

# Empire, Colony, Subject: A Genealogy of Ideas

MPhil in Politics and International Studies

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## Course description:

Is today's world best described as *post*-colonial or *neo*-colonial? Have peoples in former colonies truly secured their freedom? Is empire still with us? These questions continue to animate vigorous debate among political theorists and students of international relations from across the political spectrum. Yet it bears pointing out that the contemporary debate is part of a discourse which stretches back more than two millennia. To clarify what is at stake here, this course traces through history the genealogy of a cluster of concepts — empire, colony, and the imperial subject — which sustained intellectually Western imperial practices from Roman antiquity to the twentieth century, and arguably continue to do so. The course is organized around a series of historical ruptures when these concepts were formed, contested, and refashioned: the Roman military and political conquest of the Mediterranean region; the European invasion and colonization of the Americas; anti-colonial revolutions in the Caribbean and Africa; the projection of US military power following 9/11. We will study the development of our concepts in the thought of several major historical theorists, including Cicero, Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Toussaint L'Ouverture, and Kwame Nkrumah. We will also read influential studies by contemporary thinkers who continue to deploy versions of the concepts while trying to make sense of international politics today.

## Schedule of seminars:

- Seminar 1: Introduction: Towards a genealogy of empire
- Seminar 2: Rome and the invention of *imperium*
- Seminar 3: Machiavelli and the Renaissance of the imperial republic
- Seminar 4: The sovereign state and colonial empire: Hobbes and Locke
- Seminar 5: Revolt against empire: the case of Haiti
- Seminar 6: Nkrumah and the politics of decolonization
- Seminar 7: Globalization and imperialism in the twenty first century

## Course structure and assessment:

The course is organized as a series of discussion seminars to be held over seven weeks. Each week we will discuss a number of core readings. It is expected that you attend each seminar having

completed the readings and ready to participate in discussion. The reading list has been designed so as not to overburden you with an unmanageable volume of reading (c. 100-150 pages per week); this should allow you to read the texts carefully and help us set up probing discussions about the central arguments and concepts. Further readings are included for students who may wish to read further about a topic and can be consulted when preparing the course essay.

Assessment for the course will take the form of a 3000-word essay.

\*\* Please note that the readings listed below may be revised up to the beginning of Lent Term 2023; please ensure you have the final paper guide before the start of the course. \*\*

### **Background reading:**

- David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013).
- Lauren Benton, Adam Clulow, and Bain Attwood, eds., *Protection and Empire. A Global History* (CUP, 2017).
- Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Cornell University Press, 1986).
- Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Sovereignty, Property and Empire. 1500–2000* (CUP, 2014).
- Stephen Howe, *Empire. A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2002).
- Richard Koebner, *Empire* (CUP, 1966).
- Sankar Muthu, ed., *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (CUP, 2012).
- Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World. Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500–c. 1800* (Yale University Press, 1995).
- Anthony Pagden, *The Burdens of Empire. 1539 to the Present* (CUP, 2015).
- Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace. Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (OUP, 1999).

### **Schedule of readings:**

#### **Seminar 1: Introduction: Towards a genealogy of empire**

The contention around which this course has been organized is that, in order to gain a firmer purchase on the leading conceptual categories of contemporary discussions of foreign affairs, we need to understand something about their historical development. And the most promising means of achieving this is to conduct a genealogical investigation of a series of key concepts. We start by considering what it might mean to study a concept genealogically, drawing on the historically sensitive philosophical work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault. We will also read some of the current literature on the topic of empire in intellectual history and the history of political thought.

### **Core reading:**

Primary:

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Preface and First Treatise, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Hackett, 1998), 1-33.
- Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Cornell University Press, 1977), 139-64.

Secondary:

- Raymond Geuss, 'Nietzsche and Genealogy,' *European Journal of Philosophy* 2.3 (1994): 274-92.
- Keith Ansell-Pearson, *An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker. The Perfect Nihilist* (CUP, 1994), Ch. 6.
- Jennifer Pitts, 'Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010): 211-35.
- David Armitage, 'The International Turn in Intellectual History' in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013), 17-32.

**Further reading:**

- See 'background reading' above.

**Seminar 2: Rome and the invention of *imperium***

We begin in the ancient Roman world, which supplies in Nietzsche's terms the *pudenda origo* ('shameful origin') for our genealogy. We shall study the early formation of our concepts in Roman moral and legal thought. And we will observe that ideas of civic liberty and imperial subjection have been twinned since birth in the Western tradition.

