



The Return of History: the Liberal World Order in retreat

Start date Friday 21 January 2022 **End date** Sunday 23 January 2022

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge
CB23 8AQ

Tutor Sir Tony Brenton **Course code** 2122NRX072

Director of ISP and LL Sarah Ormrod

For further information intenq@ice.cam.ac.uk

Tutor biography

Sir Tony Brenton served for over thirty years with the British Foreign Service, including postings in the Middle East, the European Union, Washington DC, and Russia. He was in charge of the British Embassy in Washington through the Iraq War, and was British Ambassador to Russia 2004-8. He has been a UK negotiator on global climate change and the International Criminal Court. He has published two books; *The Greening of Machiavelli*, on international environmental politics, and *Historically Inevitable?* on the Russian Revolution. He is now an Honorary Fellow at Wolfson College Cambridge and a regular commentator and contributor on international affairs, notably on Russia.

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

20:30 – 22:00 The Liberal World Order: what it is, where it came from.

22:00 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

09:00 – 10:30 The Challengers: Russia

10:30 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 The Challengers: China

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Free time

16:00 Tea

16:30 – 18:00 The Big Issues: Democracy and Human Rights

18:00 – 18:30 Free time

18:30 Dinner

20:00 – 21:30 The Big Issues: Pandemic Disease

21:30 Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

09:00 – 10:30 The Big Issues: Climate Change

10:30 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 What comes next? The Sheriff Hands in his Star

12:45 Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

The course will introduce students to the big geopolitical challenges facing the world today; the shape and working of the current international system, the rise of challengers to the US dominance on which it has depended, the big global problems with which it is struggling, and how it is likely to evolve in response to these pressures.

Content:

The West's 1991 triumph in the Cold War was billed as "The End of History". The thirty years since have been unique. In a world completely dominated by the US, traditional great power competition virtually ceased. The international system devoted itself to multilateral cooperation, economic globalisation, and the spread of democracy and human rights. But history is now visibly coming back. Rival powers - China and Russia particularly - are challenging US dominance. The international community is struggling to tackle such overarching problems as climate change, nuclear proliferation and the pandemic. Democracy and respect for human rights are in retreat. These lectures will look at these challenges and ask where the World Order is now headed.

Presentation of the course:

The course will involve illustrated lectures and group discussion.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

1. Understand the big forces driving the evolution of world politics over the next few years.
2. Place international political developments in context and judge their likely implications for students' own nations and communities.
3. Bring an informed understanding of the state of the world to their own public and private involvements

Reading and resources list

The main way to derive the most benefit from this course is to be as up to date as possible with international events and intelligent commentary on them. The sources on which I most rely are the *Financial Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Economist*, the *Carnegie* and *Project Syndicate* websites and (first class if you can lay your hands on it) *Foreign Affairs* magazine. Students will of course have their own preferences.

Here is a website article to review;

"Does the International Liberal Order have a Future", Joe Nye, *National Interest*, Dec 28 2020
<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/does-international-liberal-order-have-future-175117>

Prior to the start of the course, you will be sent a number of PDF resources to review.

In addition, a fairly formidable list of books follows. Don't be intimidated! Dip into what is of particular interest to you (Schuman for China, Stent for Russia for example). Kissinger provides his normal magisterial overview, and Zakaria is first class on what is probably the central development: the decline of American power.

So, the books;

- "World Order" by Henry Kissinger
- "The Post-American World" by Fareed Zakaria

- “Superpower Interrupted – The Chinese History of the World” by Michael Schuman
- “Putin’s World” by Angela Stent
- “The Age of Global Warming” by Rupert Darwall
- “Aftershocks – Pandemic Politics and the End of the Old International Order” by Colin Kahl and Thomas Wright
- “The Twilight of Human Rights Law” by Eric Posner
- “Democracy in Retreat” by Joshua Kurlantzick