



UNIVERSITÀ
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PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS

Italian politics. International change and domestic transformation

PROF. ALESSANDRO QUARENGHI

Term	Summer 2026
Area of study	International Relations
Credits	6 ECTS
Dates	6 – 17 July 2026 (2 weeks)
Method of instruction	In person

Description

Contemporary international processes have underlined Italy's role as a political border between the East (Russia and China) and the West (the United States and its Atlantic allies); between the North (Europe) and the South (the Middle East and North Africa); between developed and developing countries; between 'the decline of the West and the rise of the Rest'. How are contemporary international processes influencing Italian politics? How is Italy transforming because of international politics and adapting to international change?

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have a solid grasp of Italian political and social structures; they will be familiar with the most important issues in the contemporary Italian debate, and aware of processes of change in its political constituencies, parties and stakeholders, foreign policies, and identities. In addition, they will have knowledge on how contemporary international and intra-State political and social structures relate to and influence each other.

Course contents

The course is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the construction of and change in Italian political and social structures in relation to the international system and its transformation; while the second part focuses on contemporary political, economic, and social issues that have shaped Italian politics. In addition, the second part of the course will discuss identity, interests, and goals of contemporary Italian political parties, and Italy's relationships with the European Union, the United States, Russia, and China.

Prerequisites

The course is an introduction to the politics and international politics of Italy; therefore, it can be approached by students of all backgrounds. A background in political science, international politics, and/or comparative politics could be helpful but is not required.

Method of instruction

The first part of the course will consist of lectures. In the second part of the course, and depending on the number of students, some issues will be introduced by presentations by small groups of students (15-20 minutes), which



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can be supported by the assigned readings. The issues raised by the presentation and by the readings will foster a discussion led by the instructors, which will constitute the bulk of the class. The instructors will then conclude by briefly (10-15 minutes) summarizing the most important points made during the discussion.

Course requirements

- a. Students are expected to regularly attend sessions and to actively take part in debate;
- b. Before each class, students are expected to have read the compulsory readings (and are strongly advised to read the recommended readings);
- c. Students, in small groups, are required to orally present one of the topics outlined in the syllabus according to the instructor's instructions;
- d. Students will have to take a final written exam.

Credits

6 ECTS

Grading

Participation	10% of final grade
Group project (presentation)	30% of final grade
Final written exam	60% of final grade

Course readings and materials

All readings and materials can be downloaded from the dedicated course blackboard pages (<http://blackboard.unicatt.it>) or be accessed through links. Further instructions on the downloading procedure will be provided in class. Both readings and lectures/class activities are crucial components of the course and are interrelated.

Instructors bio

Alessandro Quarenghi is a Lecturer in International Politics at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, where he teaches International Relations, Economic Geography, and International Relations of the Middle East. He holds a degree in Law, a PhD in International Relations, a Specialization in International Economics and Politics, and Master's Degrees in Postcolonial Politics and Cross-cultural Mediation. His work focuses on US foreign policy, international order, international order and technology, and international relations and politics of the Middle East.

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Course Schedule

Lesson	Date	Topic	Reading/Course Material
FIRST PART. THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AND ITALY			
1	July 06 14.00-18.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTRODUCTION • THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM 	<p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Väyrynen R., "Bipolarity, Multipolarity, and Domestic Political Systems", <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> 32:3 (1995) 361-371</p> <p>Ikenberry J. G., <i>After Victory. Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars</i>, Princeton University Press, 2001, 21-49</p> <p>Ikenberry J. G., "Constitutional Politics in International Relations", <i>European Journal of International Relations</i>, 4(2) (1998) 147-177</p>
2	July 07 10.00-14.30	MULTIPOLARITY AND ITALY: FROM THE 'BIRTH' OF THE STATE TO WORLD WAR II	<p>Required Reading</p> <p>Jervis, R., "A Political Science Perspective on the Balance of Power and the Concert", <i>The American Historical Review</i>, 97(3) (1992) 716-724. https://doi.org/10.2307/2164776</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Schweller R., "The Balance of Power in World Politics", <i>Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Politics</i> (2016). Available at https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-119</p> <p>Schroeder, P. W., "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure" <i>World Politics</i>, 39(1) (1986) 1-26. https://doi.org/10.2307/2010296</p> <p>Slantchev B. L., "Territory and Commitment: The Concert of Europe as Self-Enforcing Equilibrium", <i>Security Studies</i>, 14(4) (2005) 565-606, DOI: 10.1080/09636410500468792</p> <p>Beales, D. & Biagini F. E., <i>The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy</i>, Taylor and Francis, 2014, 114-133 DOI: 10.4324/9781315839004 https://ebookcentral-proquest-</p>



