

History of Globalization

HIST BC2963

Spring 2025

M-W 10:10-11:25, 418 Barnard Hall

Professor Michele Alacevich

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Office: 902 Milstein Center

Office Hours: T 10-11am, W 11.30am-12.30pm

Globalization emerged as a concept in the 1990s to describe the various supranational forces that shape the contemporary world. Its history, however, is much older, and it encompasses major historical developments such as the formation and global spread of empires, of trade and capitalism, slavery, and migratory movements, as well as environmental and ecological issues. Processes of globalization and deglobalization affect central categories with which to interpret social, political and economic dynamics such as sovereignty, hegemony, and inequality.

This course will offer students the critical instruments to discuss globalizing dynamics and how they have affected human societies historically. We will proceed both thematically and chronologically, to develop the analytical instruments to understand how various dimensions of globalization emerged and transformed over time, as well as the different interpretations that scholars have offered to interpret them.

Learning objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define and discuss the different dimensions that characterize processes of globalization historically, such as imperial projects, the rise and fall of hegemonic powers, migratory phenomena, and the ecological consequences of political, economic, and social global interconnectedness in historical perspective.
- Examine the historical trajectory of different waves of globalization and deglobalization.
- Discuss and compare the contrasting interpretations that scholars have offered of globalization processes.

Attendance policy:

While much of this class will be structured around lectures on course content, I will also encourage you to ask questions and discuss actively topics listed on the syllabus. The knowledge and skills that you gain in this course will also depend on your participation in class discussion. Because of that, I expect you to attend all class sessions unless you have a valid reason for missing. I plan to track class attendance to help me understand how and when students are engaging in the course. If you are ill or have another valid reason for missing, please contact me by email in advance of the absence. In any case, please note that you are responsible for remaining up to date with class material.

As stated in Barnard's course catalogue, frequent or prolonged absences will result in a student being denied the option of making up work or taking the final examination.

Students with disabilities may receive an attendance accommodation from the [Barnard Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services \(CARDS\)](#).

Requirements: Students are required to take two in-class quizzes (15% + 15%), a mid-term exam (25%), and a final examination (35%). Students are also required to attend lectures and participate actively in classroom discussions (5%), and to submit brief weekly written responses to the readings (5%).

Readings:

The following books will be read extensively. They will be available for purchase at Book Culture, but all required texts are also available through reserves in the Barnard Library and, when possible, online (either/or as e-books on CLIO and on other online free platforms). Each book entry describes the different sources from which to obtain it.

Other reading materials assigned for specific classes that are not listed below are available either on CLIO and platforms accessible via CLIO, or on Course Work (abbreviated as CW).

Eric L. Jones, *The European Miracle. Environments, Economies, and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003 [1981] (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977 (available on CW, Barnard Library Reserves, and Columbia libraries)

W. Arthur Lewis, *The Evolution of the International Economic Order*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015 [1978] (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, and Columbia libraries)

Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, London: Penguin, 2022 [1944] (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

M. Livi-Bacci, *A Short History of Migration*, London: Polity, 2012 (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, and Columbia libraries)

Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in the Age of Globalization*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996 (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

Richard Baldwin, *The Great Convergence. Information Technology and the New Globalization*, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016 (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

Perrin Selcer, *The Postwar Origins of the Global Environment: How the United Nations Built Spaceship Earth*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2018 (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

Branko Milanovic, *Global Inequality. A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016 (available at Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves, Columbia libraries, and as e-book on CLIO)

Use of Electronics: Students are not permitted to use cellphones during class sessions, unless they have special permission. You can either discuss your specific needs directly with me, or obtain official accommodations from [CARDS](#).

Honor Code: The honor code will be strictly enforced. Students who do not abide by the Honor Code will be reported to their Class Dean as well as the Honor Board and may fail the course depending on their determination.

The Honor Code (Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, [the Code states](#)):

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

Wellness Statement:

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself--your own health, sanity, and wellness--your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- <http://barnard.edu/primarycare>
- <http://barnard.edu/counseling>
- <https://barnard.edu/TheWellnessSpot/about>

Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) Statement:

If you anticipate barriers to your academic experience due to a documented disability or emerging health challenge, please contact your instructor and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) as early as possible. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations for the semester, contact CARDS at (212) 854-4634 or cards@barnard.edu. You can learn more about on-campus support at barnard.edu/disability-services. CARDS is located in Diana 307.

