

LIBERALISM AND IMPERIALISM
POLSCI 715 / GLOBALST 716
Term 1, Fall 2019

Instructor: Inder S. Marwah
Email: marwahi@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Thursday, 8:30-11:20
Classroom: KTH 732

Office: KTH 540
Office Hours: Thursday, 11:30-12:30,
or by appointment

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Course Description

As a political philosophy, liberalism is animated by basic commitments to moral universalism, political equality and the preservation of individual rights and freedoms. Yet the modern era during which it developed was also a time of unprecedented colonial and imperial expansion, from Europe to the rest of the world. What is the relationship between Western, liberal political thought and the project of imperialism? How were theories grounding universal human rights and political egalitarianism made compatible with, and even used to justify, imperial and colonial domination? How should we – contemporary liberals and non-liberals alike – think about traditions of political thought mired in historical injustice and exclusion?

This course will examine the complex and often contradictory relationship, both historical and conceptual, between liberal political theory and imperialism. We will read canonical thinkers in the history of modern political thought in order to examine not only how they defended or criticized imperialism, but also, how they perceived the non-European world. In so doing, we will pay particular attention their conceptualizations of history, human development, diversity/difference, progress, and civilization.

We will proceed (roughly) chronologically, moving from the early modern era in which liberalism's foundations were laid, to the Enlightenment, to the 19th century's high period of liberal imperialism, to a range of 20th century responses and reflections on the legacy and ongoing impacts of empire and domination in liberal political thought. While our focus is squarely on liberalism, we will not be restricted to it. We will examine the roots of liberalism, treating the conceptual moorings preceding any recognizably liberal doctrine (but that have been retrospectively incorporated into the "tradition"); we will engage its critics and interlocutors, past and present; and we will occasionally delve into neighbouring ideologies and political philosophies (Marxism in particular) when it helps shed light on our concerns.

This course is a **research seminar**. As a **seminar**, it will require significant student participation; regular attendance, careful preparation and active involvement will be essential. As a **research** course, students will be expected to read extensive primary and secondary texts, particularly in preparing the final paper.

Course Objectives

Students will develop

- their comprehension of liberalism and imperialism's historical and conceptual relationship
- advanced critical thinking, presentation, and research skills

Required Materials and Texts

- Aziz Rana, *The Two Faces of American Freedom* (Harvard University Press, 2010)
- James Tully, *On Global Citizenship: James Tully in Dialogue* (Bloomsbury, 2014)
- Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014)
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, ed./trans. Jennifer Pitts (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001)
- Harry Harootunian, *Marx and After Marx: History and Time in the Expansion of Capitalism* (Columbia University Press, 2015)
- Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (University of Chicago Press, 1999)
- Online Course Pack (OCP; will be posted on Avenue); Online Resources (OL)

Class Format

The course will meet for a three-hour seminar weekly. Each session will involve some (very light) lecturing, group discussions and student presentations.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Attendance & participation (20%)
2. In-class presentation (15%)
3. Paper presentation (15%)
4. Research paper (50%), due November 7, 2019

Course Evaluation – Details

Your **participation** grade will be gauged by consistent attendance, and by active and informed participation. You will be expected to have completed the readings and be ready to discuss them. As a graduate seminar, the course will revolve around our discussion of the salient issues, rather than lectures; the expectation will be that you've read and understood the materials, and that you've thought about what we should discuss from them.

Each student will be responsible for one 15-minute **in-class presentation**, for which you will sign up on the first day of the course. The presentation should aim to do several things. First, it should *briefly* introduce the central themes and ideas in the week's readings. This should *not* be the focus of your presentation, but should rather just take a minute or two to situate the central ideas in question. Secondly, and more importantly, the presentation should raise what you think are the most interesting, controversial, and/or perplexing ideas, themes or conundrums stemming from the week's readings. You are more than welcome (but not at all obligated) to go beyond the readings themselves; you should feel free to introduce any additional ideas, examples or materials (from the recommended readings or from outside of them) that you think will help us to sort through what's most interesting about the week's theme. In short, the presentation should raise the ideas or arguments that you think we need to discuss as a class, and should include a few questions to that end. Overall, then, it aims to have you critically evaluate what's most important for us to think about and to initiate our discussions on the subject, to which I will add my own questions and comments.

