

AI

SEMINAR 8

International Relations

Task 1 – General Knowledge Quiz

- 1a) What does the acronym NATO stand for?
- 1b) When was NATO founded? A) 1918 B) 1945 C) 1949 D) 1961
- 2) Where is the United Nations (UN) headquarters located? A) Geneva B) London C) New York D) Brussels
- 3) How many individuals sit at the EU parliament? A) 238 B) 626 C) 732 D) 805
- 4) What does IMF stand for?
- 5) Which country is not a part of the UN Security Council? A) Mexico B) India C) Bulgaria D) Cameroon
- 6) How many member countries are there in the EU? A) 10 B) 12 C) 15 D) 25
- 7) Which country is a member of the EU? A) Finland B) Turkey C) Switzerland D) Norway
- 8) Which country is the most recent member of the G8 group of countries? A) Russia B) China
C) Australia D) India
- 9) Which countries is Iraq bordered by? Iran, Georgia, Russia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey
- 10) In what modern-day country are the ruins of the ancient city of Babylon? A) Iraq B) Turkey
C) Iran D) Syria E) Egypt

Task 2 – Match the following words to their definitions (a-j) below

Amnesty “Red herring” Civil liberties Liberty International law
Equal opportunities Keynote Welfare Comity Internationalism

- a) The rights of a person to do, think, and say what they want if this does not harm¹ other people.
- b) An act by which the state pardons political or other offenders, usually as a group.
- c) Rules of etiquette in international relations that do not have the force of law, but make international relations smoother.
- d) The main point in a lecture or discussion.
- e) The belief that the greatest possible co-operation between nations in areas such as trade, culture, education, and government is the best way to build peace. This is the opposite of isolationism and nationalism.
- f) The idea that opportunities in education, employment or any other field, should be freely available to all citizens, regardless of race, gender, religion, or country of origin.
- g) Something irrelevant that is used to confuse or take the attention away from something else.
- h) Rules, principles, and conventions that govern the relations between states.
- i) Public financial or other assistance (food stamps, for example) given to people who meet certain standards of eligibility regarding income and assets².
- j) The freedom to live as you wish and go where you want.

Task 3 – The Study of International Relations at Stanford University in California

Read the text and fill in the gaps with words from below.

The purpose of the International Relations major is to provide students with both the foundational skills and specific _____ necessary to analyze³ the behavior of _____ countries.

The focus is on the study of the changing _____ among nation-states – political, economic, and _____. Majors pursue⁴ a course of study in world politics that includes classes in political science, economics, history and languages, focusing on a _____ of issues including international security, international political economy, political and economic _____, and the politics of the _____ to democracy.

International Relations majors are also _____ to complete at least one quarter of study abroad, and at least two years in a foreign _____. The major prepares students for a variety of _____ in government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and business, both _____ and international, as well as for _____ school in law, business, economics or political science.

<http://irweb.stanford.edu/degree.html>

Gap Fill Words

relations cultural development⁵ transition⁶ domestic⁷ graduate⁸
range⁹ contemporary¹⁰ required language knowledge careers

Discussion Questions

- 1) How important is it to follow current political events?
- 2) Do you take an interest in the international politics of your country? Can you name some recent events?
- 3) What about the international politics of other countries? Can you name some recent events?
- 4) Has the study of international politics become broader in recent years?
- 5) Do you think that international politics has direct relevance to everyone?

Task 4 – Reading – Globalisation: What on Earth is it About?

1 Globalisation is a reality that touches our lives in many ways. Many say it is a good thing: increased international trade has made us wealthier and allowed us to lead more diverse lifestyles. But the crowds that demonstrated in Prague for the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank disagree. The coalition of environmentalists, anti-poverty campaigners, trade unionists¹¹, and anti-capitalist groups see the growth of global companies as raising more problems than it solves.

2 The term "globalisation" was first coined in the 1980s, but the concept goes back centuries. Some say the world was as globalised 100 years ago as it is today, with international trade and migration; however, the 1930s Great Depression put an end to that. Nation states realised that international markets could cause much misery in the form of poverty and unemployment. After World War II, the Western states reduced protectionist barriers¹² around the world, stimulating the free movement of capital and allowing companies to set up bases abroad.

3 For consumers and capitalists, increased trade is good in that it has made for more choice in the market place, greater spending, rising living standards, and a growth in international travel. Globalisation supporters say it has promoted information exchange, led to a greater understanding of other cultures, and allowed democracy to triumph over autocracy.

4 But as numerous protests against World Trade Organisation conferences around the world have proved, there is a growing opposition to the forces of corporate globalisation. Critics say that what the West has gained¹³ has been at the expense of developing countries. The already small share of the global income of the poorest people in the world has dropped from 2.3% to 1.4% in the last decade.

