

International Relations and World Order in the 21st Century
Professor Amitav Acharya

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to stimulate critical thinking on the key organizing principles and institutions of world politics in the 21st century. It deals with both the historical evolution of world order, as well as contemporary issues and challenges in international relations and global governance, including those related to conflicts and security, globalization, global governance and the role of culture and communications and the relationship among contemporary civilizations. The world order that emerged since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and especially after World War II, which was dominated first by Europe and then by the United States, is now undergoing profound changes. What are these changes and what kind of new world order might emerge?

Student Learning Attainment Objectives

By doing this course, students are expected to:

1. develop a historical understanding of how the modern world order emerged and evolved, with particular reference not just to the West (Europe, US), but also other nations (such as China, India, and Islamic world);
2. understand major trends in contemporary international relations, including in areas of security, economics, and multilateral institutions;
3. be able to apply theoretical knowledge to practical issues in world affairs;
4. be sensitive to future of international relations and world order, especially the transition from a Western-dominated world to a post-Western, Multiplex world with many different actors and institutions, especially driven by the rise of Asia.

Assessment

Class Participation: 50%

Final Essay or Exam: 50%

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Session 1-2: Introduction- World Order: Concepts and Approaches

Sessions 3-4: Pre-Modern World Orders

Sessions 5-6: Modern World Order

Sessions 7-8: Globalization

Sessions 9-10: Global Security

Session 11-12: Global Governance

Session 13-14: Global Culture

Session 15: Concluding Class: Overview of the Course

SESSIONS AND TOPICS

Session 1 & 2: Introduction- World Order: Concepts and Approaches

What is world order? Who makes and manages it? Is the current world order, known as the Liberal International Order, ending? With the global powers shifting, and transnational challenges such as COVID-19, are we entering a new stage in world order, described variously as multipolar, post-American or Multiplex. What are the key features of the emerging world order and how can it be managed?

Readings

1. Henry Kissinger, "The Coronavirus Pandemic Will Forever Alter the World Order," *Wall Street Journal*, April 3, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coronavirus-pandemic-will-forever-alter-the-world-order-11585953005>
2. Amitav Acharya, "How the Coronavirus May Reshape the World Order," *The National Interest*, April 18, 2020, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-coronavirus-may-reshape-world-order-145972>
3. Andreas Herberg-Rothe, "The End of The Liberal World Order Is Not The End Of The World," *February 29, 2020*, <https://www.thepeninsula.org.in/2020/02/29/the-end-of-the-liberal-world-order-is-not-the-end-of-the-world-we-just-need-to-fight-for-freedom-and-equality/>
4. Amitav Acharya, "After Liberal Hegemony: The Advent of a Multiplex World," *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol.31, No.3 (Fall 2017), 271-285. <https://www.ethicsandinternationalaffairs.org/2017/multiplex-world-order/>

Sessions 3 & 4: Pre-Modern World Order

The study of world order remains for the most part a very Eurocentric and Western-dominated field. With the relative decline of the West, and the rise of new powers in the non-Western world, we need a better understanding of different civilizations including Greco-Roman, Indian, Chinese, Islamic, European and Western. Using civilizations as the focus of analysis, we explore the multiple types of world orders, including empires, through history. A particular focus of the section is the reasons behind the rise and decline of the West.

Readings

1. Roger Boesche, "Kautilya's "Arthasāstra" on War and Diplomacy in Ancient India," *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Jan., 2003), pp. 9-37, Available at: <http://www.defencejournal.com/2003/mar/kautilya.htm>
2. Gerald Draper, "The Contribution of the Emperor Asoka Maurya to the Development of the Humanitarian Ideal in Warfare," *International Review of the Red Cross*, No.305 April 30, 1995. <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/57jmf2.htm>
3. Tingyang Zhao, "Redefining the Concept of Politics via "tianxia": The Problems, Conditions and Methodology," *World Economics and Politics* (Beijing), No.6 (2015): 4-22.
4. Cemil Aydin, "What is the Muslim World," *Aeon*, 1 August 2018, https://aeon.co/amp/essays/the-idea-of-a-muslim-world-is-both-modern-and-misleading?_twitter_impression=true

Sessions 5 & 6: Modern World Order

These sessions will first cover the rise of Europe's international order, with specific reference to the Peace of Westphalia and the Concert of Europe. The later part will examine the rise and decline of the US-led liberal international order.

