Lecturers:

Jason Sharman (paper convenor), jcs207@cam.ac.uk
Carsten-Andreas Schulz, cas245@cam.ac.uk
Brendan Simms, bps11@cam.ac.uk

Lecture Times and Venue:

Mondays and Wednesdays 10am, Lady Mitchell Hall

Paper Guide Contents:

Aside from providing the ‘who, when, where and why’ of Pol.2, this paper guide contains an overview of the lecture timetable (p.3), a detailed list of lecture topics and the associated readings (pp.4-31), a list of sample supervision essay questions (pp.32-34), and finally the questions from last year’s Pol.2 exam (p.35).

Students should also check the Moodle site for Pol.2 regularly to access other documents and information.

Paper Rationale:

This paper will introduce students to both the international politics of the modern era and the sub-discipline of International Relations. After completing the paper, students should have a foundation of knowledge about both the substance of historical and current international politics, and the scholarship and theories that have been developed to explain it.

The broad approach in this paper is global and historical. Global because the paper tries to take a somewhat wider view than the traditional exclusive focus on Europe and the West. Historical because although much of the second half of the paper is concerned with contemporary topics in international politics, relative to most introductory International Relations papers, the coverage of this one begins earlier, around 1500. The rationale for this wider geographic and historical scope is that International Relations scholarship should be able to explain past as well as present conflict, order and conceptions of justice within but also beyond the West. The historical orientation of the paper also fits with the general teaching orientation in POLIS, which often takes a historical perspective.

Given this wider scope, however, the paper is inevitably selective rather than exhaustive in its coverage. Being an introduction, the paper is meant to whet students’ appetites and help them decide, as they advance to Part II of the Tripos, what they wish to focus on – such as, for instance, international organizations, international law, gender, race, development, political theory, international sociology, international political economy, or a specific geographical
**Paper Format and Assessment:**

The paper is comprised of 28 50-minute lectures in Michaelmas and Lent Terms and two revision sessions in Easter Term. It is not permitted to record lectures.

There are six supervisions across Michaelmas and Lent terms and one additional revision supervision in Easter. The assignment of supervisors is the responsibility of college Directors of Studies. Details on question selection, length of essay, and style should be discussed with each student’s supervisor. Sample supervision essay questions are provided below towards the end of this paper guide.

Students will be assessed in an end of year exam requiring that two questions be answered from eight questions on offer. Each question will provide half of the final mark. The exam will be discussed in detail in the Easter revision lecture(s), but by far the best way to prepare for the exam is to stay current in completing the readings associated with each lecture.

Last year’s exam questions are listed at the end of this paper guide, but note that the format of previous years’ exams were different to this year’s (e.g. requiring three questions instead of two).

**Readings:**

The readings are the heart of the paper. The core readings are essential for the supervision essays and especially the end of year exam. The readings are organised in conjunction with lectures, with the two complementing each other: the readings provide necessary background for the lectures, and the lectures make it easier to understand and contextualise the readings. The core readings are compulsory, the further readings are optional and at students’ discretion. Building on and extending the core readings, further readings may help with writing supervision essays and in revising for the final exam.

The readings for this paper represent a wide array of different narratives on major topics in international politics. Many of these topics are subject to intense controversy and debate, and it is common to encounter contrasting and contentious views. Just because a book or article is on the reading list, this is not an endorsement of its content. Students at Cambridge are expected to engage with readings critically, carefully examining and where appropriate challenging evidence and arguments.

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**Lecture Timetable Overview**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 10 October</td>
<td>1. First Encounters and the Beginnings of Global Relations</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 12 October</td>
<td>2. Europe and the Sovereign State</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 17 October</td>
<td>3. Westphalia</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 19 October</td>
<td>4. China and the International Politics of East Asia</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 24 October</td>
<td>5. Islamic Empires</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 26 October</td>
<td>6. African International Politics and Slavery</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 31 October</td>
<td>7. The International Politics of the Americas</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 2 November</td>
<td>8. The Great Divergence and European Imperialism</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7 November</td>
<td>9. The Decline of International Private Violence</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 9 November</td>
<td>10. Realist Theory in International Relations</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 14 November</td>
<td>11. Historical Origins of Global Governance</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 16 November</td>
<td>No lecture</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 23 November</td>
<td>12. The German Challenge to Pax Anglo-America</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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<td>Mon 28 November</td>
<td>13. The Soviet Challenge to Pax Anglo-America</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 23 January</td>
<td>14. The Japanese Challenge to Pax Anglo-America</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 23 January</td>
<td>15. The Cold War and Nuclear Weapons</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<td>Mon 30 January</td>
<td>17. The End of the Cold War</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 1 February</td>
<td>18. Constructivist Theory in International Relations</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 6 February</td>
<td>19. Liberal Institutionalist Theory in International Relations</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8 February</td>
<td>20. International Human Rights</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 13 February</td>
<td>21. Regulating the Use of Force</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 15 February</td>
<td>22. Norms and Gender</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 20 February</td>
<td>23. Power in the Global Economy</td>
<td>Sharman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 22 February</td>
<td>24. Governing the Global Commons</td>
<td>Schulz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 27 February</td>
<td>25. China Rising, America Falling?</td>
<td>Simms</td>
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</tbody>
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Lecture and Reading Guide:

