

# INTL 101. Friday

## A05 & A06

Francisco Laguna Álvarez

02/01/2019

# Announcements:

- Midterm: Wednesday, February 6th.
- **No section class next week!** (Friday 8th).
- Your Second Response Paper grades **are not definitive yet**. They will be on Monday (February 4th).
- For your next response paper it is crucial that you make comparisons between different authors, even if the paper is only about one reading.

# 02/01/2019

- Midterm preparation (Key concepts).
- Reading review:
  - McNeill Chapters 3 and 9.

# Midterm instructions:

- 7 Key concepts selected. You will be answering 5.
- You should write at least 1 paragraph on each key concept.
- You will need to place the term within its historical context, define the major points, and explain why the term is significant to our historical understanding.
- Relating the term to certain other key terms from the same and/or different lectures.
- You are also expected to use reading content for at least 3 of the key terms.

# Key Concept Review

1. The Columbian Exchange (Steinberg).
2. Silver and sugar economies (McNeill).
3. Fossil Capitalism (Malm).
4. Carbon Democracy (Malm).
5. Mass destruction mining and the making of sacrifice zones (Myrna Santiago).
6. The Green Revolution (McNeil, chapter 7).
7. Infinite Soil and the idea of Utilitarian Nature (Fentiman, Santiago).
8. United States as Imperial Power (Russel).
9. War and new machines/technologies (Russel).
10. Urbanization as an environmental problem (McNeill, chapters 3, and 9).

# **1. The Columbian Exchange**

# 1. The Columbian Exchange.

- 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Christopher Columbus.
- Transfer of plants, animals, culture, human populations, technology, and ideas between the Indies (the Americas), West Africa, and Europe.
- Beginning of European colonization.

# The Columbian Exchange





## **2. Silver and sugar economies**

## 2. Silver and sugar economies

15th to 18th centuries:

- Consequence of colonization (Spaniards and Portuguese).
- Economy based on the extraction of resources: silver and sugar.
- Commodification of nature/Utilitarian view of nature.
- These economies employed coerced labor and slavery.
- Environmental effect (land clearings, deforestation, etc).

# **Exploitative and oppressive labor relations and making of European wealth.**

- 19<sup>th</sup> century:
- Silver and sugar and other tropical products worked by people of color fuelled industrial revolution in Northern Europe and NE United States
- Slavery and the racist bases of capitalism
- Environmental inequalities have been inequalities not just around class but also race

# **3. Fossil Capitalism**

# 3. Fossil Capitalism

- 19th century.
- Coal and oil as the prime energy source for production.
- Consolidates the idea of constant growth.
- Endless quest for accumulation of wealth driven by increased production.

# **Coal and 1<sup>st</sup> industrial Revolution: some consequences**

- Profits reach new levels.
- Produced widespread poverty in cities and air pollution.
- A small but growing middle class.
- Increased inequality.
- Provoked social unrest > Carbon democracy.

## **4. Carbon Democracy**

## **4. Coal, labor wars, and Carbon democracy**

- 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Democratic reforms achieved by workers.
- Workers protested and organized themselves politically. They demanded social rights and better working conditions.
- The promise of social democracy or socialism.
- The replacement of coal by oil in the 20<sup>th</sup> century reduced the worker's pressure on capitalists and industrialists.



## **5. Mass destruction mining and the making of sacrifice zones.**

## **5. Mass destruction mining and the making of sacrifice zones**

- 19th and 20th centuries.
- Mining corroded the lithosphere with a warren of underground shafts and chambers.
- It generated mountains of waste rock and slag, and filled rivers with slurry and silt, making fishing navigation impossible. (Fentiman's article).
- Floods and landslides destroyed lowlands, dumping gravel on arable land.
- Changed landscapes.

- Industrialization required more raw materials. New areas were exploited.
- **Sacrifice zone** = Regions/zones where people and land are sacrificed to create products or to extract resources (raw materials, fossil fuels).
- Examples: Huasteca in Mexico, Island of Bonny in Nigeria.