**Core reading:**

Primary:

- Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. M. T. Griffin and E. M. Atkins (CUP, 1991), 1.33-40, 2.22-29.
- Cicero, *On the Commonwealth*, ed. J. E. G. Zetzel (CUP, 1999), 3.18-41.
- Cicero, *In Favor of Balbo*, trans. R. Gardner (Harvard University Press, 1958), 8.19-13.31.
- *The Digest of Justinian*, ed. Theodor Mommsen and Paul Krueger, English trans. ed. Alan Watson, 4 vols., vol. 1 (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), Bk 1, Ch. 5 (Human Status) and Ch. 6 (Those who are *Sui Iuris* and Those Who Are *Alieni Iuris*).

Secondary:

- Malcolm Schofield, 'Cosmopolitanism, Imperialism and Justice in Cicero's *Republic* and *Laws*,' *The Journal of Intellectual History and Political Thought* 2.1 (2013): 5-34.

- John Richardson, 'The Meaning of *imperium* in the Last Century BC and the First AD,' in *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations. Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, ed. B. Kingsbury and B. Straumann (OUP, 2010), 21-29.

### **Further reading:**

- Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. (University of California Press, 2000).
- Clifford Ando, "'A Dwelling Beyond Violence': On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Contemporary Republicans'. *History of Political Thought* 31.2 (2010): 183-200.
- Clifford Ando, 'Making Romans: Citizens, subjects and subjectivity in republican empire' in *Cosmopolitanism and Empire. Universal Rulers, Local Elites and Cultural Integration in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*, ed. Myles Lavan, Richard E. Payne and John Weisweiler (OUP, 2016), 169-185.
- Ernst Badian, *Foreign Clientelae, 264-70 BC* (OUP, 1958).
- P. A. Brunt, '*Laus imperii*' in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, ed. P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (CUP, 1978), 159-91.
- Dexter Hoyes, ed., *A Companion to Roman Imperialism* (Brill, 2013).
- Myles Lavan, *Slaves to Rome. Paradigms of Empire in Roman Culture* (CUP, 2013), esp. Introduction, Chs. 2 and 5.
- John Richardson, *The Language of Empire* (CUP, 2008).
- A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., OUP, 1973).
- Catherine Steel, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero* (CUP, 2013).

### **Seminar 3: Machiavelli and the Renaissance of the imperial republic**

We next turn to the Italian Renaissance, an intellectual movement which both revived and compounded in new ways the classical concepts of liberty and empire, particularly in Florentine republican thought. We will study in detail Machiavelli's theory of the imperial republic, a theory in which imperial subjection becomes equated unambiguously with slavery.

### **Core reading:**

#### Primary:

- Leonardo Bruni, *Panegyric to the City of Florence*, trans. B. G. Kohl, in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. B. G. Kohl and R. G. Witt (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 135-36, 149-68.
- Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (CUP, 2019), Chs. 1-5.
- Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, trans. J. B. Atkinson and D. Sices (Northern Illinois University Press, 2002), Bk 1 Preface, 1.1-6, Bk 2 Preface, 2.1-4, 2.6, 2.9, 2.13, 2.21, 2.23, Bk 3.24, 3.40-42.

### Secondary:

- J. G. A. Pocock, 'Machiavelli and Rome: The Republic as Ideal and as History,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*, ed. John M. Najemy (CUP, 2010), 144-56.
- Adam Woodhouse, 'Subjection without Servitude: The Imperial Protectorate in Renaissance Political Thought,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 79.4 (2018): 547-69.

### **Further reading:**

- Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance. Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton University Press, 1955).
- Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli, eds., *Machiavelli and Republicanism* (CUP, 1990).
- William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi, eds., *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power* (CUP, 2000).
- James Hankins, *Virtue Politics. Soucraft and Statecraft in Renaissance Italy* (Harvard University Press, 2019).
- Mikael Hörnqvist, 'The Two Myths of Civic Humanism' in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins (CUP, 2000), 105-42.
- Mikael Hörnqvist, *Machiavelli and Empire* (CUP, 2004).
- Mikael Hörnqvist, 'Machiavelli's Three Desires: Florentine Republicans on Liberty, Empire, and Justice' in *Empire and Modern Political Thought*, ed. Sankar Muthu (CUP, 2012), 7-29.
- Matthew J. Hoye, 'Neo-Republicanism, Old Imperialism, and Migration Ethics,' *Constellations* 24.2 (2016): 154-66.
- Gabriele Pedullà, *Machiavelli in Tumult: The Discourses on Livy and the Origins of Political Conflictualism* (CUP, 2018).
- J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 3, *The First Decline and Fall* (CUP, 2003), Chs. 8 and 10.
- Quentin Skinner, *Machiavelli. A Very Short Introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., OUP, 2019).
- Peter Stacey, 'Free and Unfree States in Machiavelli's Political Philosophy' in *Freedom and the Construction of Europe*, vol. 1, *Religious Freedom and Civil Liberty*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen (CUP, 2013), 176-94.

