

The Contemporary Transformation of the International System

Aims and objectives

Within the context of a period of great change the course focuses on the history and contemporary transformation of the international system, as well as on debates in the discipline of International Studies about the character of international order within that transformation. Questions will be addressed about how international order can be understood, whether it is changing and, if so, in what ways and by whose agency. In addressing these questions the course will analyse the international system through:

- a) study of the states-system and its emergence;
- b) the application of conceptual and theoretical models in an attempt to define how the states-system operates, the nature of world order and whether it is changing, and the role of the United States in those processes;
- c) the impact of contemporary global questions of culture, human rights and justice upon the states-system and the contemporary international system;
- d) the role of technological change, contemporary international inequality, and social and technological networks in shaping new forms of agency in the international system.

Structure of the course

The course will be taught through a series of weekly lectures, seminars and workshops. There will be 7 lectures, 5 seminars and 1 workshop.

The lectures seminars and workshops will be held in Room P22 at FSS on Tuesdays, commencing on 30.09.08 (except for 14.10.08 and 28.10.08 when there will be no teaching sessions) between 13.35 and 15.30.

All teaching sessions will begin at 13.35, and not at 14.00., as may have been previously notified

Lecture programme:

PLEASE NOTE: 80% attendance at lectures (i.e. at least 6) is a requirement to pass this course (see Course Assessment on page 4)

- 30.09.08 Lecture 1. The states-system and its emergence
07.10.08 Lecture 2. The transformation of the states-system: the role of the United States

14.10.08 READING AND SEMINAR PREPARATION WEEK (no lecture)

- 21.10.08 Workshop. Models of 'world order' – realism, liberalism, constructivism and marxism. (see page 2)

28.10.08 No lecture

- 04.11.08 Lecture 3. The transformation of the states-system: the role of Russia
11.11.08 Lecture 4. The transformation of the states-system: underdeveloped and developing states.
18.11.08 Lecture 5. Culture, human rights and justice in the contemporary international system + Seminar 1 (see page 3).

- 25.11.08 Lecture 6. The impact of the global network society on the contemporary international system: technology, inequality and social networks + Seminar 2 (see page 3)
- 02.12.08 Lecture 7. Evaluation of the models of world order within the context of the contemporary international system, and the challenges from other theoretical constructions + Seminar 3 (see page 3)
- 09.12.08 Seminar 4 and Seminar 5 (see page 3)

Workshop and Seminars programme (commencing 21.10.08):

PLEASE NOTE:

- a) 80% attendance at workshops and seminars (i.e. at least 5) is a requirement to pass the course (see Course Assessment on page 4)*
- b) All students will be required to participate in a verbal seminar presentation in English as a requirement to pass the course. The seminar presentation can be made individually or as part of a group presentation. The verbal seminar presentation should be on one of the seminar questions listed below in the Seminar programme. Presentations can be on topics in the Seminar programme that relate to the student's choice of essay question. Discussion and feedback in the seminar, and in later consultations with the tutor (if requested by students), will assist in the production of the assessment essay. Allocation of seminar presentation topics, on a voluntary basis, will commence from week 2 of the course (07.10.08). Seminars and presentations will commence from week 8 (18.11.08), following the lecture. The 5 seminar sessions will then take place from 18.11.08 until 09.12.08, immediately after lecture 5 (on 18.11.08), lecture 6 (25.11.08) and lecture 7 (02.12.08), and for the whole of the session on 09.12.08.*

Students will be expected to have read for each workshop and seminar, and participate. Indicative readings are given below in the course Literature/Reading list, and in addition, three set texts will be placed on the Information System.

21.10.08. Workshop: Models of 'world order' – realism, liberalism, constructivism and marxism.

This will consist of student participation and discussion groups.

Question: How are the interests and identities of states constructed? What is the nature of power and authority in international politics? How can we analyse and understand governance at an international level? Using these questions as a framework, the utility of the realist, liberal, constructivist and marxist models in analysis of the role of the United States today, and the characterisation of the contemporary international system, will be examined by students within study groups in the session. In addition to the course Literature/Reading list, and library and Internet material, three set readings by Susan Strange, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Robert W. Cox will be placed on the Information System for students.

- 18.11.08 Seminar 1.
Question: How can we characterise the international system during the post-1945, post-1989, and post-2001 periods?
- 25.11.08 Seminar 2.
Question: Has the United States of America lost its hegemonic dominance within the international system, as Immanuel Wallerstein suggests, or is the counter argument of Susan Strange a more accurate portrayal of its present position?
- 02.12.08 Seminar 3.
Question: “What did you expect us to do? Respond with a catapult? We punched the aggressor in the face.” (Vladimir Putin on why Russia took action against Georgia, in Dejevsky, M. ‘Georgia? We couldn’t just let Russia get a bloody nose’, *The Independent* newspaper, 12.09.08, p.27.)
 “The war has put European order in question. The times are past when you can punish Russia.” (Alexander Rahr on war in Georgia, in Traynor, I. ‘Six days that broke one country’, *The Guardian* newspaper, 16.08.08, p.12.)
 “The post-1991 decade of the US’s position as unchallenged number one – in Charles Krauthammer’s memorable phrase, “the unipolar moment” – is over.” (Kennedy, P. ‘Georgia is important. But what it tells us about global politics is far more so’, *The Guardian* newspaper, 16.08.08, p.34.)
- In the context of these statements, what do the events in South Ossetia and Georgia tell us about the contemporary international system, and within it the international system of states, as well as the role of Russia?
- 09.12.08. Seminar 4.
Question: Within the contemporary international system what external and internal constraints exist on the autonomy and sovereignty of underdeveloped and developing states?
- 09.12.08. Seminar 5 (a).
Question: What are the relationships between cultural claims, universal human rights, and power within the contemporary international system?
- 09.12.08. Seminar 5 (b).
Question: Evaluate the role of non-state and non-governmental actors, and transnational economic and social networks, as agents of change in the international order.