The **research paper** will be 6000-8000 words, and will be on a topic of your own choosing. It can be based on the themes/ideas/readings from the course, or on a different subject altogether (within the constraints of the course's subject, broadly speaking, and subject to my approval). You are required to discuss your paper topic with me ahead of time to have it approved. The paper will be due at the beginning of class on November 7, 2019.

Our final class, on Nov. 28, will be dedicated to your **research paper presentations** – we will run something of a mini-conference on your work. Each student will prepare a 15-minute presentation based on your research paper – its subject, central ideas, and/or research question. The purpose of the presentation is threefold. First, it will provide you with an opportunity to develop presentation skills in a friendly and collegial environment; this aims to prepare you to present papers at professional academic conferences. Second, it will allow us all to learn a bit about what everyone is working on. Third, it will enable both me and other students to ask a few questions and offer some constructive criticisms regarding your paper.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Sept 5) Introduction: What is Liberalism?

Topic: Introduction: What is Liberalism?

Reading:

-Duncan Bell, "The Dream Machine: On Liberalism and Empire". **OCP**

Recommended:

-Jennifer Pitts' "Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism", *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010), 211-235.

-Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), Introduction.

-Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

-Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, Introduction.

-Jeremy Waldron, "Theoretical Foundations of Liberalism", *The Philosophical Quarterly* 37 (147) 1987: 127-150.

-Duncan Ivison, *Postcolonial Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Week 2 (Sept 12) Working the Land Right: Locke and Property in America

Topic: Working the Land Right: Locke and Property in America

Reading:

-John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*. If you've read Locke's *Treatises* way too many times, just read Chapter 5; if it's been a while (or if you haven't read it way too many times), read Chapters 1-5. **OL**

-David Armitage, "John Locke: Theorist of Empire?", in Sankar Muthu (ed) *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2012), 84-111. **OCP**

-Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, ch. 2.

-Onur Ulas Ince, *Colonial Capitalism and the Dilemmas of Liberalism*, ch. 2. **OCP**

Recommended:

-Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

-James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy, Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

-David Armitage, "John Locke, Carolina, and the *Two Treatises of Government*", *Political Theory*, 32, no. 5 (2004).

-Duncan Ivison, "Locke, Liberalism and Empire", in *The Philosophy of John Locke: New Perspectives*, ed. Peter R. Anstey (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Week 3 (Sept 19) Philosophical Histories

Topic: Philosophical Histories: Race, Difference and Distance

Reading:

-Immanuel Kant, "Of the Different Races of Human Beings," in *History, Anthropology, Education*, eds. Robert Loudon and Allen Wood (Cambridge University Press, 2007), **OCP**.

-Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, R. L. Meek, D. D. Raphael, P.G. Stein (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), A.i.27-35, B.149-150. **OCP**

-Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man, Vol. 1* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2007), pp. 17-38. **OCP**

-Johann Gottfried von Herder, [Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man](#), trans. T. Churchill (Bergman Publishers, 1966 [1800]), 202-208, 218-224.

-Inder S. Marwah, draft chapter of "Ethnicity, Race and Nationalism", in *A Cultural History of Democracy in the Age of Enlightenment*, eds. Anna Plassart and Michael Mosher (Bloomsbury, 2020). Please read the introduction and "History" section. **OCP**

Recommended:

-Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), ch. 2.

-Robert Bernasconi, "Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant's Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race." In *Race*, 11-36. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

-Ronald Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

-Sylvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender and the Limits of Progress* (Palgrave, 2013).

-H. M. Hopfl, "From Savage to Scotsman: Conjectural History in the Scottish Enlightenment", *Journal of British Studies* 17 (2) 1978.

-Gladys Bryson, *Man and Society: The Scottish Inquiry of the 18th Century* (Princeton University Press, 1945).