			<p>com.ezproxy.unicatt.it/lib/unicatt-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1741871</p> <p>Gooch J., <i>The Unification of Italy</i>, Taylor & Francis, 2001 https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.unicatt.it/lib/unicatt-ebooks/reader.action?docID=178382</p>
<p>MOVIE: Luchino Visconti, <i>Il gattopardo -The Leopard</i> (1963), based on Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's novel (1958): https://www.bitchute.com/video/S7epMZf2wCNE/</p> <p>OR</p> <p>MINISERIES: Tom Shankland, <i>Il Gattopardo</i>, Netflix (2025)</p>			
3	<p>July 8</p> <p>10.00-14.30</p>	<p>BIPOLARITY AND ITALY: THE 'FIRST REPUBLIC'</p>	<p>Required Reading</p> <p>Guzzini S., "The 'Long Night of the First Republic': Years of Clientelistic Implosion in Italy." <i>Review of International Political Economy</i>, . 2 (1) 1995, 27–61. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4177133</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Waltz, K. N., "The Stability of a Bipolar World", <i>Daedalus</i>, 93(3), 1964, 881–909. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026863</p>
	<p>July 09</p> <p>10.00-14.00</p>	<p>FIELD TRIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAZIONE CENTRALE FS ● MEMORIALE DELLA SHOAH ● PIAZZALE LORETO 	<p>Meeting at 10.00, Stazione Centrale FS, Piazza Duca d'Aosta, 1, 20124 Milano MI</p>
4	<p>July 10</p> <p>10.00-14.30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNIPOLARITY AND ITALY: THE 'SECOND (AND THIRD?) REPUBLIC' - THE MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES: IDENTITY, GOALS, CONSTITUENCIES, DISCOURSES 	<p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Monteiro, N. P., "Unrest Assured: Why Unipolarity Is Not Peaceful", <i>International Security</i>, 36(3), 2011,9–40 http://www.jstor.org/stable/41428108</p> <p>Carbone M., "The Domestic Foundations of Italy's Foreign and Development Policies", <i>West European Politics</i> 30:4 (2007) 903–23</p> <p>Cladi L., Webber M., "Italian Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period: A Neoclassical Realist</p>



		<p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partito Democratico (PD) 2. Fratelli d'Italia (Fdl) 	<p>Approach", <i>European Security</i> 20:2 (2011) 205–19</p> <p>Ventura S. "The Italian Democratic Party from Merger to Personalism", <i>South European Society and Politics</i>, 23:1, 2018, 181-196, DOI: 10.1080/13608746.2018.1440483</p> <p>Mosca L., Tronconi F., "Beyond left and right: the eclectic populism of the Five Star Movement", <i>West European Politics</i>, 42:6, 2019, 1258-1283</p> <p>Albertazzi D., Giovannini A., Seddone A., " 'No regionalism please, we are Leghisti!' The transformation of the Italian Lega Nord under the leadership of Matteo Salvini", <i>Regional & Federal Studies</i>, 28:5, 2018, 645-671, DOI: 10.1080/13597566.2018.1512977</p> <p>Raniolo F., "Forza Italia: A Leader with a Party", <i>South European Society and Politics</i>, 11:3-4, 2006, 439-455, doi: 10.1080/13608740600856470</p> <p>Sondel-Cedarmas J., "Giorgia Meloni's new Europe, Europe of sovereign nations in the Brothers of Italy party manifestos", in Sondel-Cedarmas J., Berti F. (eds.), <i>The Right-Wing Critique of Europe. Nationalist, Sovereignist and Right-Wing Populist Attitudes to the EU</i>, Routledge, 2022, 60-75</p>
SECOND PART. ISSUES			
5	July 13 10.00-14.30	<p>ISSUES: MIGRATION, REGIONALISM, MAFIAS, ECONOMIC DECLINE, FAMILY AND FAMILISM, CATHOLICISM, NATIONAL IDENTITY</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Mafias and the Italian State 4. The Catholic Church and the Italian State 5. The Italian national identity 	<p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Paoli L., "Italian Organised Crime: Mafia Associations and Criminal Enterprises", <i>Global Crime</i>, 6:1, 2004, 19-31, DOI: 10.1080/1744057042000297954</p> <p>Armao F., "Mafia-owned democracies: Italy and Mexico as patterns of criminal neoliberalism", <i>Tiempo devorado</i>, 2(1), 2015, 0004-21</p> <p>Garelli F., "The public relevance of the church and Catholicism in Italy", <i>Journal of Modern Italian Studies</i>, 12:1, 2007, 8-36, DOI: 10.1080/13545710601132722</p> <p>Donovan M., "The Italian state: no longer Catholic, no longer Christian", <i>West European Politics</i>, 26:1, 2003, 95-116, DOI: 10.1080/01402380412331300217</p>