Topics and Readings:

01 WEEK: WAVES OF GLOBALIZATION

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Class 01: Introduction

02 WEEK: A FRACTURED WORLD

Monday, Jan. 27

Class 02: Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony. The World System A.D. 1250-1350*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, Ch. 1 (“Studying a System in Formation”): 3-40, CW (38 pp.)

James Belich, *The World the Plague Made. The Black Death and the Rise of Europe*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022, Prologue (“Prologue: Globalising Europe”): 7-25, CLIO (18 pp.)

James Belich, “The Black Death and the Spread of Europe,” in James Belich, John Darwin, Margret Frenz, and Chris Wickham (eds.), *The Prospect of Global History*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016: 93-107, CLIO (15 pp.)

TOT. 71 pp.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

Class 03: Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015 [1986]: 1-40, CLIO (40 pp.)

Alfred W. Crosby, “Conquistador y Pestilencia: The First New World Pandemic and the Fall of the Great Indian Empires,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (August 1967): 321-337, CLIO (17 pp.)

Francis J. Brooks, “Revising the Conquest of Mexico: Smallpox, Sources, and Populations,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1993): 1-29, CLIO (29 pp.)

TOT. 86 pp.

03 WEEK: EMPIRES

Monday, Feb. 03

Class 04: Eric L. Jones, *The European Miracle*, Ch. 1-3, 6-7: 3-69, 104-149 (111 pp.)

TOT. 111 pp.

Wednesday, Feb. 05

Class 05: Eric L. Jones, *The European Miracle*, Ch. 9-12: 175-238 (63 pp.)

Carlo M. Cipolla, *Guns, Sails, and Empires. Technological Innovation and the Early Phases of European Expansion, 1400-1700*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1965, Epilogue: 132-148, CW (17 pp.)

Philip T. Hoffman, *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015, Introduction: 1-18, CW (18 pp.)

TOT. 98 pp.

04 WEEK: COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

Monday, Feb. 10

Class 06: Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts*: 1-120 (120 pp.)
TOT. 120 pp.

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Class 07: Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts* (cont.)

05 WEEK: INTERNATIONAL CAPITALISM

Wednesday, Feb. 17

Class 08: W. Arthur Lewis, *The Evolution of the International Economic Order* (79 pp.)
TOT. 79 pp.

Wednesday, Feb. 19

Class 09: **In-class quiz**
W. Arthur Lewis, *The Evolution of the International Economic Order* (cont.)

06 WEEK: SLAVERY

Monday, Feb. 24

Class 10: Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, Ch. 1-3, 4, 6-8, 11-13: 1-60, 80-91, 102-145, 169-201 (147 pp.)
TOT. 147 pp.

Wednesday, Feb. 26

Class 11: David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, "The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (March 2000): 123-144, CLIO (22 pp.)

Seymour Drescher, "Eric Williams: British Capitalism and British Slavery," *History and Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (May 1987): 180-196, CLIO (17 pp.)

Kevin Bales, "Expendable People: Slavery in the Age of Globalization," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 2, Shadow Economies: Promoting Prosperity or Undermining Stability? (Spring 2000): 461-484, CLIO (24 pp.)

TOT. 63 pp.

07 WEEK: MIGRATIONS

Monday, Mar. 03

Class 12: M. Livi-Bacci, *A Short History of Migrations*, Preface, Ch. 1-5 (70 pp.)

TOT. 70 pp.

Wednesday, Mar. 05

Class 13: M. Livi-Bacci, *A Short History of Migrations*, Preface, Ch. 6-9 (70 pp.)

TOT. 70 pp.

08 WEEK: SOVEREIGNTY

Monday, Mar. 10

Class 14: S. Sassen, *Losing Control?* (112 pp.)

TOT. 112 pp.

Wednesday, Mar. 12

Class 15: **Midterm Exam**

WEEK March 17-21: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES HELD

09 WEEK: TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Monday, Mar. 24

Class 16: R. Baldwin, *The Great Convergence*, Introduction, Ch. 1-3, CLIO (110 pp.)
TOT. 110 pp.

Wednesday, Mar. 26

Class 17: D. Harvey, "Globalization in Question," *Rethinking Marxism*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1995: 1-17, CW (17 pp.)

R. Wade, "Globalization and Its Limits: Reports of the Death of the National Economy Are Greatly Exaggerated," in Suzanne Berger and Ronald Dore (eds.), *National Diversity and Global Capitalism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996: 60-88, CLIO (29 pp.)