1. (Sharman) First Encounters and the Beginnings of Global Relations
Monday 10 October

Core Reading:


Further Reading:


2. (Sharman) **Europe and the Sovereign State**

Wednesday 12 October

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


3. (Simms) **Westphalia**
Monday 17 October

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


4. (Sharman) **China and the International Politics of East Asia**
Wednesday 19 October

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**
Ayse Zarakol, *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West*. Cambridge:


5. (Sharman) **Islamic Empires**

Monday 24 October

**Core Readings:**


**Further Reading:**

Manjeet S. Pardesi, “Mughal Hegemony and the Emergence of South Asia as a ‘Region’ for Regional Order-Building.” *European Journal of International Relations* 2019 25 (1): 276-301.


6. (Sharman) *African International Politics and Slavery*
   Wednesday 26 October

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


7. (Schulz) The International Politics of the Americas
Monday 31 October

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


8. (Sharman) **The Great Divergence and European Imperialism**

Wednesday 2 November

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).


9. (Sharman) **The Decline of International Private Violence**
Monday 7 November

Core Reading:

Further Reading:


10. (Sharman) **Realist Theory in International Relations**

   Wednesday 9 November

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


11. (Schulz) **The Historical Origins of Global Governance**

Monday 14 November

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Jennifer Pitts, “Boundaries of Victorian International Law.” In Duncan Bell (Ed.) *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political*


(No Lecture Wednesday 16 November)

12-14. (Simms) **Anglo-American Hegemony and its Enemies, 1914-1945.**

General Readings for lectures 12-14:


Monday 21 November

Core Reading:


Further Reading:


13. (Simms) The Soviet Challenge to Pax Anglo-America

Wednesday 23 November

Core Reading:


Further Reading:


14. (Simms) *The Japanese Challenge to Pax Anglo-America*
Monday 28 November

**Core Reading:**


Further Reading:


Lent Term

15. (Sharman) **The Cold War and Nuclear Weapons**

Monday 23 January

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


16. (Schulz) De-colonisation and the End of Empires
Wednesday 25 January

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), chap 3 [‘The Pitfalls of National Consciousness’].


Robert P. Hager and David A Lake, “Balancing Empires: Competitive Decolonization in


17. (Schulz) **The End of the Cold War**

Monday 30 January

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**

Cynthia H. Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley:


18. (Sharman) **Constructivist Theory in International Relations**

Wednesday 1 February

**Core Reading:**


Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics.” *Annual Review of Political*
Further Reading:


19. (Sharman) Liberal Institutional Theory in International Relations
Monday 6 February

Core Reading:

Further Reading:


20. (Schulz) International Human Rights
Wednesday 8 February

Core Reading:


Further Reading:

Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1958), chap. 9 [‘The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man’].


21. (Schulz) **Regulating the Use of Force**

Monday 13 February

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


22. (Sharman) **Norms and Gender**

**Wednesday 15 February**

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


23. (Sharman) **Power in the Global Economy**
Monday 20 February

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


24. (Schulz) **Governing the Global Commons**

Wednesday 22 February

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Mette Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Stephanie C. Hofmann, “Of the Contemporary Global Order,


25. (Simms) **China Rising, America Falling?**

Monday 27 February

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


26. (Simms) **The Russian Challenge**
Wednesday 1 March

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


27. (Simms) **Global Britain**

Monday 6 March

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


28. (Sharman) **Progress in International Politics?**
Wednesday 8 March

**Core Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Supervision Essays

The conduct and arrangement of supervisions are the responsibility of the colleges, specifically the Director of Studies and college-appointed supervisor.

In consultation with their supervisor, students may select questions from the list below in completing the six supervision essays or equivalent supervision assignments.

The lectures (in brackets after each question) but especially the readings for those lectures, may be helpful in completing the essays. However, these are only suggestions, and students may choose to range more widely in their readings for supervision essays. There is no need to wait for all of the relevant lectures before writing the essays. Some essay questions are related to a larger or smaller number of lectures, but all supervision essays should be about the same amount of work. Those essay questions relating to a smaller number of lectures (possibly just one) may require deeper engagement with the further reading, while those topics linked with many lectures may require a more selective approach to reading.

The essays questions are roughly ordered in line with when these topics are covered in the paper. Although it is for supervisors and students to decide, it may be most sensible to address the earlier questions for the Michaelmas supervisions, while tackling the later ones for supervisions in Lent. Though it is again up to supervisors, in order to manage the workload, it may be advisable to complete essays around weeks 3, 5 and 7 of Michaelmas and Lent terms.

Sample Supervision Essay Questions

1. To what extent can European relations with the rest of the world before the year 1800 be accurately described as ‘colonial’? (Lectures 1, 6 and 7)

2. What explains the rise of the state, and does this have anything to do with the Treaty of Westphalia? (Lectures 2 and 3)

3. Does the state have a different history in Europe and the non-European world? Pick two regions from East Asia, the Islamic world, Africa, the Americas to compare with Europe (Lectures 2-7)

4. Is it more convincing to argue that international politics has historically been the same in different regions of the world (e.g. Europe, East Asia, the Islamic world, Africa, the Americas), or that international politics has been fundamentally different in different regions? (Lectures 1-7)

5. Without violence there would be no nations in the Americas. Discuss. (Lectures 1, 7)

6. Which era has seen the greatest change in international politics and why? (Lectures 1, 9, 10)

7. Does the international economy operate independently of international politics? (Lectures
8. Can empires and imperialism ever be just and legitimate? (Lectures 4, 5, 7, 8, 16)

9. Were the international rivalries of the 1930s and 1940s a clash between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’? (Lectures 12, 13, 14)

10. Was the twentieth century a long international race war? (Lectures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)

11. What caused de-colonization? (Lecture 16)

12. To what extent did the end of the Cold War change the fundamentals of global politics? (Lecture 17)

13. Which was more consequential for international politics: the Cold War or de-colonization? (Lectures 15, 16, 17)

14. Russia is never as strong or as weak as it seems. Discuss (Lectures 13, 26)

15. What are the most important differences between the main International Relations theories (Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism)? Compare two (Lectures 10, 18, 19)

16. Which of the three main theories of International Relations (Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism) best explains those states challenging the dominant international order of the twentieth OR twenty-first century? (Lectures 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 25, 26)

17. Are international institutions imperialism by another name? (Lectures 8, 11, 20, 24)

18. Does international law enable or constrain powerful states? (Lectures 11, 20, 21)

19. What is the point of human rights if the international community cannot enforce them? (Lectures 18, 20)

20. Will violence always dominate justice in international politics? (Lectures 4, 9, 11, 16, 17, 21, 28)

21. Do developments like the rise of gender equality and human rights prove that progress towards a more just order is possible in international politics? (Lectures 20, 22, 28)

22. Are international attempts to govern climate change doomed to fail? (Lecture 24)

23. To what degree does the Soviet challenge to Anglo-American international order in the mid-twentieth century resemble that of the current Russian challenge to the international
order, if at all? (Lectures 13, 25, 26)

24. To what degree does the Japanese challenge to Anglo-American international order in the mid-twentieth century resemble that of the current Chinese challenge to the international order, if at all? (Lectures 14, 25)

25. To what degree is the US position in international politics in the early twenty-first century similar to that of Britain’s international position in the inter-War period? (Lectures 12, 13, 14, 25)

26. Will China replace the United States in the twenty-first century as the world’s dominant power? Discuss with reference to one of the three main International Relations theories (Lectures 10, 18, 19, 25)

27. It is the decline not the rise of China that most threatens world peace. Discuss. (Lecture 25)

28. The Russian invasion of Ukraine marked the end of the territorial integrity norm. Discuss (Lectures 21, 26)

29. Is Britain still one of the five great powers today? (Lecture 25, 26, 27)
1. ‘Globalization has waxed and waned for centuries – today we are witnessing simply another turn of that cycle.’ Assess the validity of this statement.

2. ‘It is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism.’ Assess the validity of this statement.

3. What present problem of international politics will continue to pose the greatest threat to the stability of international order over the next decade?

4. Do the fundamental dynamics of international relations stay constant across history, or do they change over time?

5. Does international law offer a tool for weaker states or for stronger states?

6. How can attention to gender help to understand climate change?

7. Does anti-colonialism – whether in political, economic, or intellectual spheres – always represent a ‘world-making’ project?

8. What is the political relevance of human rights today?

9. When is the use of violence justified in international politics?

10. Do ecological limits define political possibilities?

11. ‘The Anthropocene marks the ironic triumph of human agency.’ Assess the validity of this statement.

12. What has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Liberal International Order?

13. Which state is most responsible for the crisis of the liberal international order?

14. Could the Westphalian system continue without the nation-state?

15. Is it reasonable to describe international politics as entirely anarchic?

16. If the nation-state were to wither away, what would replace it?