

Module title: *Interdisciplinary Development Studies and the Changing Global Context – Theory, Methodology and the Case Study of Sub-Saharan Africa*

Proposed by: **Dr. István Tarrósy**, PhD, Assistant Professor – tarrosy.istvan@pte.hu
Director of the Africa Research Centre, University of Pécs
Department of Political Science and International Studies

To be held preferably from May 18, 2015 on.

Course Aims

Having realised a growing need among students of International Relations, Political Science, Anthropology and other Social Sciences disciplines, the module investigates the potential roles and positions of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) – its countries, regional economic communities, together with the continent-wide African Union, including also countries of North Africa as its member states – in the global arena. This new 16-hour (8-session) graduate course tackles a number of intriguing current issues of EU–SSA relations, the major bilateral linkages such as the ones with the USA, China, Japan, India, Brazil, and other emerging economies of Asia, their development, aid and foreign policies. Special attention will be given to analysing the re-emergence of Central and Eastern European countries across SSA and how they could formulate separate (or joint) policies towards African countries, former allies or friends from the era of the Soviet Bloc. As part of the current module, Sub-Saharan Africa, its problems, challenges and opportunities and the ‘Global World’ will be discussed from different angles, using interactive methods such as the British Parliamentary Debating (BPD) style during the course. Burning issues such as the environment, sustainability, technology for African development in general, together with development policies and engagements of different players from the global arena will be debated during the course.

Research Methodology

The course intends to present some fresh perspectives on the “consummate challenges and abundant opportunities” (as Robert I. Rotberg indicates it in the title of his latest book) of Sub-Saharan Africa. It will apply an interdisciplinary approach operating with a number of theories of International Relations, Political Science and Social Geography, but also presenting field research experience from sociological and anthropological perspectives. During the module various indexes of different international organizations and institutions, together with other non-state entities, as well as data from financial institutions, NGOs and think tanks will be used. Students will be able to develop methodological knowledge and consciousness while analyzing the cases presented by the tutor from his own field experience since 2000. A special feature of the module is the British Parliamentary Debating style, which the students will be introduced and as a concluding phase, will be using in the form of a final debate tournament, during which they will be debating over a ‘hot topic’ of current African affairs. This will require a dynamic and constant group work from the start of the module on.

Teaching Methodology

Each session will be built up along the following lines:

- lecturing on the given topic (by the tutor)
- student reflections, presentations on some of the topics: at the first session, part of the introduction, students will be given a list of topics they can choose from. In groups (which will be different from the ‘debate teams’) they need to prepare for providing reflections during each following session. Every session will accommodate one or two 5-8-minute student reflections, which will be channelled into the flow of discussions/debate by the tutor (as facilitator in this respect).
- identifying debate points and major arguments, which may be useful for the final debate tournament.

Detailed Course Structure

The sixteen 45-minute classes are structured in eight 90-minute sessions.

Session 1: Introduction to the module and the methods used and Introduction to parliamentary debate (BPD style)

The first occasion will be devoted to introducing the entire module, then, to teambuilding activities, using elements of intercultural learning. Students will learn the method of parliamentary debate (BPD style), which they will use in the final class to negotiate over a current African issue.

In terms of the methodology used during the module to better understand the diversity of African politics, society and changes, different approaches and schools of thought will be presented (ranging from the modernization school via the dependency school to the statist school) arriving at the Political Interaction Framework, an analytic approach by Chazan et al. (1999).

Basic source for the introductory class:

Chazan, Naomi et al. *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*. Third ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

Basic sources for the British parliamentary debating style and method:

Trapp, Robert et al. *Discovering the world through debate. A practical guide to educational debate for debaters, coaches, and judges*. Third ed. (New York: IDEA Press Books, 2005).

Johnson, Steven L. *Winning Debates: A Guide to Debating in the Style of the World Universities Debating Championships*. (New York: IDEA Press Books, 2011).

Session 2: Africa and the global arena

After a brief overview of Africa’s positions and historic importance in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, focal attention will be laid on the post-bipolar world and its new dynamics connected with the Global South. Major IR theories will support the investigation of the framework of Afro-Asian relations, along with the better understanding of the changing setting of Euro-African relations. Students will look beyond the macro figures and will get more familiar with various indices of African development, ranging from HDI via FSI to CPI.