Course Assessment

- a) **Attendance:** 80% attendance at lectures (at least 6) and at the seminars and workshop (at least 5) is a requirement to pass this course.
- b) **Seminar Presentation:** All students will be required to participate in a verbal seminar presentation in English as a requirement to pass the course. The seminar presentation can be made individually or as part of a group presentation (see page 2).
- c) **Essay** (maximum 2000 words/6 sides of A4 paper)

Deadline: Wednesday 14 January 2009. To be submitted by email or through the Masaryk University Information System

Students will be required to submit an essay in answer to **one** of the questions shown below. The essay must be of a maximum of 2,000 words/6 sides of A4 paper, be typewritten, fully properly referenced, and include a full bibliography.

- (i) Is the state-based international order more accurately characterised as an arena of continuity or of transformation?
- (ii) How might claims to universal human rights and justice transform the international order?
- (iii) In what ways might the emergence of transnational networks represent a challenge to an international order based on sovereign states?

Literature/Reading list

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to this list three set readings by Susan Strange, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Robert W. Cox will be placed on the Information System for students.

Texts

- Baylis, J. Smith, S. (2001) *The Globalisation of World Politics* (2nd edition) Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Burchill, S. et al (1996) *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave.
- Brown, C. (2005) *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice. International Political Theory Today*, Cambridge, Polity.
- Buzan, B. (2004) *The United States and the Great Powers*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Carlsnaes, W. Risse, T. Simmons, B. (eds.) (2003) *Handbook of International Relations*, London, Sage.
- Fawcett, L. (2005) *International Relations of the Middle East*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Fry, M.G. Goldstein, E. Langhorne, R. (2002) *Guide to International Relations and Diplomacy*, London, Continuum.
- Ginsberg, R.H. (2001) *The E.U. in International Politics*, Maryland, Rowman and Littlefield.
- Goldstein, J.S. (2003) *International Relations* (5th edition) London, Longman.

- Green, D. and Luehrmann, L. (2003) *Comparative Politics of the Third World*, Boulder, Lynne Reinner.
- Halliday, F. (1983) *The Making of the Second Cold War*, London, Verso, 1983.
- Halliday, F. (2005) *The Middle East in International Relations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Jentleson, B.W. (2004) *American Foreign Policy*, New York, W.W. Norton.
- Kolodziej, E.A. (2005) *Security and International Relations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Kupchan, C.A. (2002) *The End of the American Era*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf.
- Mittelman, J.H. (2004) *Whither Globalisation?*, London, Routledge.
- Neumann, I.B. (1996) *Russia and the Idea of Europe*, London, Routledge.
- Petro, N.N. and Rubinstein, A.Z. (1997) *Russian Foreign Policy. From Empire to Nation-State*, Harlow, Longman.
- Pursiainen, C. (2000) *Russian Foreign Policy and International Relations Theory*, Aldershot, Ashgate.
- Rosenberg, J. (2000) *The Follies of Globalisation Theory*, London, Verso.
- Strange, S. (1996) *The Retreat of the State*, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Viotti, P.R. Kauppi, M. (2001) *International Relations and World Politics* (2nd edition), New Jersey, Prentice Hall.
- Wallerstein, I. (1984) *The Politics of the World Economy*, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Wegren, S.K. (2003) *Russia's Policy Challenges. Security, Stability and Development*, London, M.E. Sharpe, 2003
- Wendt, A. (1999) *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Wilkinson, J. Hughes, H.S. (2004) *Contemporary Europe* (10th edition), New Jersey, Prentice Hall.
- Wilkinson, R. (2005) *The Global Governance Reader*, London, Routledge.
- Wilton, J. (1997) "Sinatrova" či "Mozartova" doktrína? Sovětská politika ve východní Evropě po roce 1985' ("Sinatra" Doctrine or "Mozart" Doctrine? Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe post-1985'), in *Politologická Revue*, 1997/2, pp.87-98. (English version copy on Masaryk University Information System).
- Woods, N. (1996) *Explaining International Relations Since 1945*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Journals

British Journal of Politics and International Relations
 Europe-Asia Studies
 Foreign Affairs
 International Political Science Review
 Review of International Studies

Book Review:

Friedman, B.D. Review of Ahmed, S. and Potter, D.M. *NGOs in International Politics*, Bloomfield, CT, Kumarian Press, Inc., 2006. in *INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW*, Vol. 83, Issue 1/2, 2008, p. 85. (copy on Masaryk University Information System)

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 01.09.08