



**INSTITUT
BARCELONA
ESTUDIS
INTERNACIONALS**

SUMMER SCHOOL IN GLOBAL POLITICS, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY 2019

Geopolitics of the MENA Region in a Post-Western World

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Date: June 19 - 21

Time: 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm

Room: 24.133 Fred Halliday - Mercè Rodoreda Building 24 (Floor 1)

Which are the implications for the Middle East and North Africa of the relative decline of the West, Russia's return, the rise of China and Africa's potential? The purpose of this course is to help students understand the processes through which this region has been subject to exceptional influence and intervention by foreign powers. But it also aims at assessing which are the strategies of several countries in the region to take advantage of global geopolitical shifts. While the region was, in the early 2000s, one of the theatres where Washington projected its unilateral moment, it has now become one of the areas where the US perceived decline is more acute. In the post-2011 context Russia has manoeuvred to fill this vacuum. Is it sustainable? In a more subtle but gradual manner, China is also becoming a relevant actor. Mega-infrastructure projects but also some embryonic investment in the security domain (military base in Djibouti) suggest that this is a long-term investment. More broadly, relations between the MENA and Asia are growing and are multifaceted, including Iran's economic links with major Asian economies or the presence of South-Asian diasporas in the Gulf. Are we witnessing an 'Asianization' process? Finally, Africa's demographic and economic growth in the next decades will be a global game-changer but the effects will be felt more strongly in the MENA because of geographic proximity. While many may look to Africa as a source of threats, countries in the MENA tend to perceive it as geopolitical opportunity. By analysing at these trends and assessing the role and strategies of different MENA countries, this course will provide

students with an innovative approach on the region's embeddedness in global trends and will invite them to "de-westernise" their reading of the MENA's position in global affairs.

Session 1. Global rivalries in the MENA: From the US hegemonic moment to Russia's return

Required reading:

Del Sarto, Raffaella et al (2019) "Interregnum: The Regional Order in the Middle East and North Africa after 2011" MENARA Final Report, n.1
<http://www.menaraproject.eu/portfolio-items/interregnum-the-regional-order-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-after-2011/>

Popescu, Nicu and Secrieru, Stanislav (ed.) (2018) "Russia's return to the Middle East: building sandcastles?", EUISS Chaillot paper, n. 146.
<https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/russia%E2%80%99s-return-middle-east-building-sandcastles>

Quero, Jordi and Andrea Dessì (2019), "Unpredictability in US Foreign Policy and the Regional Order in the Middle East: Reacting vis-à-vis a Volatile External Security-Provider", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 17 February, <https://doi.org/10.1080/013530194.2019.1580185>

Session 2. The Asian factor: China, Infrastructures, Energy and Diasporas

Required reading:

Degang Sun & Yahia Zoubir (2018) China's Participation in Conflict Resolution in the Middle East and North Africa: A Case of Quasi-Mediation Diplomacy? *Journal of Contemporary China*, 27:110, 224-243, DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2018.1389019

Maha S. Kamel (2018) China's Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for the Middle East, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 31:1, 76-95, DOI: 10.1080/09557571.2018.1480592

Müller-Markus, Christina (2016) "China Moors in the Mediterranean: A Sea of Opportunities for Europe?" *Notes internacionais CIDOB*, n.156.
https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/notes_internacionales/n1_156/china_moors_in_the_mediterranean_a_sea_of_opportunities_for_europe

Session 3. A pivot to Africa? Demographics, environmental challenges and economic opportunities

Required reading:

Elhadidi, Alaa (2018) “Egypt’s Shifting Foreign Policy Priorities” *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, <https://www.thecaireview.com/essays/egypts-shifting-foreign-policy-priorities/>

Hernando de Larramendi, Miguel (2018), “Doomed Regionalism in a Redrawn Maghreb? The Changing Shape of the Rivalry between Algeria and Morocco in the Post-2011 Era” *The Journal of North African Studies*, 23 March, DOI: 10.1080/13629387.2018.1454657

Todman, Will (2018) “The Gulf Scramble for Africa: GCC states’ foreign policy laboratory”, CSIS Brief, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/gulf-scramble-africa-gcc-states-foreign-policy-laboratory>