

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 the international system and whether it is changing, and the role of the United States in those processes;
- c) the developing roles of Russia and China in the contemporary international system;
- d) the impact of contemporary global questions of culture, human rights and justice upon the states-system and the contemporary international system;
- e) 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 and workshops. There will be 8 lectures and 2 workshops.

Lecture and Workshop programme:

PLEASE NOTE: 80% attendance at lectures (i.e. at least 7) and 100% attendance at the 2 workshops is a requirement to pass this course (see Course Assessment on page 4)

All classes will take place on Wednesdays between 16.00 and 17.40 in Room AVC, EXCEPT FOR Lecture 5 which will take place on Monday 15 November between 12.00 and 13.40 in Room 43

- 06.10.10 Lecture 1. The states-system and its emergence
13.10.10 Lecture 2. The transformation of the states-system: the role of the United States
- 20.10.10 *READING AND WORKSHOP PREPARATION WEEK (no class)*** - students should do preparation reading on the theoretical models of the international system, and the contemporary position of the United States within that system, for Workshop 1 on 27.10.10 (see page 2 for suggested library texts and set readings that have been placed on the Information System)
- 27.10.10 Workshop 1. Models of ‘world order’ and the international system – realism, liberalism, constructivism and marxism. – and the contemporary position of the United States of America in the international system (see page 2)
- 03.11.10 Lecture 3. The transformation of the states-system: the role of Russia
10.11.10 Lecture 4. The transformation of the states-system: China

15.11.10 Lecture 5. The transformation of the states-system: underdeveloped and developing states.

17.11.10 NATIONAL HOLIDAY (no class)

24.11.10 Lecture 6. Culture, human rights and justice in the contemporary international system

01.12.10 Lecture 7. The impact of the global network society on the contemporary international system: technology, inequality and social networks

08.12.10 Workshop 2. (a) Russia and the contemporary international system (see page 3)
(b) Culture, human rights and justice – communitarianism or cosmopolitanism?

15.12.10 Lecture 8. Evaluation of the models of world order within the context of the contemporary international system, and the challenges from other theoretical constructions

Workshop programme

PLEASE NOTE:

a) 100% attendance at the 2 workshops is a requirement to pass the course (see Course Assessment on page 4)

b) Students will be expected to have read for each workshop, and participate. Indicative readings are given below for each Workshop and in the Course Literature/Reading list. In addition, three set texts have been placed in the Study Materials section of the Information System.

27.10.10 Workshop1: Models of ‘world order’ and the international system – realism, liberalism, constructivism and Marxism - and the contemporary position of the United States of America in the international system.

The Workshop will consist of student participation and discussion groups. The following questions will be examined by students within study groups in the session:

Questions: a) Critically assess to what extent the realist, liberal, constructivist and marxist models are useful in the characterisation of the contemporary international system?

b) 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?

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to some of the *Readings and Texts* listed below, students should particularly read the three set texts by Susan Strange, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Robert W. Cox that have been placed on the Information System.

Readings and Texts:

- Burchill, S. et al (1996) *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave.
- 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.
- Goldstein, J.S. (2003) *International Relations* (5th edition) London, Longman
- Ikenberry, J.G. (2008) 'The rise of China and the future of the West', in *Foreign Affairs*, vol.87, no.1.
- Jentleson, B.W. (2004) *American Foreign Policy*, New York, W.W. Norton.
- Kirby, W.C. Ross, R.S. Li, G. *Normalisation of U.S. – China Relations*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard Univ. Press, 2005.
- Kupchan, C.A. (2002) *The End of the American Era*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf.
- MacDonald, Paul K. (2009) 'Those who forget historiography are doomed to republish it: empire, imperialism and contemporary debates about American power', in *Review of International Studies*, Vol.35, no.1, pp.45-68.
- 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.

- 08.12.10 Workshop 2.** (a) Russia and the contemporary international system.
(b) Culture, human rights and justice – communitarianism or cosmopolitanism?

The Workshop will consist of student participation and discussion groups. The following questions will be examined by students within study groups in the session:

Question (a): "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 in August and September 2008 tell us about the contemporary international system, and the role of Russia within it?

Readings and Texts:

- Burchill, S. et al (1996) *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave.
- Dejevsky, M. 'Georgia? We couldn't just let Russia get a bloody nose', *The Independent* newspaper, 12.09.08, p.27.
- Headley, J. *Russia and the Balkans*, London, Hurst and Co., 2008
- 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.
- Kolodziej, E.A. (2005) *Security and International Relations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- 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.
- Traynor, I. 'Six days that broke one country', *The Guardian* newspaper, 16.08.08, p.12.)
- 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

Question (b): Are contemporary global questions of culture, human rights and justice best approached from a communitarian or cosmopolitan perspective?

Readings and Texts:

- Baylis, J. Smith, S. (2001) *The Globalisation of World Politics* (2nd edition) Oxford, Oxford University Press, Ch.11 and Ch.29.
- Brown, C. (2005) *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice. International Political Theory Today*, Cambridge, Polity.
- Burchill, S. et al (1996) *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave. (and subsequent editions)
- Goldstein, J.S. (2003) *International Relations* (5th edition) London, Longman.
- Kegley, C.W. *Controversies in International Relations Theory*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1995.
- Wilkinson, R. (2005) *The Global Governance Reader*, London, Routledge.

Course Assessment

- a) **Attendance:** 80% attendance at lectures (at least 7) and 100% attendance at the 2 workshops is a requirement to pass this course.
- b) **Essay** (maximum 2000 words/6 sides of A4 paper)

Deadline: Tuesday 4 January 2011. 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 contemporary state-based international order undergoing a transformation?
- (ii) Assess the ways in which cultural and rights claims contribute to change in international order.
- (iii) Does the rise of networks indicate a transformation of international order?
- (iv) Critically assess to what extent China and Russia are challenging the hegemonic dominance of the United States and whether “the unipolar moment” of post-1991 is over.

Literature/Reading list

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to this list three set readings by Susan Strange, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Robert W. Cox have been placed on the Masaryk University Information System, as has the article by John Wilton on Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe post-1985 (cited below) and the Book Review by B.D. Friedman (cited below).

Texts

- Baylis, J. Smith, S. (2001) *The Globalisation of World Politics* (2nd edition) Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Brown, C. (2005) *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice. International Political Theory Today*, Cambridge, Polity.
- Burchill, S. et al (1996) *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave. (and subsequent editions)
- 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 Rienner.
- 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.
- Headley, J. *Russia and the Balkans*, London, Hurst and Co., 2008
- Ikenberry, J.G. (2008) ‘The rise of China and the future of the West’, in *Foreign Affairs*, vol.87, no.1.
- Jentleson, B.W. (2004) *American Foreign Policy*, New York, W.W. Norton.
- Kegley, C.W. *Controversies in International Relations Theory*, New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1995.
- Khagram, S. Levitt, P. *The Transnational Studies Reader*, New York, Routledge, 2008.
- Kirby, W.C. Ross, R.S. Li, G. *Normalisation of U.S. – China Relations*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard Univ. Press, 2005.
- 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.

- MacDonald, Paul K. (2009) 'Those who forget historiography are doomed to republish it: empire, imperialism and contemporary debates about American power', in *Review of International Studies*, Vol.35, no.1, pp.45-68.
- 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)

John Wilton
 14.08.10