			<p>Simoni, M..”Institutional roots of economic decline: Lessons from Italy”, <i>Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica</i>, 50(3), 2020, 382-397. doi:10.1017/ipo.2019.41</p> <p>Tridico P., “From economic decline to the current crisis in Italy”, <i>International Review of Applied Economics</i>, 29:2, 2015, 164-193, DOI: 10.1080/02692171.2014.983049</p> <p>Koenig-Archibugi M., “National and European Citizenship: The Italian Case in Historical Perspective”, <i>Citizenship Studies</i>, 7:1, 2003, 85-109, DOI: 10.1080/1362102032000048710</p> <p>Foot J. , “How Italian Football Creates Italians: The 1982 World Cup, the ‘Pertini Myth’ and Italian National Identity”, <i>The International Journal of the History of Sport</i>, 33:3, 2016, 341-358, DOI: 10.1080/09523367.2016.1175440</p> <p>Agnew, J. , “Working the Margins: The Geopolitical Marking of Italian National Identity”, <i>Carte Italiane</i>, 2(11), 2017</p> <p>Costabile A., Coco A., “Social actors and social ties in multiple modernity: Familism and social change in the South of Italy”, <i>European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology</i>, 4:1, 2017, 76-99, DOI: 10.1080/23254823.2017.1274119</p> <p>Dennison J., Geddes A., “The centre no longer holds: the Lega, Matteo Salvini and the remaking of Italian immigration politics”, <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i>, 48:2, 2022, 441-460, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2020.1853907</p> <p>Tarrow, S., “Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical Reflection on Robert Putnam’s Making Democracy Work”, <i>The American Political Science Review</i>, 90(2), 1996, 389–397. https://doi.org/10.2307/2082892</p>
<p>MOVIE: <i>Il giorno della civetta - The Day of the Owl (1968), based on Leonardo Sciascia’s novel (1961):</i> https://www.bitchute.com/video/ePpzIUgfh6Q/</p>			
6	<p>July 14</p> <p>14.30-19.00</p> <p>17.30.</p>	<p>ITALY AND THE UNITED STATES</p>	<p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Nation R.G., “Intra-Alliance Politics. Italian-American Relations 1946-2010”, in Giacomello G., Verbeek B. (eds.) <i>Italy’s Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century. The New Assertiveness of an Aspiring Middle Power</i>, Lexington Books, 2011, 29-54</p>



	<p>Guest speaker: Prof. Kimberly Quinney, California State University, San Marcos (https://www.csusm.edu/history/masters/faculty.html)</p>		<p>Available at https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.unicatt.it/lib/unicatt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=860105&pq-origsite=summon</p> <p>Pasquino G., "Italy and America: politics and culture: Americanization of Italian politics?", <i>Journal of Modern Italian Studies</i>, 10:1, 2005, 3-9, DOI: 10.1080/1354541042000333333</p> <p>Del Pero M., Romero F., "The United States, Italy and the Cold War: Interpreting and Periodising a Contradictory and Complicated Relationship", in Varsori A., Zaccaria B. (eds.), <i>Italy in the International System from Détente to the End of the Cold War. The Underrated Ally</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 15-33</p>
7	<p>July 15 10.00-14.30</p>	<p>ITALY and: - The EUROPEAN UNION - The MEDITERRANEAN - RUSSIA - CHINA</p>	<p>Required Reading</p> <p>Giacomello G. and Verbeek B., "'It's the Perception, Stupid!' Italy's Hard Life as a Middle Power", in Giacomello G., Bertjan V. (eds.) <i>Italy's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century. The New Assertiveness of an Aspiring Middle Power</i>, Lexington Books, 2011, 13-28. Available at https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.unicatt.it/lib/unicatt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=860105&pq-origsite=summon</p> <p>Romero F., "Rethinking Italy's shrinking place in the international arena", <i>The International Spectator</i> 51:1, 2016, 1–12 DOI: 10.1080/03932729.2016.1108613</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Costalli S., Ruggeri A., "Italy and its international relations. Getting real on relative positions", <i>Italian Political Science</i>, Vol. 15 No. 1, 2020, 5-28</p> <p>Fabbrini S., "Italy and the EU: A Relationship with Uncertain Outcomes", in Kaeding M., Pollak J., Schmidt P. (eds) <i>The Future of Europe</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 61-64 https://doi-org.ezproxy.unicatt.it/10.1007/978-3-319-93046-6_16</p> <p>Andreatta F., "Italian Foreign Policy: Domestic Politics, International Requirements and the European</p>



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			<p>Dimension", <i>Journal of European Integration</i> 30:1, 2008, 169–81</p> <p>Matarazzo R., "In Search of the North Star. Italy's Post-Cold War European Policy", in Giacomello G., Bertjan V. (eds.) <i>Italy's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century. The New Assertiveness of an Aspiring Middle Power</i>, Lexington Books, 2011, 55-70. Available at https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.unicatt.it/lib/unicatt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=860105&pq-origsite=summon</p> <p>Natalizia G., Morini M., "Sleeping with the Enemy: The not-so-constant Italian stance towards Russia", <i>Italian Political Science</i>, 15 (1), 2020, 42-59</p> <p>Dossi S., "Italy-China relations and the Belt and Road Initiative. The need for a long-term vision", 15 (1), 2020, 60-76</p> <p>Hanau Santini R., "Italian post-2011 foreign policy in the Mediterranean between status and fear", <i>Italian Political Science</i>, 15 (1), 2020, 132-143</p>
8	<p>July 16</p> <p>10.00-14.30</p>	<p>FIELD TRIP: WALKING IN MILAN: A POLITICAL HISTORY OF ITALY</p>	<p>Meeting at 10.30, Piazza del Duomo, Milano, Mi.</p>
	<p>July 17</p> <p>10.00-14.00</p>	<p>EXAM</p>	<p>MULTIPLE CHOICE AND OPEN QUESTIONS</p>