



UNIVERSITÀ
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del Sacro Cuore

International relations

PROF. ENRICO FASSI; PROF. IBRAHIM AL-MARASHI

First Part: Prof. Enrico Fassi

Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The course aims to provide students with analytical tools to understand the main features of the international political system. Starting with the investigation of its primary constitutive elements and players, the course will address typical topics of international relations – e.g. peace, war and change – as well as some top issues of today's international political agenda: terrorism, democracy, development. The course will also focus on International Relations theories, presenting the discipline's main theoretical approaches and applying them to the analysis of specific topics and cases.

Knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- know the main theories of International Relations;
- understand the functioning of the International Political System and its interactions with the economic and institutional systems;
- analyze the foreign policy choices of state actors and identify the role of non-state actors.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- recognize and master the linkages among the fundamental questions around which the discipline is articulated;
- assess which level of analysis offers the best prospects for investigation with respect to the single problem faced and how to move through the levels;
- use the historical, economic and political knowledge in the direction of the profitable interaction with the theories of International Relations;
- draw links between theory and practice, past and present, expectations and reality;
- develop a critical sense to move between the different theoretical approaches

Course content

Introduction: Understanding International Relations

- The emergence of the global system of states.
- Theories of International Relations: Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Marxism, Feminism.
- The analysis of foreign policy.
- War and its causes.
- Pathways to interstate peace.
- Power, politics and world economy.
- Non-State actors and challenges to sovereignty.
- Different visions of an emerging international order.



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Reading list

The syllabus includes:

- a. Lecture notes.
- b. Handbook: J. GRIECO-G. J. IKENBERRY-M. MASTANDUNO, Introduction to International Relations. Enduring questions and contemporary perspectives, Palgrave, London/New York, 2014 [Chapters 1-6, 9, 11, 13].
- c. Suggested readings: R.H. JACKSON-G SORENSEN, Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2015 (6th edition). [especially, Chapters 3-9].

Attending students should focus on a. and b. and will be informed of any additional article provided. Non-attending students can substitute a. with c.

Teaching method

The course will consist mostly of lectures, based on power point presentations. Thematic seminars may also be included – requiring a more active participation by the students – as well as experts and practitioners' talks.

Assessment method and criteria

Full-time and distance-learning students will be assessed through a written exam graded 30/30. The test will include multiple choice and open-ended questions on the themes covered by the handbook (b.). The test is aimed at assessing the students' ability to both accurately report on the themes covered by the program, and provide articulated answers on themes of particular relevance. For attending students, the final grade will be given by the average of the two modules' tests. For non-attending students, there will be a single written exam combining the two tests.

Notes and prerequisites

A basic background of international history and political science concepts is recommended.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/ita/enrico_fassi/, or on the Faculty notice board.

SECOND PART: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST (Prof. Ibrahim Al-marashi).

Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The course is intended as an introduction to the International Relations of the Middle East, and provides a general overview of the chief issues of the contemporary Middle Eastern state system, and the historic factors that have given shape to the region. These include the fall of the Ottoman Empire and Western colonialism, the discovering of oil, the impact of Arab nationalism and Islam on state and nation building, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and broader processes and trends of globalization. The main issues will be examined in their evolution through the Cold War period, the 1991 Gulf war and its consequences, the 'War on Terror' and the 2003 Iraqi war, the Arab Spring and the rise and fall of ISIS.

Knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- know the chief issues of the contemporary Middle Eastern state system, and the historic factors that have given shape to the region;



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- know the main theories of International Relations that are relevant to understand the Middle East;
- understand the functioning of the Middle East as a sub-system, and its relations to the wider international political system;
- understand the foreign policy choices of state actors & identify the role of non-state actors.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- recognize and master the linkages among the fundamental questions that characterize the application of IR theories to the study of the Middle East;
- assess which level of analysis/theory offers the best prospects for investigation with respect to the single problem faced by different actors in the region and how to move through the levels of analysis and theories;
- use the historical, economic and political knowledge in the direction of the profitable interaction with the theories of International Relations in the Middle East;
- draw links between theory and practice, past and present, expectations and reality;
- develop a critical sense to move between the different theoretical approaches.

Course content

Introduction: *Understanding International Relations*

- Understanding the Middle East through an analysis of the classical, but also critical, theories of International Relations.
- The evolution of the Middle East State System.
- Middle East Oil and the World Economy.
- Non-State Actors such as al-Qaida and ISIS and Challenges to Sovereignty.

Reading list

The syllabus includes:

Module 1 1789-1919

Tulin Daloglu, "Turkey Misunderstands its 'Magnificent Century'" *Al-Monitor*, Turkey Pulse, February 18, 2014, p. 1-2.