5 But even in the developed world, not everyone benefits. The freedoms gained from globalisation are leading to increased insecurity in the workplace. Workers are under threat¹⁴ as companies move their production overseas to low-wage economies, where employees have little protection. People in small and medium-sized firms worry that large scale global economies will put them out of work. Another concern¹⁵ is that huge trans-national companies are becoming more powerful and influential than democratically-elected governments, putting shareholder interests¹⁶ above those of communities and even customers.

6 Ecologists say corporations are disregarding¹⁷ the environment in their search for mega-profits and operating where environmental laws are weak. Human rights groups say corporate power is restricting individual freedom. But does the fact that communications have improved so much that this debate can take place simultaneously across continents prove that the global village is already here?

Viewed on 20.4.2004 and adapted from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/special_report/1999/02/99/e-cyclopedia/711906.stm.

Discussion questions

- 1 What are some of the benefits and drawbacks¹⁸ of corporate globalisation?
- 2 Who benefits most from globalisation? Who suffers the most from it?
- 3 What issues related to globalisation are of concern to you?

Task 5 – Listening – National Public Radio Interview: Islamic Society and Western Mentality

Listen to the following interview with Bernard Lewis, Professor Emeritus of Middle Eastern Studies at Princeton University (New Jersey), fill in the gaps, and answer the questions below.

I = NPR News Interviewer; BL = Bernard Lewis

I: This is *All Things Considered* from *NPR News*. I'm Robert Siegel. In the summer of 1683, the Ottoman Turks laid siege to Vienna and were repelled and defeated by an alliance of Christian European states. Historian Bernard Lewis marks that calamitous defeat as a turning point for Islam. An empire that had been wealthier and more powerful than the West, more creative, more fair to its 1 _____ and its poor, the Islamic world began to sink militarily, politically, economically. Lewis explores that decline in a new book called *What Went Wrong*. To illustrate the turn about between East and West, he cites the example of a cup of coffee with sugar.

BL: Coffee came originally from Ethiopia. It was brought to the Middle East and became very popular in the Middle East and the West first 2 _____ it from the Middle East. Sugar came from Iran, possibly ultimately from India. That too became well-known in the Middle East long before it was known in Europe. So that coffee and sugar were two important 3 _____ among Middle Eastern exports to the Western world.

Then things changed round. The Europeans learnt how to grow both sugar and coffee in their plantations, and to do so more 4 _____ and therefore more cheaply than in the Middle East. So that by the 18th century if a Turk or an Arab indulged in that familiar delight, a cup of sweet coffee, the probability was that the coffee came from Java or South America and the sugar from the West Indies. Only the hot water was local. And in the 19th century even that ceased to be true as European companies took over most of the public utilities.

I: There's an implication there that some capacity for innovation – and you write about it in terms of science – some capacity for innovation simply wasn't there in that part of the world.

BL: It had been there, but it was lost or even suppressed. The Islamic society of the Middle East had been in its prime undoubtedly the most advanced, the most creative, the most inventive¹⁹ on all the frontiers of knowledge in every significant field of human endeavor. They had led in science and in technology, in 5 _____, in astronomy, chemistry, physics – you name it. And then suddenly they just stopped and began to fall more and more behind the previously barbarous West.

I: Well, when you try to examine how it was that this spiritually-based, scientifically 6 _____ at one time civilization fell behind what had been the barbarous rival in Europe, one great difference that you focus on and that obviously made a huge impression on the Muslims as they first encountered the West was the status of 7 _____.

BL: They look at it with horror.

I: Yes, they thought it was a sign of all that was wrong.

BL: Yes, they see it as a sign of weakness, of decay and so on. For a long time, when they looked to the causes of Western progress, they first of all looked to the military, then to the economic, then to the political, then to the scientific. But then, as far as I'm aware, for the first time, a 8 _____ writer in 1868 wrote an article in which he suggested something entirely new. He said that the cause of our backwardness is that we deprive ourselves of the talents and

services of half the population, and entrust the 9 _____ of the other half to ignorant and downtrodden mothers. He uses a couple of very striking metaphors. He says at best we treat our women as jewels or musical instruments, and he ends by saying the result is that our society is like a human body that is paralyzed on one side. Now, this has not been widely accepted. The most noteworthy exponent of this view was Kamal Attaturk, the first President of the Turkish Republic. In the 1920s one of his first campaigns was for women's 10 _____. Anything less than an Ottoman Pasha and a general campaigning for feminism would be difficult to imagine!

I: And a general who had been a true war hero at that...

BL: Indeed, yes, and also something of a philanderer. Nevertheless, he went around campaigning for equal rights for women, political rights especially, and he put it with military terseness. He said: "Our 11 _____ now is to catch up with the modern world. We will not catch up with the modern world if we only modernize 12 _____ the population."

I: Well, could that be the big idea - not that things are inevitably all explained by one big idea – but is it possible that the marginalization of half of one's population through discrimination against women, could that have been what inhibited Islam from advancing or were women really that far advanced in the West in the 13 _____ century.

BL: Well, I wouldn't say it's the sole cause but I think it is a very important cause and one which has not been given adequate attention.

