# Regional Studies

## Prof. Andrea Plebani; Prof. Aldo Pigoli; Prof. Marco Valigi; Prof. Elisa Giunipero

Module: *East Asia* (Prof. Elisa Giunipero)

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

The course provides an introduction to the history of eastern Asia’s international relations throughout the 20th century, with a particular focus on the role of China in regional and international relations throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. At the end of the course, students will be able to contextualise the history of China from the Opium wars to the present day, with a focus on the relations between the countries of Eastern Asia.

***COURSE CONTENT***

– The crisis of the China-centric system and the end of the Chinese imperial system

– China and Japan in the first half of the 20th century.

– The People's Republic of China in international relations from 1949 to today.

– The new Silk Road.

***READING LIST***

Students attending class on a regular basis are requested to know the topics analyzed in class and the study of the following texts:

A. Fiori, *L' Asia orientale. Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2011.

In addition to the texts indicated above, non-attending students are requested to study:

R. Caroli-F. Gatti, *Storia del Giappone,* Laterza, 2017 [capitoli IX-XI]

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures. Group discussions on assigned reading and “open lectures” with contributions from experts.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The examination is carried out in oral form. It is marked out of 30 and comprises three open questions worth 10 points each. The test is designed to assess students’ knowledge of the content of the texts on the exam reading list and, for attending students, the topics covered during the course. Students will also be assessed on their critical and expressive skills. Students who are able to demonstrate a critical and organic approach to the material, using specific terminology appropriately and confidently will receive top marks.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

A basic knowledge of the physical and political geography, and the contemporary history of Eastern Asia are prerequisites for attending this course.

Additional information on the reading list will be provided in class.

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.

Module: *History of Contemporary Africa* (Prof. Aldo Pigoli)

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

The course aims to explore and outline the main historical trends of the African continent from the second half of the 1800s to recent and current developments.

After reviewing the colonisation process of the African continent - identifying and describing its main characteristics and dynamics - the course will focus on the process of decolonisation and the political-institutional impact of the Cold War on the African political and institutional context; next, the course will cover the political, economic and security-related development of the continent from the 1990s, exploring the political and military crises of the last three decades, the developments of the process of political and economic integration and the international relations of the African States.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* understand the main political, economic, and social dynamics that characterised African states from their independence to the present day;
* recognise the most important factors lying at the basis of positive and negative outcomes in the trajectories for the development of African states;
* identify the main national and regional differences between African states in terms of political and social development and economic growth;
* estimate the importance of international relations in the trajectories for the development of African states.

***COURSE CONTENT***

– The African context prior to European colonisation: general outline.

– The colonisation of the African continent: main characteristics, figures and dynamics.

– The process of de-colonisation

– The construction of a national state.

– The evolution of the economic context of African countries.

– The impact of the bi-polar conflict on the African continent.

– Economic, political and social development of the African continent between the end of the 20th century and twenty-first century.

– Continental and regional integration processes in Africa.

– The international relations of African states.

– Case studies and further analysis.

***READING LIST***

The reading list will be provided at the beginning of the course and made available on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures, practical classes, themed seminars and testimonies.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral assessment. Students will be tested on their knowledge and understanding of the subject, with a focus on the political, economic, and social aspects of the current African context, and the international relations of African states.

The assessment will be structured as follows: three (3) questions. In order to pass the exam, students must give a correct answer to at least two of the three questions.

Students attending at least 70% of the classes, will have the possibility to write an assignment on a topic of their choice (that must be approved by the lecturer); this will replace one of the three questions of the final assessment.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

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.

Module: *History of Islamic Asia* (Prof. Andrea Plebani)

Module: *Russia and International Relations* (Prof. Marco Valigi)

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

The aim of the course is to analyse the development of the role of Russia in international relations since the end of the Cold War. The course will focus equally on the factors and resources that have led Russia to play a leading international role, and on the ideas and principles (sovereign democracy, network diplomacy, pragmatism, modernisation, sovereignisation) underpinning the new Russian foreign policy. Russian interaction with the outside world will be examined from a systematic, regional and internal perspective. Finally, the discussion of particular case studies will help students understand Russian external projection (the positioning of Russia in the so-called “near abroad”; its reaction to the Arab Spring; and, finally, Russia’s role in the Syrian war). At the end of the course, students will be able to understand, examine, and carry out a critical analysis of the main social, political, and economic factors of Russian history, and identify the elements of continuity between these factors and the structure constants of Russian politics.

***COURSE CONTENT***

5. Russia and post-Soviet space

1. Energy and armaments, or the basis of Russian power.

1. Transition from Soviet to Russia’s foreign policy and the rise of new Russia

2. Factors of strength and weakness of the new Russian external projection

3. Sovereign democracy, network and coercive democracy, pragmatism, multi-vector cooperation, modernisation

4. The geopolitics of energy

6. Russia and organisations in the post-Soviet space: GUAM, CIS, CU, CSTO, EurAsEc, SCO

7. Russia and the EU: from cooperation and modernisation partnership to tensions over Ukraine

8. The cyclic relations between Russia and the US: from the Bush era to the mistrust under Obama’s presidency

9. Russia-China relations and the competition in Central Asia

10. Russia and emerging powers: the case of Turkey

***READING LIST***

M. Valigi -G. Natalizia -C. Frappi, *Il Ritorno della Geoplitoca:* *Regioni e Instabilità dal Mar Nero al Mar Caspio*, Edizioni Epokè, Novi Ligure, 2018.

Further material (such as slides, documents, articles, reports, and papers) will be made available on the lecturer’s webpage; in addition, the lecturer will guide students in the choice of useful websites to integrate the information contained in the textbook.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course privileges an interactive way of teaching and learning. Students are encouraged to read newspapers and specialist journals regularly as well as to follow and discuss events regarding Russia’s foreign policy during classes.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed by means of a single written test.

The test will be made up of 11 closed questions, each of which is worth three points for a total of 33, i.e. 30 with *lode*. The questions will be equal in weight and marked as follows: 0 for incorrect answers and 3 for correct answers.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should ideally have a basic knowledge of international relations.

Students who have never studied international relations (e.g. students of different curricula) are supposed to inform the lecturer, and they will be provided with a list of readings on the subject.

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.