. – Contemporary History

Prof. Paolo Borruso

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course intends to offer students the necessary historical categories for in-depth, articulated understanding of the contemporary age, with particular emphasis on the historical dynamics of globalisation and its effect on the contemporary world. The course outlines the historical processes which have led to the current framework, within political, social, cultural and religious settings, between the nineteenth and the twenty-first century.

At the end of the course, students will:

1. Have basic, critical knowledge of historical topics;
2. Acquire specific, articulated language for discussing course topics, via the reading and analysis of the reading list;
3. Acquire an approach and study methodology for an independent understanding of historical issues: research and analysis of primary and secondary resources, analysis of critical essays, periodisation, gathering and interpretation of data from other scientific environments (sociology, anthropology, geography, medicine, psychology);
4. Development of independent criticism on historical issues regarding institutional, social, religious and ethical environments, in connection with the current scenario;
5. Clear, articulate presentation of historical and cultural ideas, questions to specialised and non-specialised interlocutors

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course follows the chronological period between the French Revolution and the first decades of the twenty-first century, and focuses on transformations in single societies by the progressive expansion of the geopolitical horizons and transnational and transcontinental connections. Lectures will examine the development of European and non-European societies, the dissolution of Empires, the formation and consolidation of nation-states, the affirmation of ideologies, the development of religious Christian and non-Christian worlds and the development of intra-religious relations, the great “global” crises in military and economic fields. Within this framework, there will be particular focus on contemporary Italy from post-WW2 to the present day.

The syllabus is organised as follows:

Semester 1 (**6 ECTS credits – 8 ECTS credits- 12 ECTS credits**):

1. Introduction to contemporary history: features, methodology and periods.
2. Historical and historiographical turning points in contemporary history between 1789 and 1989, with a particular focus on political, social, cultural and religious changes in the 1900s.
3. Origins and development of globalisation processes.

Semester 2 (**only 8- 12 ECTS credits**):

Single-subject section:

The relationships between Europe and the extra-European world in the contemporary age, with a focus on Africa, according to the following structure:

Europe and Asian civilisations.

Origins and development of African civilisations.

From colonial encounter and conflict to decolonisation.

Issues of the post-colonial age.

Euro-African interconnectedness and the role of Italy.

Migrations as global processes.

***READING LIST (6 ECTS)*:[[1]](#footnote-1)**

1. Lecture notes (semester 1).

2. A textbook of their choice (recommended option: L. Caracciolo-A. Roccucci, *Storia contemporanea. Dal mondo europeo al mondo senza centro,* Le Monnier, Milan, 2017 or following editions, chapters 10-27; alternatively, students can choose another textbook they already know). [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/lucio-caracciolo-adriano-roccucci/storia-contemporanea-dal-mondo-europeo-al-mondo-senza-centro-9788800744737-254296.html)

3. P. Borruso, *Debre Libanos. Il più grave crimine di guerra dell’Italia,* Laterza, Rome-Bari 2020. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/paolo-borruso/debre-libanos-1937-il-piu-grave-crimine-di-guerra-dellitalia-9788858139639-680502.html)

Non-attending students can replace lecture notes with the following textbook:

4. J. Osterhammel-N.P. Peterson, *Storia della globalizzazione. Dimensioni, processi, epoche,* Il Mulino, Bologna 2005 (or following editions). [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/jurgen-osterhammel-niels-p-petersson/storia-della-globalizzazione-dimensioni-processi-epoche-9788815098535-208331.html)

***READING LIST (12 ECTS)[[2]](#footnote-2)***

a) For the general course:

1. Lecture notes (semester 1).

2. A textbook of their choice (recommended option: L. Caracciolo-A. Roccucci, *Storia contemporanea. Dal mondo europeo al mondo senza centro,* Le Monnier, Milan, 2017 or following editions, chapters 10-27; alternatively, students can choose another textbook they already know). [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/lucio-caracciolo-adriano-roccucci/storia-contemporanea-dal-mondo-europeo-al-mondo-senza-centro-9788800744737-254296.html)

b) For the single-subject course:

1. Lecture notes (semester 2).
2. C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Breve storia dell’Africa,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2012. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/coquery-vidrovitch-catherine/breve-storia-dellafrica-9788815237224-212195.html)
3. P. Borruso, *Debre Libanos 1937. Il più grave crimine di guerra dell’Italia,* Laterza, Rome-Bari 2020. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/paolo-borruso/debre-libanos-1937-il-piu-grave-crimine-di-guerra-dellitalia-9788858139639-680502.html)

