

BROCK UNIVERSITY
Fall, 2012 D2

Political Science 4P03/5P03: Polis to Empire

Professor Bradshaw

Thursdays, 2-5: Plaza 411
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Political Science 4P03/5P03 is listed in the course bank as a course focused on modern political thought. This year, however, this course focuses more on a comparison between classical ideas of politics, and the contrast between those ideas and the exploration of empire. The classical polis in the ancient Greek context was a small, relatively homogeneous state, in which the citizens constituted a minority of the population. The polis was a place fortified for war, where women had no political status, and slaves did most of the hard work. But the polis was also the birthplace of democracy, home to the public assembly where citizens gathered to articulate and debate political ends. For Hannah Arendt, the Greek polis stands as the exemplary model for the celebration of human action. “[The polis] is the space of appearance in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things, but make their appearance explicitly.” (The Human Condition, 198-199) Importantly, in the classical polis, democratic politics required the face-to-face interaction among equal citizens in a circumscribed public space.

We carry many of the original commitments of the ancient Greek polis in our contemporary political discourse and practice in Western democracies. Yet, we know that the polis was a short-lived phenomenon in the ancient Greek world, and the democratic polis was corroded by greed, war, and expansion. Some argue that it was inevitable that the polis should decay into empire. In the canon of political theory, the model of the ancient Greek polis is succeeded by the legal empire of the Romans, ushering in a different template for political order. Empires can be grounded in law; they can be founded faith or on economic domination ; they can be construed as colonial oppressors or manifestations of *biopower* .

In this course, we are going to explore two principal themes: 1) the idea of the *political* as that idea is formulated by Hannah Arendt in reference to the ancient Greek experience of democracy and public space; and 2) the idea of *empire* as that idea is interpreted by Arendt, Edward Said, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, and a collection of other contemporary political theorists . Questions at the heart of the course: What is the difference between politics and empire? Have both politics and empire changed categorically in the trajectory of Western history?

Required Texts for Poli 4P03/5P03:

- Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958)
- Hannah Arendt, Imperialism (N.Y., Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1968)
- David Tabachnick and Toivo Koivukoski, eds, Enduring Empire: Ancient Lessons for Global Politics (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2009)
- Edward Said, Orientalism (N.Y., Vintage, 1969)
- Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, Empire (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2000)

All texts are available in the Brock University Campus Store.

Course Format and Requirements:

As is typical of my advanced level courses, we focus on a few difficult and important texts in political theory, and wrestle with the ideas presented in these texts. This is a combined Masters/senior undergraduate seminar, and it is expected that students will engage in careful reading of these difficult texts, and come to seminar prepared to discuss the texts in depth.

Each student will be responsible for part of a seminar, including a presentation , but students will be assessed on an ongoing basis for seminar participation.

Written assignments include seminar notes and a final paper.

Grade Breakdown:

Ongoing seminar participation:	20%
Seminar presentation plus five page paper based on presentation and class discussion:	30%
Final paper: 15-18 pp undergraduates; 25 pp. graduates; due December 6	50%

Seminar/Reading Schedule:

Sept. 13: Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition: Parts I and II (pp. 1-78)

Sept. 20: Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition: Parts III , IV (pp. 79-174) (**Belynda Halyburton; Sonia Reynolds**)

Sept. 27: Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition: Part V (pp. 175-247) **(Alex Robart; Mike Cameron)**

(Seminar/reading schedule cont'd for Poli 4P03/5P03)

Oct. 4: Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition Part VI (pp. 248-325) **(Wayne Young; Julien Bonniere)**

Oct. 11: Hannah Arendt, Imperialism **(Rosey Amoah; Rachael Desborough)**

Oct. 18: David Tabachnick and Toivo Koivukoski, eds, Enduring Empire: essays by Hendrikson, Bagby, Tabachnick and Balot **(Melissa Pital; Brytnie Washington)**

Oct. 25: Enduring Empire: essays by Orwin, Bradshaw, Koivukoski and Eckstein **(Jay Conte)**

Nov. 1: Enduring Empire: essays by Mattern, Kellow, Newell and Strauss **(Bernadette Sockey)**

Nov. 8: Edward Said, Orientalism **(Michael Hives; David Morse)**

Nov. 15: Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, Empire **(Professor Bradshaw)**

Nov. 22: Mary Dietz, "Between Polis and Empire: Aristotle's Politics", American Political Science Review 2012:106(2) pp. 275-293 **(Michelle Ouelette; Tyler Sanders)**

Additional Readings of Interest:

Historical notes

Steven Forde, "Thucydides on the Causes of Athenian Imperialism", American Political Science Review 1986: 80(2)

Jennifer Pitts, A Turn to Empire (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005)

John McBratney, Imperial Subjects, Imperial Space: Rudyard Kipling's Fiction of the Native Born (Ohio State University Press, 2002)

Edward Andrew, Imperial Republics: Revolution, War and Territorial Expansion from the English Civil War to the French Revolution (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2011)

Pro empire:

Niall Ferguson, Civilization: The West and the Rest (Penguin, 2011)

Deepak Lal, In Praise of Empires: Globalization and Order (N.Y., Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)

Anti empire:

Christopher Hitchens, Blood, Class and Empire (N.Y., Norton, 2004)

George Orwell, Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays, (Penguin Modern Classics, 1970)

Chalmers Johnson, The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy and the End of the Republic (N.Y., Metropolitan, 2004)

Pankaj Mishra, From the Ruins of Empire: The Intellectuals Who Remade Asia (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012)