Politics and Theories of International Development (P03123)

Course Convenors
Dr Rachel Hayman, rachel.hayman@ed.ac.uk CMB 5.03 Office hours: Tuesday 9.30-11am
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Seminars
Wednesday 2-4pm, Dugald Stewart Building, G.06

Course Description
Development is primarily concerned with the economic transformation of countries considered to be less advanced than others. International development as we now know it emerged in the 1950s, drawing on economic development theories from the 18th century onwards. Over time, however, international development has taken on new dimensions, encompassing social and political, as well as economic, transformation. Development is a profoundly political process, shaped by and shaping social actors and political institutions at local, national, regional and global levels. This course explores the politics and theories of development by analyzing the dominant and alternative social scientific theories that seek to explain development outcomes, and the actors and institutions involved. It offers an introduction, overview and critical analysis of the forces shaping international development. Much of the focus will be on Africa, but the theories and examples have wider resonance throughout the developing world.

Learning Outcomes
You will gain familiarity with the major cultural, economic and political theories of development and underdevelopment. The course will enable you to analyse the theory and practice of development in an objective and critical manner. It will promote an understanding of the diversity and complexity of interactions amongst political, economic and social actors involved in development.

Organisation
Two-hour weekly seminar, including whole class lectures, general discussion, and group work/presentations on specific themes. Weeks 2-5 will provide an overview and analysis of the main theories of development from the 1950s to the present day, outlining the international political context in which the theories arose. Weeks 6-9 will explore how development theories are translated into practice by social and political actors involved in development, using specific case study examples with group presentations by students.

Topic Overview:
Week 1: Introduction: the problem of development and underdevelopment
Week 2: Modernisation Theory
Week 3: Dependency Theory
Week 4: Neo-liberalism and its critics
Week 5: Development in the 1990s and 2000s
Week 6: Development States
Week 7: Development Partnerships: donors and international agreements
Week 8: Civil Society and Development
Week 9: Religion and Development
Week 10: Development, knowledge and power

Assessment
The course is assessed by one long essay (4000 words). Two word-processed copies of your essay should be submitted to the Graduate School office (1.21 CMB) by 4 pm on Tuesday 21st April. Each copy should have a cover sheet with your examination number (but not your name), the course title, your essay title and an exact count of the number of words. You should submit a plagiarism form with the first piece of work you hand in each semester. Cover sheets and plagiarism form are available in the reception area of the Graduate School office.

Five marks per day will be deducted for assessed work handed in late. Assessed work arriving more than one week (five working days) after the deadline will receive a mark of zero. Assessed work which exceeds the word limit will have ten marks deducted (this applies whether the excess is 500 words or merely 5 words). Please note that the stated word limits include footnotes and appendices but not bibliography or diagrams.

If you are going to require an extension, you must approach your MSc Programme Director before the deadline, with appropriate documentation. If you think you will have a problem with a deadline for a legitimate reason, please apply for an extension well in advance.

RESOURCES, READING LIST AND CLASS PREPARATION

The reading list includes:
- required reading, which students are expected to have read prior to each seminar
- further reading for additional background, presentations and essay preparation

Students are encouraged to read beyond the required readings for each session as full participation in discussions is expected. We also provide a list of recommended texts which are used regularly in the course and key journals which are available on-line or in the library. Required readings for each week are available via WebCT.

**Recommended Texts**

**Useful ‘Readers’ on Development (short overviews of core topics, authors)**

**Key Journals (all available electronically)**
Development and Change
Development Policy Review
Journal of Development Studies
Journal of International Development
Oxford Development Studies
Review of African Political Economy
Studies in Comparative International Development
Third World Quarterly
WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION - THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT
After a brief overview of the course and its organisation, this week provides an introduction to the history of ‘international development’ as we now know it. What is development and underdevelopment, and where did it emerge from? Who determines what development is and does?

Required reading:

Further reading:

WEEK 2: MODERNISATION THEORY
This week we explore modernisation theory which was the cornerstone of development discourse in the 1950s and 1960s. Modernisation theory includes both cultural and economic assumptions about progress and the transformation of societies. It emerged in the geopolitical context of the post-World War period and the Cold War.

Required reading:

Further reading:

WEEK 3: DEPENDENCY THEORY
Modernisation theory hit up against major criticism, particularly from thinkers in the ‘south’. The response was Dependency Theory which argued that the problem of development stemmed from structural imbalances in the world political economy. This
week we explore the origins and central tenets of dependency theory, as well as the
problems with this approach.

Required reading:
African Political Economy (43): 68-87
Fall of Development Theory

Further reading:

WEEK 4: NEO-LIBERALISM AND ITS CRITICS
The global economic downturn of the late 1970s, rising debt, and economic and political
crisis in many developing countries, led to the rise of a new paradigm for development -
neo-liberalism. This saw the re-emergence of classical economics in relation to development.
There was a backlash against the logic of neo-liberalism in light of its impact on developing
countries. The late 1980s and early 1990s also saw the emergence of new trends in
development thinking captured in ideas around ‘post-development’. This week explores
these issues.

Required reading:
 critique of neoliberalism’ Third World Quarterly (16: 2): 297-318
 Development Theory’, chapter 4 in The Rise and Fall of Development Theory [HC800 Ley –
HUB]

Further reading:
Fukuyama, F. (1992) The End of History and the Last Man
 Globalization and the postcolonial world. The new political economy of development
Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa
Nyang’oro, J.E. and T. Shaw (eds.) (1992) Beyond Structural Adjustment in Africa: The Political
Economy of Sustainable and Democratic Development
Theory and Practice
World Bank (1981) Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa [also known as the Berg
Report]

WEEK 5: DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s AND 2000s
WEEK 6: DEVELOPMENTAL STATES
The role of the state in development is a topic of constant debate. The developmental states which emerged in East Asia have provided a model of development which keeps returning to the agenda. This week we explore the topic of developmental states in historical and contemporary perspective.

Required reading:

Further reading:

WEEK 7: DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS: DONORS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS
Over the next three weeks we will explore how the different theories of development translate into the strategies and practices of actors and institutions. This week we consider the role of multilateral and bilateral donor agencies as well as international frameworks and agreements, considering how development agencies use and frame development discourse, and the theories and concepts that underpin global and regional agreements.

Required reading:
Maxwell, S. Heaven or Hubris?

Further reading:
Development Assistance Committee (1996) Shaping the Twenty-First Century

Case study material:
UNDP (annual publication) Human Development Report
World Bank (annual publication) World Development Report

WEEK 8: CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

WEEK 9: RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

WEEK 10: DEVELOPMENT, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER
The objective of this final week is to bring the course to a conclusion by holding a debate on concepts of development, knowledge and power. Why do we ‘do development’ and why do we study it? How are ideas transferred and how do they become dominant in development? How relevant is development theory to practice? Should we ‘do development’?

Required reading:

Further reading: