

INVITATION

JIAS invites you to attend the seminar presented by

Prof John Rapley

(Visiting Fellow, JIAS)

THE LIFECYCLE OF EMPIRES

ABSTRACT ■ *Can the West make itself great again?*

Between 1800 and the turn of this millennium, the West – what are today the developed OECD economies – rose to dominate the planet. Over those two centuries, as it went from being a secondary player in the global economy to producing fully eight-tenths of its output, the Western world's average incomes went from being roughly equal to those of the rest of humanity to being fifty times greater. Then, quite suddenly, the direction reversed. Since 2000, the West's share of global economic output has declined from four-fifths to three-fifths, and is set to keep on falling.

In our upcoming book, *Lives of Empires* (Penguin 2020), Peter Heather and I argue that this results from a natural process of re-balancing. Empires, we suggest, have a lifecycle, and generate the eventual end of their own dominion because of the transformations they unleash in the regions they initially dominate. The focus of the narrative should thus be less on the decline of the West, and more on the rise of the former periphery, which will assume an ever-more important role in global affairs. This presentation will offer a snapshot of the thesis.

DATE ■ Tuesday, 7 May 2019

TIME ■ 12 noon

VENUE ■ JIAS, 1 Tolip Street, Westdene

RSVP ■ jiasinfo@uj.ac.za before 2 May 2019

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