Week 4 (Sept 26) Tocqueville

Topic: Tocqueville: Liberalism, Republicanism and Colonialism in Algeria

*** PLEASE NOTE: WE CAN REPLACE TOCQUEVILLE WITH EITHER J. S. MILL OR EDMUND BURKE, DEPENDING ON YOUR INTERESTS. IF WE OPT TO DO SO, I WILL PROVIDE A DIFFERENT SET OF READINGS (REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED). WE WILL DECIDE ON THIS IN THE FIRST SEMINAR.***

Reading:

-Pitts, Introduction to Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery*.

-Alexis de Tocqueville, "First Letter on Algeria", "Second Letter on Algeria", "Essay on Algeria", and Part I of "First Report on Algeria" (to p. 146), in Jennifer Pitts (ed./trans), *Writings on Empire and Slavery* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

-Alexis de Tocqueville, "Author's Preface", [*Democracy in America*](#) (1840).

Recommended:

-Pitts, *A Turn to Empire*, Ch. 6, 7.

-Margaret Kohn, "Empire's Law: Alexis de Tocqueville on Colonialism and the State of Exception", in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 41, no. 2, 2008, 255-278.

-Jennifer Pitts, "Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire in Postrevolutionary France", in Sankar Muthu (ed) *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2012), 261-291.

-Melvin Richter, "Tocqueville on Algeria," *Review of Politics* , 25 (1963), 362–398

-Tzvetan Todorov, "Tocqueville et la doctrine coloniale," in *De la colonie en Algérie* , ed.Tzvetan Todorov (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1988), pp. 9–34

-Cheryl Welch, "Colonial Violence and the Rhetoric of Evasion: Tocqueville on Algeria," *Political Theory*, 31 (2003), 235–264.

Week 5 (Oct 3) Liberalism, Imperialism and Capitalism

Topic: Liberalism, Imperialism and Capitalism (or Marx's Sort-of Critique of Liberal Imperialism)

Reading:

-Karl Marx, "The Communist Manifesto", "The German Ideology" (just read "First Premises of the Materialist Method" in Section A. Idealism and Materialism), "The British

Rule in India,” “The Future Results of British Rule in India”, “The East India Company – Its History and Results”. **OL**

-Harootunian, *Marx After Marx*, Introduction: Deprovincializing Marx.

-Kevin Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity and Non-Western Societies* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 22-55, 196-198, 208-218. **OCP**

Recommended:

-Harootunian, *Marx After Marx*, “Chapter 1: Marx, Time, History”.

-Terrell Carver, *Marx* (Polity, 2018).

-Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton University Press, 2007), Ch. 1-4.

-Aijaz Ahmad, “Marx on India,” in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature* (New York: Verso, 1992), 221-242.

-Gabriel Paquette, “Colonies and Empire in the Political Thought of Hegel and Marx”, in Sankar Muthu (ed) *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2012), 292-323.

-Marx and Engels, *On Colonialism: Articles from the ‘New York Tribune’ and other Writings* (New York: International Publishers, 1972).

-Shlomo Avineri (ed) *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization: His Despatches and Other Writings on China, India, Mexico, the Middle East and North Africa* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1968).

Week 6 (Oct 10) Lenin on Imperialism

Topic: Lenin on Imperialism

Reading:

-V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. **OCP**

-Harootunian, *Marx After Marx*, Chapter 2: Marxism’s Eastward Migration.

Recommended:

-Anthony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Survey* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980).

-Charles A. Conant, "The Economic Basis of 'Imperialism'", *The North American Review* 167 (502) 1898: 326-340.

-Charles Willoughby, "Evaluating the Leninist Theory of Imperialism", *Science & Society* 3 (1995): 320-338.

-Charles W. Lindsey, "Lenin's Theory of Imperialism", *Review of Radical Political Economics* 14 (1) 1982.

Week 7 (Oct 17) Fall mid-term recess, NO CLASS

Week 8 (Oct 24) Indian Liberalism and its Critics

Topic: Indian Liberalism and its Critics

Reading:

-C. A. Bayly, *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 1-25. **OCP**

-C. A. Bayly, *Modern Intellectual History*, 4, no. 1 (2007), "Afterword". **OL**

-Surendranath Banerjee, "The Congress: Its Mission" and "The Situation in India", available at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=NXIrAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA143&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false

-M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, Chapters 5, 6, 13, 14. I'd recommend using this edition – M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, ed. Anthony Parel (Cambridge University Press, 2009) – but others are available free of charge online.