### **Seminar 4: The sovereign state and colonial empire: Hobbes and Locke**

We now enter a decisively modern phase in our genealogy as our concepts become bound together with two epochal developments: the consolidation of the modern sovereign state, and its colonial expansion. We will study how Hobbes constructs a theory of the modern state which places it in a world of inter-state competition and conflict, and how Locke comes to justify colonial expropriation by formulating a proto-capitalist idea of property rights.

### **Core reading:**

#### Primary:

- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (CUP, 1996), Intro., Chs. 13-17, 20-22.
- John Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, ed. P. Laslett (CUP, 1988), Bk 2, Chs. 1-8.

### Secondary:

- Noel Malcolm, 'Hobbes's Theory of International Relations,' in Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Clarendon Press, 2002), 432-56.
- David Armitage, 'John Locke: Theorist of Empire?' in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013), 114-31.

### **Further reading:**

#### Hobbes:

- David Armitage, 'Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought' in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013), 59-74; see bibliography cited at 60 n. 6.
- Murray Forsyth, 'Thomas Hobbes and the External Relations of States,' *British Journal of International Studies* 5.3 (1979): 196-209.
- Mark A. Heller, 'The Use and Abuse of Hobbes: The State of Nature in International Relations,' *Polity* 13(1980): 21-32.
- Laurie M. Johnson, *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Interpretation of Realism* (Cornell University Press, 2019), 113-27.
- Richard Tuck, *Hobbes. A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2002).

#### Locke:

- David Armitage, 'John Locke, Carolina and the Two Treatises of Government' in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013), 90-113.
- David Armitage, 'John Locke's International Thought' in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (CUP, 2013), 75-89.
- Barbara Arneil, 'Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defence of Colonialism,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 55 (1994): 591-610.
- Barbara Arneil, 'The Wild Indian's Venison: Locke's Theory of Property and English Colonialism in America,' *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 60-74.
- John Douglas Bishop, 'Locke's Theory of Original Appropriation and the Right of Settlement in Iroquois Territory,' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 27 (1997): 311-37.
- Stephen Buckle, 'Tully, Locke, and America,' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 9 (2001): 245-81.
- James Farr, "'So Vile and Miserable an Estate': The Problem of Slavery in Locke's Political Thought,' *Political Theory* 14 (1986): 263-89.
- James Farr, 'Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery,' *Political Theory* 36.4 (2008): 495-522.
- James Farr, 'Locke, "Some Americans", and the Discourse on "Carolina,"' *Locke Studies* 9 (2009): 19-96.

- Wayne Glasser, 'Three Approaches to Locke and the Slave Trade,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51 (1990): 199-216.
- Duncan Ivison, 'Locke, Liberalism, and Empire' in *The Philosophy of John Locke: New Perspectives*, ed. Peter Anstey (Routledge, 2003)
- H. Lebovics, 'The Uses of America in Locke's Second Treatise of Government,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47 (1986): 567-82.
- James Tully, 'Rediscovering America: The Two Treatises and Aboriginal Rights' in James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy. Locke in Contexts* (CUP, 1993), 137-76.

### **Seminar 5: Revolt against empire: the case of Haiti**

We reach in this seminar a vivid moment of rupture in our genealogy: the Haitian Revolution of 1791–1804, a successful revolt against slavery and empire. Here our concepts are ripped apart and reconstituted, both against the backdrop of the French Revolution and within a distinctive field of Black Atlantic political thought. We will read works by the revolutionary leader Toussaint L'Ouverture, as well as C. L. R. James's pioneering study of the revolution.

#### **Core reading:**

##### Primary:

- Toussaint Louverture, *The Haitian Revolution*, ed. Nick Nesbitt (Verso, 2008), docs. 1, 3-7, 9, 11- 13, 15-16, 19-21.

##### Secondary:

- C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins. Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (Penguin, 2001), Selections TBD.
- Adom Getachew, 'Universalism After the Post-colonial Turn: Interpreting the Haitian Revolution,' *Political Theory* 44.6 (2016): 821-45.