## **6. The Green Revolution**

## 6. Green Revolution

- 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- A set of technological innovations to boost farming yields, first in Mexico and then spread elsewhere. Norman Borlaug.
- Hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides.
- A technological fix to a complex problem (soil erosion, necessity to feed more people, very limited access to land).

# The Green Revolution and the Cold War:

- Cold War fear of communism in Global South.
- GR as a way to prove that capitalism was better.
- “In this Cold War struggle for the minds of men, the side that best helps satisfy man’s primary needs for food, clothing, and shelter is likely to win.” – Norman Borlaug.

# Consequences (McNeill, Chapter 7):

- Triumph of monoculture.
- In order to keep pests away, farmers resort to heavier and heavier doses of pesticides.
- The GR also altered the species and genetic diversity of agriculture.
- Reduced regional and family autonomy.
- Increased social inequality. It doesn't challenge the status quo. Avoid land reform.

## **7. Infinite Soil and the idea of Utilitarian Nature**



## 7. Infinite soil/Utilitarian nature

- Consolidates the idea that technology can solve any problem.
- Example: Application of technology and science to agriculture (fertilizers, machines such as the McCormick Reaper).
- Reinforce the concept of constant circle of growth. Land is inexhaustible.
- Related to sugar and silver economies, and fossil capitalism.

## **8. United States as Imperial Power**

## 8. United States as Imperial Power

- United States becomes an imperial power at the end of the nineteenth century.
- 19th century:
- **Mexican-American War (1846-1848).** The United States obtained more than the half of the Mexican territory.
- Intervention in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico (1898). War against Spain.



## 8. United States as Imperial Power:

- During the 20th century:
- US imperialism in Latin America: search for raw materials (fuels, rubber, fruit sugar, etc).
- United Fruit Company = US company. Became a political force in Central America. Supported coup d'état against socialist governments to avoid land reform.
- Support of dictatorships during the Cold War to suppress communism in the region.

# AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA, 1898–1939







U.S. Involvement in Latin America, 1953 - 2000

## **9. War and new machines/technologies**



# 9. War and new machines/technologies

- 20th century.
- Russel's article.
- Interrelation between scientific discoveries, technological developments and the military.
- Industrialization of warfare.
- Chemical weapons. Example: Agent Orange utilized by the US Army in Vietnam.
- Environmental impact: Great destruction of cities (World War II), and the environment.

## **9. War and new machines/technologies**

- War became a tool to control livelihoods, and means of subsistence. Example: Military interventions to control fossil fuels (oil in the Middle East), or raw materials.
- War as state of exception, immense destruction possible. Example: Cold War and the arm race > Nuclear weapon.

# **10. Urbanization as an environmental problem**

# Explaining Planetary urbanization:

- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Pull factors:
  - the two industrial revolutions and jobs in cities.
  - political economies in global south (protectionism and neoliberal policies since 1980).
- Push factors:
  - Land concentration and privatization
  - Mechanization of agriculture
  - Environmental damage
  - Population growth and resource crunch in countrysides
  - Neoliberal capitalism since 1980

# Reading Review:

- McNeill, Something New Under the Sun:
- Chapters 3 and 9.

# McNeill, Urban History (Chapters 3 and 9)

- McNeill explores various differences between air pollution (that is, the main elements that produced air pollution) before and after 1900. Can you name and explain some of them?
- After 1950 European and North American cities managed to reduce air pollution. How did they accomplish it? Provide an example of a city that fought against its environmental problems.

# Air in cities before and after 1900

- **Before:**

- Indoor pollution caused by fire and wood combustion.
- Outdoor pollution only in cities. Early cities oftend exuded pungent smells on account of decaying flesh, food, and feces.

- **After:**

- Fossil fuels (coal, oil).
- Air pollution caused by Industries and dwellings. Chimneys.
- Cars and road traffic.

# How cities improved their air quality

1. **Economic reason:** Oil replaced coal. Nuclear and hydroelectric energy reduced consumption of coal.
2. **Political reason:** Cities adopted a policy of smoke abatement. Industries started to disperse around the world instead of being concentrated in some regions. Industries left cities to set onto industrial parks, to not affect people.

Case of Mexico City.