Readings

1. Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (Penguin 2014), Introduction, Chapter 1 and 2.
 2. "Peace of Westphalia", <https://www.britannica.com/event/Peace-of-Westphalia>
 3. "Concert of Europe", <https://www.britannica.com/event/Concert-of-Europe>
- Power Points from Prof Acharya
4. Kyle Lascuertes, "The Concert of Europe and Great-Power Governance Today", (Rand Corporation, 2017), https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE226/RAND_PE226.pdf
 5. Joseph S. Nye, "Will the Liberal Order Survive? The History of an Idea", *Foreign Affairs*, January-February 2017. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-12-12/will-liberal-order-survive>

Sessions 7 & 8: Globalization

This session will examine the debate over the benefits and dangers of globalization. It will also look at the future of globalization in the light of recent economic crises.

Readings:

1. *What is Globalization? And How Has the Global Economy Shaped the United States* (Washington DC: The Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2018), <https://www.piie.com/microsites/globalization/what-is-globalization>
2. Klaus Schwab, "Globalization 4.0 – what does it mean?" World Economic Forum, 5 November 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/11/globalization-4-what-does-it-mean-how-it-will-benefit-everyone/>
4. He Yafei, "Reglobalization Heralds an Emerging New World Order," *China-US Focus*, December 30, 2016, <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/reglobalization-heralds-an-emerging-new-world-order>

Sessions 9 & 10: Global Security

Topics: There has been much concern that the world today is facing a new wave of threats such as terrorism, and ethnic conflicts? Is the danger of great power war increasing? Is the world becoming less stable? This topic will debate whether such concerns are valid or exaggerated, and how to ensure international security and stability. What are the principal causes of conflict today?

Readings:

1. "The next war: The growing danger of great-power conflict", <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/01/25/the-growing-danger-of-great-power-conflict>
2. Therese Pettersson, Stina Hogbladh and Magnus Oberg, "Organized violence, 1989–2018 and peace agreements", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.56, No 4 (2019): 589-603. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022343319856046>
3. Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Global Order* (Cambridge 2018), chapter 5

Sessions 11 & 12: Global Governance

The system of international cooperation built after World War II around the UN system is facing unprecedented challenges. This session will examine the future of multilateral cooperation and global governance in view of the rise of new challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and new actors, including the BRICS, non-state actors, regional institutions and private corporations, in global governance. Given the rise of new powers and non-state actors in world politics, what kind of global cooperation and governance system is possible and desirable?

Readings:

1. Video: David Held: Global Governance ... into the Future <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/videos/david-held-global-governance-future>
2. Thomas Hale and David Held, "Beyond Gridlock in World Politics", 13 October 2017 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/thomas-hale-david-held/beyond-gridlock-in-world-politics>
3. Amitav Acharya, "Donald Trump as President: Does It Mark a Rise of Illiberal Globalism?", YaleGlobal 19 January 2017, <https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/donald-trump-president-does-it-mark-rise-illiberal-globalism>
4. Uri Dadush, "Can the Emerging Economic Powers Govern the Globe?", *The Globalist*, 1 April 2019, <https://www.theglobalist.com/global-governance-g7-wto-us-china/>

Sessions 13 & 14: Clash of Civilizations and Global Culture

The late Samuel Huntington had predicted that the end of the Cold War will be followed by a "clash of civilizations" and threaten global stability. Is that happening? Or are the world's civilizations converging? Or is there the rise of "multiple modernities" in which civilizations remain distinct but engage in dialogue and understanding that may create a new "pluralistic universalism"? Do civilizations clash or cooperate and learn from each other? Discuss in

view of both historical and recent developments, with a focus on Japan, China, and East Asia.

Readings:

1. Video: Samuel Huntington on the 'Clash of Civilizations', September 11, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SNicJRcUqs>
2. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (3), (Summer 1993). <http://online.sfsu.edu/mroozbeh/CLASS/h-607-pdfs/S.Huntington-Clash.pdf>
3. Amitav Acharya, "How the Two Big Ideas of the Post-Cold War Era Failed," Washington Post (Monkey Cage), June 24, 2015. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/06/24/how-the-two-big-ideas-of-the-post-cold-war-era-failed/?utm_term=.03b4fbf770ea

Amitav Acharya, "The Myth of the "Civilization State": Rising Powers and the Cultural Challenge to World Order," *Ethics & International Affairs*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Summer 2020): 139-156.

Session 15: Summary and Conclusions