Recommended:

-Bayly, *Recovering Liberties* (remainder).

-Shruti Kapila (ed) *An Intellectual History for India* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

-Andrew Sartori, *Liberalism in Empire: An Alternative History* (University of California Press, 2014).

-Andrew Sartori, "A Liberal Discourse of Custom in Colonial Bengal," *Past and Present*, 212 (August 2011), 163-97.

-Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

-Partha Chatterjee, "The Curious Career of Liberalism in India", in *Modern Intellectual History* 8 (3) 2011, 687-696.

-Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Week 9 (Oct 31) Liberalism, Recognition and Indigeneity in Canada

Reading:

-Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.

Recommended:

-Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Duke University Press, 2014).

-Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (eds), *Theorizing Native Studies* (Duke University Press, 2014).

-Robert Nichols, "Indigeneity and the Settler Contract Today", *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 39 (2) 2013.

-Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

-Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (University of Toronto Press, 2005).

-Dale Turner, *This Is Not a Peace Pipe: Towards a Critical Indigenous Philosophy* (University of Toronto Press, 2006).

Week 10 (Nov 7) The Critique of Neo-Colonialism

Topic: The Critique of Neo-Colonialism, and a Civic Alternative

Reading:

-James Tully, "Lineages of Contemporary Imperialism", in Duncan Kelly (ed) *Lineages of Empire: The Historical Roots of British Imperial Thought* (Oxford University Press, 2009). **OCP**

-Tully, "On Global Citizenship".

Recommended:

- Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- Enrique Dussel, "Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures)", *boundary 2* 20 (3) 1993, 65-76.
- Enrique Dussel, "The 'World-System': Europe as 'Center' and its 'Periphery' Beyond Eurocentrism," in *Colonialism and Its Legacies*, ed. Jacob Levy with Iris Marion Young (Lexington, 2011), pp. 97-120.
- James Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key, Vol. II: Imperialism and Civic Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), particularly "On Law, Democracy, and Imperialism".

Week 11 (Nov 14) American Empire

Topic: American Empire

Reading:

- Rana, *Two Faces*, 1-175.
- Michael Ignatieff, "[The American Empire; the Burden](#)", *New York Times Magazine*.

Recommended:

- Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan* (Penguin 2003).
- Jeanne Morefield, *Empires Without Imperialism: Anglo-American Decline and the Politics of Deflection* (Oxford University Press, 2014), Introduction, Chapters 4, 6.
- Alexander Livingston, *Damn Great Empires! William James and the Politics of Pragmatism* (Oxford University Press, 2016).
- Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2001).
- Michael Walzer, "Is There an American Empire?" *Dissent*, Fall 2003.

Week 12 (Nov 21) Moving Forward?

Topic: Moving Forward? Liberalism and Progress, Past and Present

Reading:

-Thomas McCarthy, *Race, Empire and the Idea of Human Development* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), Ch. 5, Conclusion. **OCP**

-Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, Conclusion.

-David Scott, "The Traditions of Historical Others", *Symposia on Gender, Race and Philosophy* 8 (1) 2012. **OCP**

Recommended:

-James Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key, Vol. II: Imperialism and Civic Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

-Jürgen Habermas, "Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace, with the Benefit of 200 Years' Hindsight", in James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann (eds), *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997).

-S. N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities." *Daedalus* 129 (2000), 1-29.

-Charles Taylor, "Two Theories of Modernity", in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (ed), *Alternative Modernities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 172-196.

-Amy Allen, *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Columbia University Press, 2016).

-Andrew Sartori, "The British Empire and its Liberal Mission," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 78, no. 3 (September 2006), 623-642.

Week 13 (Nov 28) IN-CLASS MINI-CONFERENCE

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

The paper will be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on November 7.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
69-0	F

Late Assignments

All students will be granted a **one-week** extension on the final paper, by request. If you opt to use the extension, please let me know **by email** a minimum of one week prior to the paper's due date.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Beyond the above, extensions for the paper will **ONLY** be extended to students unable to submit in time due to extraordinary circumstances. This will require **official documentation** (for example, an official medical certificate) explaining your circumstances.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.