DISCOURSE

Royal Irish Academy Public Lecture Series

'Academic Freedom: Threats Within and Without'

A conversation with Professor Michael Ignatieff, Department of History, CEU and Ben Tonra MRIA, UCD School of Politics and International Relations

Academy House and online
Friday, 7 October 2022, 12pm

Professor Michael Ignatieff and Ben Tonra MRIA will discuss how academic freedom is not just a privilege of academics, but a key pillar of democracy itself. This freedom has been threatened from within by academic trends and external pressures to conformity. Are good moral causes- anti-racism, anti-imperialism - also doing damage to academic freedom inside our campuses? This discussion will explore how the impact of globalization of higher education has enabled authoritarian regimes to invigilate foreign students on university campuses. If universities don't take these threats seriously, either other authorities will intervene or else academic freedom will be radically devalued – and neither of these outcomes will serve the public good.

Professor Michael Ignatieff is a university professor, writer and former politician. He was educated at the University of Toronto (BA) and Harvard (PhD). From 2006-11, he served as an MP in the Parliament of Canada and then as Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and Leader of the Official Opposition. Between 2012-15 he served as Centennial Chair at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs in New York. From 2014-16 he was Edward R. Murrow Chair of the Press, Politics and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. Until recently, he was the Rector and President of Central European University, stepping down in July 2021, to remain as a Professor in the History Department.

Ben Tonra MRIA is Professor of International Relations at UCD's School of Politics and International Relations. At UCD he teaches, researches and publishes in European foreign, security and defence policy, Irish foreign, security and defence policy and International Relations theory. In UCD he served as the College of Social Sciences and Law's VP for Internationalisation/Global Engagement (2020-2022). He worked previously at the Department of International Politics, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Trinity College Dublin and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington DC. He is a graduate of the University of Limerick (BA and MA) and completed his doctoral studies at TCD in 1996. He was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 2020, and previously served as the chair of the Academy's Standing Committee on International Affairs.

Booking: https://bit.ly/3pJxsx