Session 3: Asians in Africa: Chinese, Indian, Indonesian and Japanese engagements in Africa

Based on primary field research (of the tutor), different Asian foreign policies towards Sub-Saharan Africa will be discussed in a comparative way. Case studies from East, West and Central Africa will be shown (Tanzania, Kenya, The Gambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo), with an eye on innovations and investments in the energy sector (e.g. geothermal project in Kenya), sustainable tourism (in Tanzanian national parks), and NGO activity in the field of environmental protection (Wangari Maathai's Green Belt Movement and Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots movement).

Session 4: Beyond 'Chimerica': A comparative analysis of US and Chinese involvement in African development

Again based on primary research (of the tutor) (connected with his recent Fulbright research fellowship), the last twenty years of American and Chinese presence and engagements across SSA will be compared. Special attention will be given to the issue of 'summit diplomacy'.

Session 5: How Europe can cope? Is Africa back on the foreign policy maps of Central European countries?

In the first part, the session will look at closely how the former European imperial powers, today's European Union have been adjusting their policies in light of fundamental global challenges and the rise of the emerging economies (the 'rise of the rest', as Zakaria indicates in his book on the post-American world). The second part will be devoted to Central Europe–Africa relations, with a focus on the Visegrad countries and how – since the change of political systems – they have been re-emerging in SSA countries, both state and non-state actors and forms. As a case study, Hungary's "global opening" foreign policy doctrine will be shown in more depth. Special case projects will be shown, e.g. the joint Slovakian-Kenyan(-Hungarian) clinic in Eldoret, or the Foundation for Africa's school and orphanage project in Kinshasa, or the health missions of the African-Hungarian Union in a number of SSA countries.

Sessions 6-7: Hotly-discussed topics and ongoing socio-political issues in SSA

These two sessions will discuss a number of current issues across Sub-Saharan Africa. Students will deal with:

- migration trends and tendencies, with a special focus on the feminization of migration and changing gender roles, the challenges of intra-African migrations, and the migration-development nexus
- the issue of security in its complexity, looking at energy security, human security, maritime security and the recent escalation of terrorist threats in different corners of SSA
- the status and role of education in a broader context of traditional beliefs and modern state development, with recent examples from East Africa (the case of albino killings in Tanzania), as well as the role and potentials of African universities in social and economic development
- information and communication technologies, infrastructure-related issues, the mobile boom
- technological innovations for Africa's development
- the role of the environment
- the rise of the African middle class

Session 8: Final parliamentary debate – open public session

In an open public session students will have a parliamentary debate over a current issue connected with the central topic of the module 'Sub-Saharan Africa in a Changing Global Context'. Students will have the opportunity to get prepared for this in advance, as – in addition to the introduction at the beginning of the module – several tutorial movies/short films will be provided for them. The classes are planned and will be performed in an interactive and engaging way so that students can be motivated to become active participants of a constant flow of discussions.

Course essay and final assessment

One course essay must be completed for this module.

Titles will be provided at the second session. The essay should not exceed 12 pages (A/4, Times New Roman 12, 1.5 line spacing) without references and bibliography.

This will give 70% of the final grade.

Another 30% of the final grade will come from student presentations and individual work during the module.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying out verbatim of parts of a work without citation. If you wish to quote the works of others, please, make sure you use the quotation marks and footnotes/endnotes indicating your source. Where plagiarism is suspected the student will be interviewed; if the case is established beyond reasonable doubt there are a range of penalties, which can be imposed, in line with the regulations of the home university.

Basic literature (indicative list of books) (numerous current journal articles will be added to each topic of the sessions)

- Chazan, Naomi et al. *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*. Third ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).
- Kane, Abdoulaye – Leedy, Todd H. eds. *African Migrations. Patterns and Perspectives*. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).
- Mangala, Jack. ed. *Africa and the European Union. A Strategic Partnership*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
- Peet, Richard – Hartwick, Elaine. *Theories of Development. Contentions, Arguments, Alternatives*. Second Ed. (New York – London: The Guilford Press, 2004).
- Rotberg, Robert I. *Africa Emerges. Consummate Challenges, Abundant Opportunities*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
- Smith, Steve – Baylis, John. eds. *The globalization of world politics. An introduction to international relations*. Third ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Tarrósy, István – Szabó, Loránd – Hyden, Goran. eds. *The African State in a Changing Global Context. Breakdowns and Transformations*. (Berlin – Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011).
- Taylor, Ian. *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa*. (New York – London: Continuum, 2010).
- Xing, Li – Farah, Abdulkadir Osman. eds. *China–Africa Relations in an Era of Great Transformations*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).