One of the following textbooks:

1. P. Borruso, *Il Pci e l’Africa indipendente*, Le Monnier, Florence, 2009
2. P. Borruso (edited by), *L’Italia in Africa. Le nuove strategie di una politica postcoloniale*, Cedam, Padua, 2015
3. S. Cannelli, *Cattolici d’Africa,* Guerini e Associati, Milan, 2011. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/cannelli-susanna/cattolici-dafrica-9788862502375-177415.html)
4. S. Picciaredda, *La Croce Rossa alla prova dell’Africa. Nuove sfide a sud del Sahara (1936-1975)*, Carocci, Rome, 2022
5. G. Musso, *La caserma e la moschea. Militari e islamisti al potere in Sudan*, Carocci, 2016. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/giorgio-musso/la-moschea-e-la-caserma-islamisti-e-militari-al-potere-in-sudan-1989-2011-9788843078479-657139.html)
6. M. Aime, A. de Georgio, *Il grande gioco del Sahel. Dalle carovane di sale ai Boeing di cocaina*, Bollati Boringhieri, 2021.
7. A. Plebani, *Jihadismo globale. Strategie del terrore tra Oriente e Occidente*, Giunti, Florence, 2016
8. V. De Cesaris, M. Impagliazzo (edited by), *L’immigrazione in Italia da Jerry Masslo a oggi*, Guerini e associati, Milan, 2020
9. M. Giro, *Global Africa. La nuova realtà delle migrazioni: il volto di un continente in movimento*, Guerini e Associati, Milan, 2019.

(\*) Students will have the possibility to replace the lecture notes (semester 1 and 2) with one of the following textbooks of their choice:

1. A. Riccardi, *La strage dei cristiani*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2015. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/andrea-riccardi/la-strage-dei-cristiani-mardin-gli-armeni-e-la-fine-di-un-mondo-9788858126400-244127.html)
2. A. Riccardi, *Mediterraneo. Cristianesimo e Islam tra coabitazione e conflitto,* Guerini e Associati, Milan, 2014 (latest updated edition). [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/autori-vari/mediterraneo-cristianesimo-e-islam-tra-coabitazione-e-conflitto-9788862505116-188418.html)
3. A. Giovagnoli (edited by), *La Chiesa e le culture. Missioni cattoliche e «scontro di civiltà»*, Guerini e Associati, Milan, 2005. [Buy from V&P](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/la-chiesa-e-le-culture-9788883356568-176369.html)

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures – Use of audio-visual material – Analysis of texts, talks by experts on specific topics.

Practical classes: during the course attending students will be requested to present a topic of their choice (approved by the lecturer).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam as follows:

Students on the one-year course (8 -12 ECTS credits):

a) one question on the general section (textbook);

b) one question on the topics from both semesters of the course, including any class presentations by students;

c) one/two questions on the topics of the single-subject course and related texts.

For students taking Semester 1 only (6 ECTS credits):

a) one question on the general section (textbook);

b) one question on the topics of Semester 1 and the text on the reading list (*L’ultimo impero cristiano*);

For students taking Semester 2 only (A course 6 ECTS credits):

c) two questions on the topics of the single-subject course and related texts.

The exam will be marked out of 30 (from a minimum of 18/30 to a maximum of 30/30). The final mark will consider how well students present information (appropriate language) and quality of answers (70%), as well as ability to justify statements, analyses and judgments during the exam (30%). Students who answer all questions fully and appropriately will be awarded a distinction with honours.

The **12 ECTS** credit exam may be taken in two parts as follows:

1. general section (textbook only)

2. single-subject section (texts from the single-subject section in semester 2).

The two parts may be taken on two separate exam dates, either in the same or different exam sessions.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Given the complexity of the course, regular attendance is recommended; students will be provided with learning and reading material for further study and will be informed of any changes to the syllabus. Students should place particular emphasis on clarity of presentation; international students should have sound knowledge of the Italian language, both written and oral, as well as of the main events of European history.

All changes and notices will be published in the lecturer’s virtual classroom. Students are therefore recommended to monitor it regularly.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.

1. The textbooks indicated in the reading list can be purchased at UCSC bookshops or from any other reseller. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The textbooks indicated in the reading list can be purchased at UCSC bookshops or from any other reseller. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)