G. Arrighi, "Globalization and the Rise of East Asia: Lessons from the Past, Prospects for the Future," *International Sociology*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1998: 59-77, CLIO (19 pp.)

TOT. 65 pp.

10 WEEK: CONVERGENCE

Monday, Mar. 31

Class 18: W. J. Baumol, "Productivity Growth, Convergence, and Welfare: What the Long-Run Data Show," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 76, No. 5 (1986): 1072-85, CLIO (14 pp.)

J. Bradford De Long, "Productivity Growth, Convergence, and Welfare: Comment," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 5 (1988): 1138-54, CLIO (17 pp.)

W. J. Baumol and E. N. Wolff, "Productivity Growth, Convergence, and Welfare: Reply," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 5 (1988): 1155-59, CLIO (5 pp.)

L. Pritchett, "Divergence, Big Time," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1997): 3-17, CLIO (14 pp.)

R. Boyer, "The Convergence Hypothesis Revisited: Globalization but Still the Century of Nations?" in Suzanne Berger and Ronald Dore (eds.), *National Diversity and Global Capitalism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996: 29-59, CLIO (31 pp.)

TOT. 81 pp.

Wednesday, Apr. 2

Class 19: P. H. Lindert and J. G. Williamson, "Does Globalization Make the World More Unequal?" in M. D. Bordo, A. M. Taylor, and J. G. Williamson (eds.), *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003: 227-71 CLIO (44 pp.)

B. Milanovic, "The Two Faces of Globalization: Against Globalization as We Know It," *World Development*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2003): 667-683, CLIO (17 pp.)

TOT. 61 pp.

11 WEEK: ENVIRONMENT

Monday, Apr. 7

Class 20: John R. McNeill, "Can History Help Us with Global Warming?" in Kurt M. Campbell (ed.), *Climatic Cataclysm. The Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Climate Change*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008: 26-48, CLIO (23 pp.)

Kurt M. Campbell and Richard Weitz, "The Clear Implications of Global Climate Change," in Kurt M. Campbell (ed.), *Climatic Cataclysm. The Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Climate Change*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008: 213-223, CLIO (11 pp.)

Wednesday, Apr. 9

Class 21: P. Selcer, *The Postwar Origins of the Global Environment*, Introduction, Ch. 4, 6, Conclusion, CLIO (112 pp.)

TOT. 112 pp.

12 WEEK: ECOLOGY

Wednesday, Apr. 14

Class 22: **In-class quiz**

John R. McNeill, “Yellow Jack and Geopolitics: Environment, Epidemics, and the Struggles for Empire in the American Tropics, 1640-1830,” *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 27, No. 4, *The Environment and World History* (2004): 343-364, CLIO (22 pp.)

Stuart McCook, “The Neo-Columbian Exchange: The Second Conquest of the Greater Caribbean, 1720-1930,” *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 46, Special Issue: Contemporary Debates on Ecology, Society, and Culture in Latin America (2011): 11-31, CLIO (21 pp.)

TOT. 43 pp.

Wednesday, Apr. 16

Class 23: F. M. Snowden, *Epidemics and Society. From the Black Death to the Present*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019, Ch. 17-20, CLIO (91 pp.)

TOT. 91 pp.

13 WEEK: INEQUALITY

Wednesday, Apr. 21

Class 24: B. Milanovic, *Global Inequality*, Introduction, Ch. 1-2 (117 pp.)

TOT. 117 pp.

Wednesday, Apr. 23

Class 25: B. Milanovic, *Global Inequality*, Ch. 3-5 (122 pp.)

TOT. 122 pp.

14 WEEK: HEGEMONY

Wednesday, Apr. 28

Class 26: M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001, Ch. 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, CLIO (102 pp.)

M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Multitude. War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, New York: Penguin, 2004, Ch. 2.2, CW (30 pp.)

TOT. 132 pp.

Wednesday, Apr. 30

Class 27: G. Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing. Lineages of the Twenty-first Century*, London: Verso, 2007, Introduction, Ch. 1-3, CW (96 pp.)

TOT. 96 pp.

15 WEEK: WRAP-UP

Wednesday, May. 5

Class 28: Wrap-up

May 6 – May 9, 2025: Reading period

May 9 – May 16, 2025: Final Exam