



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO

ID

TIC09_DIP_CPS

Visiting Professor Program Academic year 2019/2020

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURES, POLITICS AND SOCIETY

TEACHING COMMITMENT: 30 hours

COURSE TITLE

Politics and Development in Africa

TEACHING PERIOD

1st term

SCIENTIFIC AREA

Political Science

LANGUAGE USED TO TEACH

English

The Degree Course is entirely taught in English

COURSE SUMMARY

This course will analyze practices and narratives of development in Africa, with particular attention to the political processes they implies. The proposed perspective eschews a narrowly institutional or short-term conflict-solving approach to favour instead a careful analysis of interwoven political, social and cultural dynamics, emphasizing the articulation rather than the dichotomization of the “above” and the “below”, the past and the present, the global and the local. Questioning the notions of "Africa" and "development" will be the starting point for approaching concrete political situations in historical perspective. Standing on a wide range of empirical examples from both Northern, Sub Saharian and Southern Africa, its main aim will be to explore political processes and development practices by outlining the core actors in these processes and the roles that they can play. Particular attention will be devoted to the process of State formation and transformation in Africa and to the interplays between national political processes and international development aid, humanitarian actions, conflict management, migrations and democracy promotion. By this approach, the course aims at make students aware of the complexity of African political societies and their dynamics of development, and of the difficulties encountered by social sciences and the political debate to propose an analytical framework breaking with culturalism and exceptionalism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course students are expected to:

- be familiar with a methodological perspective combining historical sociology of politics, which emphasizes the historicity of the social and political practices of development, with international political sociology, which focuses on the roles and dynamics of political actors and practices;
- be able to critically analyze development processes, whose expertise, frameworks of thought and rationalities often generate tensions and power struggles when they are employed in real political contexts;
- be capable to accurately construct analytical arguments, in a variety of written and oral formats, problematizing African political societies beyond simplistic representation of Africa as a monolithic political space, naturally incline to conflicts and underdevelopment.

OTHER ACTIVITIES BESIDES THE COURSE

Considering the great interest on the issues that will be developed during the course, seminars will be organized in the frame of the PhD programme in 'Social and Political Change' promoted by the Department CPS of the University of Torino (in partnership with the University of Florence). Moreover, public lectures involving relevant stakeholders will be organized in partnership with the Center of Applied Social Research of the Department CPS. Dissemination activities might also be organized in partnership with the Turin School of Development.

VISITING PROFESSOR PROFILE

The ideal candidate is a Francophone or Anglophone scholar, conducting original and internationally acknowledged research on development in Africa from a political science, political sociology or political history perspective. The ideal candidate would have a solid network of scientific cooperation both in African societies and in internationally acknowledged higher education institutions and research centers on African affairs. Documented teaching experience and the necessary social skills for being fully involved in the scientific activities of the Department will be also required. A background in political sociology is preferable, but applications from scholars with a broader African Studies background are also welcome.

CONTACT PERSON AT THE DEPARTMENT

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