I: At one point you draw a distinction between patterns of corruption in the East and patterns of corruption in the West.

BL: Yes, I think that that's important. Corruption is a 14 _____ thing anywhere, but it seems to me that there is a very important difference between our corruption and their corruption. In our corruption, meaning in the Western world and the Western democracies in particular, you make money in the market place and then you use that money to buy power or at least to buy 15 _____ or influence. In their societies, particularly as they have developed in modern times, you seize power and then you use the power to make money. And morally I can't see any difference between them, but from the political and the economic point of view, I think our kind of corruption does less 16 _____.

I: For the past few months, well since September 11th, this has been – what perhaps before that was a question that occupied only a small number of the population – is now a very common one: what's 17 _____ in that part of the world; why does it seem to be stuck; why is Islam still dealing with religion and politics in a way that seems at best archaic and obsolete to us.

BL: Well, this is the key question. This is the question which they have been asking themselves for something like 18 _____ years now, and the debate has been going on ever since and many different explanations have been offered. They have certainly become aware that things have gone badly wrong. Now when you are aware that things are going badly wrong there are two questions you can ask. You can ask: "What did we do wrong?" in which case you proceed to the next question "How do we put it right?" Or you can ask: "Who did this to us?" and that leads you off into the twilight world²⁰ of conspiracy theories and neuroses and so on.

I: Well, we seem to have quite a bit of that now.

BL: Oh yes, it's also known as the blame game²¹.

I: Yes, I mean, is there actually still a vigorous discussion going on in say 19 _____, or Pakistan for that matter, about "What's wrong, what should we do?"

BL: One of the difficulties now is that there are very few states in Muslim Middle East or elsewhere where free discussion is possible. It happens in Turkey and it happens to a very large extent among émigrés. Arabic newspapers published in London for example are much more interesting than 20 _____ newspapers published in the Arab world. And they do circulate in the Arab world quite extensively so the debate is going on, but it's not by any means a free and open debate.

I: Bernard Lewis, thank you very much for talking to us. Historian Bernard Lewis is the author most recently of the book What Went Wrong: Western Impact and Middle Eastern 21 _____. There is more on the subject and on the author at our website: NPR.org.

Comprehension Questions

1. What was the "turning point" for Islam and where did it happen?
2. What is the name of Bernard Lewis' book?
3. Where did coffee come from originally? Sugar?
4. What did the Europeans learn to do better than the Arabs?
5. What quality or ability was lost or suppressed in the Islamic world?
6. In what three ways was Islamic society in its prime? "The most _____, _____, _____."
7. What made a huge (negative) impression on the Arab world when they first encountered the West?
8. What are the four main aspects of "western progress"?
1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____
9. What idea did the Turkish writer in 1868 write about in his article?

10. What did the first Turkish president Kamal Attaturk campaign for?
- 11.a) What is the difference between corruption in the West and in the East?
b) In the author's opinion, which does more damage?
12. According to the author, what is the key question that has been asked for 300 years?
13. What is another term for "conspiracy theory"?
14. What is one of the biggest problems in the Muslim Middle East?

Task 6 – Grammar – Conjunctions and Linking Words

Choose the best answer; sometimes both forms are possible.

- 1) We are planning a series of conferences; *however/therefore* there will be a weekend devoted to International Relations in the 21st Century.
- 2) I failed my exam precisely *although/because* I didn't have time to study.
- 3) There is no record of the transaction in our files, *but/so* there is no proof that it ever took place.
- 4) The speaker is ill and will *therefore/ because* be unable to lecture today.
- 5) John, *as/although* you speak French, I wonder if I could ask you about some words?
- 6) Some people believe that the politician died *because/since* he was poisoned.
- 7) Jerome Smith has ambitions in politics; *or/consequently* he is interested in the media.
- 8) *Since/Because* we have not heard from you, we assume that you have no objections to the proposal.
- 9) Everyone had arrived, *because/consequently* the meeting could begin.
- 10) *Since/However* everyone agreed, we went ahead with the proposal.

Vocabulary

1 *to harm	škodit
2 eligibility regarding income and assets	příjem a celkový majetek
3 *to analyze; analysis	analyzovat; analýza
4 *pursue a course of study	uskutečňovat, plnit studijní program
5 *development	vývoj, rozvoj
6 *transition	přechod
7 *domestic	vnitřní, vnitrostátní, domácí
8 *graduate; to graduate	absolvent; absolvovat, promovat
9 *range of issues	řada otázek
10 *contemporary	současný
11 trade unions	odbory
12 protectionist barriers	zábrany vztahující se k ochraně národních ekonomik
13 *to gain at the expense of	získat na úkor něčeho
14 *to be under threat	být ohrožen
15 *concern, issue	záležitost, věc
16 shareholder interests	zájmy držitelů akcií
17 *to disregard	znevažovat, nevěnovat pozornost čemu
18 *drawback, disadvantage	nedostatek
19 *inventive	vynalézavý
20 twilight world	temný svět
21 blame game	hra na viníka