

## Contemporary Political Theory: From Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* to Hardt and Negri's *Empire*

Political Science 250, Spring 2007, PPHAC 338: T, TH 12:50-2:00,  
Office Hours: M, W 10:15-noon and by appointment, Comenius 112  
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Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* represents an expansive analysis of anti-semitism, racism, nationalism, imperialism, alienation in mass society and the dangers of bureaucratic government in her effort to understand totalitarianism as a novel form of power. Published in 1951, Arendt's work remains an important point of reference for political theorists. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have recently undertaken a new analysis of empire at the turn of the century. Almost fifty years after *Origins*, *Empire* redefines imperialism in a 21<sup>st</sup> century global context. This course explores old and new definitions of power within and beyond the formal institutions of government in these two key texts with the help of other 20<sup>th</sup> century classics of political thought.

Meeting	Text	Presentation
Tuesday, January 16 Thursday, January 18	Introduction Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, <i>Empire</i> (Preface, 1-21)	
Tuesday, January 23 Thursday, January 25	<i>Empire</i> (22-41) <i>Empire</i> (42-66)	Jennifer
Tuesday, January 30 Thursday, February 1	Carl Schmitt, <i>The Concept of the Political</i> (19-50) <i>Concept</i> (51-79)	
Tuesday, February 6 Thursday, February 8	Hannah Arendt, <i>The Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (Preface to xl) <i>Origins</i> (305-340)	
Tuesday, February 13	John Dewey, <i>The Search for the Great Community</i> (TCPT, 61-65) Hannah Arendt, <i>The Public and the Private Realm</i> (TCPT, 66-72)	

Thursday, February 15	Juergen Habermas, <i>The Public Sphere</i> (TCPT, 21-26)	Maria
Tuesday, February 20 Thursday, February 22	Hannah Arendt, <i>On Violence</i> (Parts I and II) <i>Violence</i> (Part III)	Mike
Tuesday, February 27 Thursday, March 1	Leo Strauss, <i>What is Liberal Education?</i> (TCPT, 100-105) Allan Bloom, <i>The Democratization of the University</i> (copies)	Justin Chris
Tuesday, March 13 Thursday, March 15	Hannah Arendt, <i>The Crisis in Education</i> (copies) Herbert Marcuse, "Liberation from Affluent Society" (TCPT, 226-235)	James
Tuesday, March 20 Thursday, March 22	bell hooks, <i>Teaching to Transgress</i> (copies) Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools will Never Dismantle the Master's House" (TCPT, 340-342)	
Tuesday, March 27 Thursday, March 29	Frantz Fanon, Selections from <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> Fanon, <i>Concerning Violence</i> and Mohandas Gandhi, <i>The Doctrine of the Sword</i> (TCPT 265-273)	Luke
Tuesday, April 3 Thursday, April 5	Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, <i>Empire</i> (69-92) <i>Empire</i> (160-182)	
Tuesday, April 10 Thursday, April 12	Hannah Arendt, <i>Origins: Imperialism</i> (219-266), also Preface to Part Two (xvii-xxii) Hardt and Negri, <i>Empire</i> (240-259)	
Tuesday, April 17 Thursday, April 19	<i>Empire</i> (393-413) Hannah Arendt, <i>Origins: Total Domination</i> (437-459)	Dan
Tuesday, April 24 Thursday, April 26	Arendt, <i>Origins: Ideology and Terror a Novel Form of Government</i> (461-479) Closing Discussion and Evaluations	

### ***Evaluation***

We will discuss all assignments two weeks in advance of a given due date. I do not accept late assignments. For the sake of fairness, please do not ask for special treatment. Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment in this class. I will apply both quantitative and qualitative judgments in determining grades for individual assignments and for the course.

