigration and emigration in the past and present, and where do people typically migrate to and from?
3. **Country’s Structure of Social Inequality**: What are the dominant patterns and structures of social inequality in the past and present? Within the country, are class, gender, race, age, rural-urban/regional divides or other categories of social inequality more important for structuring social inequality both empirically and in public discourse? How unequal is the society within (e.g. rated on the Gini coefficient)? When and why does someone count as “upper class”, “middle class”, “working class” and/or “under class”, and how big are these social classes?
4. **The Low-Skilled Service Economy**: What are the main economic sectors? What role does the low-skilled service economy – e.g. domestic workers, careworkers and related professions (e.g. maids, nurses, cooks, gardeners etc. – play in the overall economy? How well-paid and valued are these jobs, and what skills are required to work in these jobs? Who typically works in these jobs, concerning class, gender, race, age, rural/urban and regional origin?
5. **Images of Self and Aspirations**: Against the background foil of these structural issues, the main part of the talk should focus on low-skilled service workers’ perception of social inequality, social justice, aspirations and conceptions of the future. Questions to be asked could be: What is a “good life” and how does it manifest itself (e.g. in a happy family life, a high income, a specific type of work or specific types of consumption? What counts as a “good job”? Are people happy with their jobs and where they are in life, or do they dream of other jobs – and which ones and why? Do they dream of upward-mobility in their own society and – if yes – what does this look like and why? Or do they rather dream of upward-mobility by emigration? Do they want to emigrate permanently, or do they want to remigrate, e.g. when they have earned enough?
6. **Images of other Countries**: If people dream about emigration, where do they want to emigrate to and why? Where would they absolutely NOT want to emigrate to and why? What countries do they not even think about and why? What images do they have of these foreign countries? Within those countries, what social groups do they imagine, e.g. when someone imagines emigrating to the US, do they imagine “the American” to be e.g. a white male executive like Mark Zuckerberg or Donald Trump, or a service worker like themselves? What type of life style do they associate with these imagined others? And how does this relate to self, i.e. do they imagine themselves or their children to be like these imagined others? In other words: How do they imagine their own futures?
7. **Lessons Learnt**: What can we learn from these reflections on the relationship of local conceptions of the future and historically grown global inequalities? What would be questions for future research?

## Mailing List

Regular updates on the course will be distributed via the mailing list. If you are interested in the whole course or in single sessions, please subscribe to the mailing list via the following website:

<https://lists.tu-berlin.de/mailman/listinfo/mes-globalsociology2>

## Schedule

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| Who (Name, Website) | Topic | Date | Time (CET) |
| Nandera Ernest Mhando ([www.udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/colleges/coss/nandera-muhando](http://www.udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/colleges/coss/nandera-muhando)) | Sub-Saharan Africa (3):  **Tanzania** |  |  |
| Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/cf/faculty-and-staff/faculty.cfm?pid=1003363>) | Latin America:  **Mexico** |  |  |
| Sherene Idriss ([www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/people/sherene-idriss](http://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/people/sherene-idriss)) | Anglo-Saxon Countries (2):  **Australia** |  |  |
| Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni ([www.ethnologie.uni-bayreuth.de/de/team/Ndlovu-Gatsheni\_Sabelo](http://www.ethnologie.uni-bayreuth.de/de/team/Ndlovu-Gatsheni_Sabelo)) | Sub-Saharan Africa (4): |  |  |
| Steve William Tonah ([www.ug.edu.gh/sociology/staff/steve-william-tonah](http://www.ug.edu.gh/sociology/staff/steve-william-tonah)) | Sub-Saharan Africa (5):  **Ghana** |  |  |
| Nina Baur,  Maria Norkus,  Boniface Nevanji Bwanyire,  Upasana Bhattacharjee,  Caio Moraes Reis | **Introduction**  **to the Course Programme** | Tue, 13.04.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Manuela Boatcă  ([www.soziologie.uni-freiburg.de/personen/manuela-boatca](http://www.soziologie.uni-freiburg.de/personen/manuela-boatca)) | **Multiple and Unequal Europes** | Wed, 21.04.21 | 17.00 – 19.00 |
| Raewyn Connell ([www.raewynconnell.net/](http://www.raewynconnell.net/)) | **The Global Economy of Knowledge** | Mon, 26.04.21 | 10.00 – 12.00 |
| Stephen Mennell  (<https://people.ucd.ie/stephen.mennell>) | Anglo-Saxon Countries:  **The American Civilizing Process** (working title) | 04.05.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Wolfgang Aschauer  (<https://uni-salzburg.elsevierpure.com/de/persons/wolfgang-aschauer-4>) | Western Europe:  **Egocentrism and Ethnocentrism in the Western Achievement Society. Theoretical and Empirical Insights on Potentials of Solidarity and Value Cleavages in Western Europe** | 11.05.21 | 18.00 – 20.00 |
| Rose Jaji  ([www.zambakari.org/dr-rose-jaji.html](http://www.zambakari.org/dr-rose-jaji.html)) | Sub-Saharan Africa (1):  **Kenya** (working title) | 18.05.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Sujata Patel (<https://globalsocialtheory.org/thinkers/sujata-patel/>) | South Asia (1):  **India** (working title) | 21.05.21 | 15.00 – 17.00 |
| Katharine M. Donato (<https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014SR2RAAW/katharine-donato>) | South Asia (2):  **Bangladesh** (working title) | 25.05.21 | 18.00 – 20.00 |
| Reason Beremauro (<http://governanceinnovation.org/reason-beremauro/>) | Sub-Saharan Africa (2):  **Zimbabwe and South Africa** (working title) | 01.06.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Abigail L. Andrews (<https://abigailandrews.com/>; <https://sociology.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/faculty%20members/abigail-andrews.html>) | Latin America:  **Mexico** (working title) | 08.06.21 | 18.00 – 20.00 |
| Anna Amelina ([www.b-tu.de/en/fg-interkulturalitaet/](http://www.b-tu.de/en/fg-interkulturalitaet/)) | Eastern Europe, Russia and Central Asia:  **Poland and Ukraine** (working title) | 15.06.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Eva Bahl ([www.uni-goettingen.de/en/477897.html](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/477897.html)) and  Arne Worm ([www.uni-goettingen.de/en/134019.html](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/134019.html)) | North-Africa and the Middle East:  **Morocco and Syria** (working title) | 22.06.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho (<https://ari.nus.edu.sg/people/aprof-elaine-lynn-ee-ho/>) | East-Asia:  **China** (working title) | 01.07.21 | 08.00 – 10.00 |
| Anju Mary Paul  ([www.yale-nus.edu.sg/about/faculty/anju-mary-paul/](http://www.yale-nus.edu.sg/about/faculty/anju-mary-paul/)) | South-East Asia:  **Migration Futures in the Philippines: The Case of Migrant Domestic Workers** | 06.07.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |
| Nina Baur,  Maria Norkus,  Boniface Nevanji Bwanyire,  Upasana Bhattacharjee,  Cairo Moraes Reis | **Summing Up – Final Discussion** | 13.07.21 | 12.00 – 14.00 |