Timothy Snyder, "Toleration and the Future of Europe," *New York Review of Books*, August 10, 2011, pp. 1-2.

David Motadel, 'Defending the Faith' in the Middle East, *New York Times*, May 23, 2015, pp. 1-2.

Shadi Hamid, "The Roots of the Islamic State's Appeal: ISIS's Rise Is Related To Islam. The Question Is: How?" *The Atlantic*, Oct 31, 2014, pp. 1-5.

Karen Armstrong, "Wahhabism to ISIS: how Saudi Arabia exported the main source of global terrorism," *The New Statesman*, November 27, 2014, pp. 1-5.

Mark Levine, "History's Shifting Sands," *Al-Jazeera*, Feb 26, 2011, pp 1-3.

Module 2 1920-1946

Malise Ruthven, "The Map ISIS Hates," *New York Review of Books*, June 25, 2014, pp. 1-3.

F. Gregory Gause, "Is This The End Of Sykes-Picot?" *Washington Post*, May 20, 2014, pp. 1-2.

Edhem Eldem, "Turkey's False Nostalgia," *New York Times*, June 16, 2013, pp. 1-2.

Sherene Seikaly, "To Stay Modern," *Jadaliyya*, Aug 22 2010, pp. 1-2.

Lawrence G. Potter, "Oil Profits Have Created Conflict," *Opposing Viewpoints*, 2000, pp. 1-2.

Malise Ruthven, "Storm over Syria," *New York Review of Books*, June 9, 2011, pp 1-5.

Module 3 1947-1990

Fred Halliday, "Crises of the Middle East," *Trans National Institute*, June 2007, pp. 1-4.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "Putin Declares Checkmate on Syria," *Al-Jazeera*, Oct 1 2015, pp. 1-2.

Ussama Makdisi, "Playing Politics with Religion," *New York Times*, July 3, 2013, pp. 1-2.



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Yezid Sayigh, "The Arab Region at Tipping Point," Al-Hayat, August 21, 2014, pp. 1-2.

Yezid Sayigh, "The Crisis of the Arab Nation-State," Al-Hayat, November 19, 2015, pp. 1-2.

Module 4 1990-2011

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "Twenty Five Years Later, The Middle East Looks The Same," Al-Jazeera, August 2, 2015, pp. 1-2.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "The Enduring Legacy of Operation Desert Storm," Al-Jazeera, January 17, 2016, pp. 1-2.

Nadim Shehadi, "Battle of Ideas," The World Today, June 1 2003 pp. 1-4.

Gabrielle Spear, Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "Iraq 2103: Sci-fi against Empire," Warscapes, March 24, 2017, pp. 1-3.

Module 5 2011-present

Charles A. Kupchan, "Be Careful What You Wish For," New York Times, February 24, 2011, pp. 1-2.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "Reconceptualizing Sectarianism in the Middle East and Asia," Middle East Institute, June 18, 2014, pp. 1-4.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "What the Spanish civil war can reveal about Syria," Al-Jazeera, September 30, 2016, pp. 1-3.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, "Syria, the Spanish Civil war and foreign legions," Al-Jazeera, October 29, 2016, pp. 1-3.

Alexander Thurston, "The Islamic State's Intellectual Genealogy (And What You Need To Read To Understand It), blogs.SSRC.org, April 20, 2015, pp. 1-4.

John Gray, "A Point of View: Isis and What it Means to be Modern," The BBC, July 11, 2014, pp. 1-3.

Kevin McDonald, "Islamic State's 'Medieval' Ideology Owes A Lot to Revolutionary France," The Conversation, September 8, 2014, pp. 1-2.

Stephen M. Walt, "Much Ado About the Islamic State," Foreign Policy, October 13, 2014, pp. 1-3.

Lawrence Rubin, "Why the Islamic State Won't Become a Normal State," The Monkey Cage, The Washington Post, July 9, 2015, pp. 1-3.

F. Gregory Gause III, "Why Isn't There an anti-Iran Alliance?" The Monkey Cage, Washington Post, June 3, 2015, pp. 1-3.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, The Battle For Mosul Is Almost Over. What Next? Al-Jazeera July 3, 2017, pp. 1-2.

Teaching method

The course will consist mostly of lectures, based on power point presentation. It may also include thematic seminars – in which an active participation by the students is required – documentary screenings, and talks given by experts.

Assessment method and criteria

There will be a written examination for both full-time and distance-learning students, graded 30/30. This test combines multiple choice questions and open-ended questions, both based on the course's syllabus. In this way it will be possible to evaluate both the overall preparation of students over large portions of the program, and their ability to elaborate articulated answers on themes of particular relevance. Students are required to attend each class and to read the assigned reading and actively participate in class discussion. The classes will emphasize specific parts and trends in the reading, but all reading material forms part of the final assessment.