#### We have negotiated the following:

Engagement (discussion participation, three written questions per class, and one presentation)	30%
Paper #1 (six pages), due 2/16	20%
Midterm examination, TBA	20%
Final paper (10-15 pages), due 4/30	30%

### ***Textual Evidence***

Learning how to use textual evidence is one of the top priorities of this course. We cannot work without the text. It is an explicit requirement that you bring your impulsively highlighted and passionately marked up books or articles to every meeting. If you prefer not to write in books, you should take detailed notes on the text, including the page numbers of critical passages. The highest form of participation is to take the voice of the author seriously, to be able to reconstruct and reconsider the argument, and to direct others to critical passages. Unsupported answers will be less valued than those that draw the discussion back into the text.

Analysis, not only summary, is the point of our reading. Underline important passages, take notes, ask questions, and come to class prepared to participate in discussions. A good question is an excellent contribution. What does the text say? What does it not say? What does it imply? When we read political theories we are looking for arguments, implications, and complications. Do not regard the text as a smooth surface. Don't be afraid to change your mind. Discussion is generative when it allows all participants to voice a position, to receive feedback from others, to reconsider, and to possibly revise the initial claim.

### ***Academic Honesty***

Students in this course should refer to the statement on academic honesty at Moravian College in the current Student Handbook. It is also available online at <http://www.moravian.edu/StudentLife/handbook>. Students must retain copies of all written work submitted, as well as all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments. These are to be made available for inspection at any time. Questions about appropriate collaboration, proper documentation, and other honesty issues can be confusing. If in doubt, ask me.

*Your part in our work together*

### **I expect faithful attendance and active discussion participation.**

1) Compose three questions about the reading for each meeting. I will call on students to inquire about questions and will also occasionally collect questions during class. You may want to keep a journal for questions. Completing the reading and preparing contributions in the form of questions, arguments, or passages to be examined in class are the two activities that are critical to our work together. I especially value text-based contributions, thoughtful questions, and willingness to engage the concerns of other students. Requests for clarification are always welcome.

2) Each student will present readings to the class once in the course of the semester. We will discuss guidelines for these presentations in class. You will prepare your presentation in consultation with me several days in advance. It is your responsibility to contact me by email or in person with your presentation ideas for text passages and questions.

3) All written assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

### *Engagement*

A - Critical, innovative and careful readings; substantial and consistent notes or written preparations for discussion; frequent and illuminating text-based contributions; contribution of discussion-shaping questions; careful engagement of the arguments of others; support and promotion of positive discussion dynamics.

B - Complete and careful readings; consistent notes or written preparations for discussion; lively, substantial, and argumentative text-based contributions; contribution of independent questions, engagement of the arguments of others.

C - Incomplete or superficial readings; minimal notes or written preparations for discussion; regular (at least once per meeting) discussion participation.

D - Incomplete or missing readings; lack of notes or written preparations for discussion; mostly passive presence.

F - Persistent vegetative state; low-level trance; slightly elevated body temperature.

## General Housekeeping

- 1) I invite you to visit my office hours. Please be in touch with any questions and thoughts you may have about our work together. You can also contact me by e-mail at [haddad@moravian.edu](mailto:haddad@moravian.edu). For your engagement grade, I also take into account e-mail exchanges, discussions in office hours, and other forms of communication. If you're finding it difficult to participate in discussions, please contact me. I will help you develop a participation strategy.
- 2) We will discuss all assignments two weeks in advance of a given due date. I am happy to help you with outlines.
- 3) Expect to work six hours on average outside of class per week. Some weeks the reading load will be lighter, some weeks it will be considerably heavier.
- 4) Students with a documented learning disability who desire accommodations for this course must first visit the Office of Learning Services (ext. 1510) and follow college procedures on receiving accommodations.
- 5) I do not accept late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment.
- 6) Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment in this class. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm>
- 7) Do not miss class. Undocumented absences beyond the first will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% per absence.
- 8) No food in the classroom, please. And, turn your cell phone off before class.

### N.B.:

This syllabus is subject to change. Expect to work at least six hours per week outside of class preparing for this class. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.