#### **Further reading:**

- Robin Blackburn, 'Haiti, Slavery, and the Age of the Democratic Revolution,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63.4 (2006): 643-74.
- Susan Buck-Morss, 'Hegel and Haiti,' *Critical Inquiry* 26.4 (2000): 821-65.
- Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens. Revolution & Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
- Laurent Dubois, 'An Enslaved Enlightenment: Rethinking the Intellectual History of the French Atlantic,' *Social History* 31.1 (2006): 1-14.
- Carolyn E. Fick, 'The Haitian revolution and the limits of freedom: defining citizenship in the revolutionary era,' *Social History* 32.4 (2007): 394-414
- Philippe Girard, *Toussaint Louverture. A Revolutionary Life* (Basic Books, 2016).

- C. L. R. James, 'Lectures on *The Black Jacobins*,' *Small Axe* 8 (2000): 65-112.

## **Seminar 6: Nkrumah and the politics of decolonization**

We focus in this seminar on the political thought of the Ghanaian politician Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the first African state to gain independence from Britain. Here we find an early articulation of the new discourse of post-colonialism in which some important conceptual shifts become apparent: from imperialism to anti-imperialism; from colonization to decolonization; from imperial subjection to national liberation.

### **Core reading:**

#### Primary sources:

- Kwame Nkrumah, *Towards Colonial Freedom. Africa in the Struggle against World Imperialism* (Heinemann, 1962).
- Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism. The Last Stage of Imperialism* (International Publishers, 1965), Selections TBD.
- Kwame Nkrumah, *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare. A Guide to the Armed Phase of African Revolution* (International Publishers, 1968), Selections TBD.

#### Secondary sources:

- Jeffrey S. Ahlman, *Living with Nkrumahism. Nation, State, and Pan-Africanism in Ghana* (Ohio University Press, 2017), Intro. and Selections TBD.
- Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire. The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton University Press, 2019), Ch. 1.

### **Further reading:**

- Jeffrey S. Ahlman, *Kwame Nkrumah. Visions of Liberation* (Ohio University Press, 2021).
- Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
- Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (Monthly Review Press, 2000).
- Barnaby Croccroft, 'The Problem of Protectorates in an Age of Decolonisation: Britain and West Africa, 1955-60' in *Protection and Empire. A Global History*, ed. Lauren Benton, Adam Clulow, and Bain Attwood (CUP, 2017), 228-44.
- Basil Davidson, *Black Star. A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah* (Routledge, 2018).
- Emma Hunter, 'The History of Political Thought in the African Political Present' in *History, Politics, Law. Thinking Through the International*, ed. Annabel Brett, Megan Donaldson, and Martti Koskenniemi (CUP, 2021): 208-28.
- Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (CUP, 1990).
- C. L. R. James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (Lawrence Hill and Co., 1977).
- Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton University Press, 1996).



Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (University of California Press, 2001).

- Paul Nugent, 'States and Social Contracts in Africa,' *New Left Review* 63 (2010): 35-68.

- Susan Pederson, *The Guardians. The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (OUP, 2015).

## **Seminar 7: Globalization and imperialism in the twenty first century**

We bring our genealogy up to the present by reading some work by contemporary theorists, of varying methodological and political commitments, who all seek to interpret our current predicament using the framework of empire. We will consider whether it is illuminating to call the United States of today an empire, and whether globalization should be understood as, at bottom, an imperial process.

### **Core reading:**

- Niall Ferguson, *Colossus. The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (Penguin, 2005), Introduction and Ch. 5.

- Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2000), Selections TBD.

- Ellen Meiskins Wood, *Empire of Capital* (Verso, 2003), Selections TBD.

### **Further reading:**

- Eric Adler, 'Post-9/11 Views of Rome and the Nature of "Defensive Imperialism,"' *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 15.4 (2008): 587-610.

- Stanley Aronowitz and Heather Gautney, eds., *Implicating Empire Globalization and Resistance in the 21st Century World Order* (Basic Books, 2003).

- Johan Galtung, 'A Structural Theory of Imperialism,' *Journal of Peace Research* 8.2 (1971): 81-117.

- David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (OUP, 2003).

- A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire. A Global History* (Princeton University Press, 2018).

- Richard H. Immerman, *Empire for Liberty. A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

- Charles S. Maier, *Among Empires. American Ascendancy and its Predecessors* (Harvard University Press, 2006).

- Alexander J. Motyl, 'Is Everything Empire? Is Empire Everything? (review essay),' *Comparative Politics* 38.2 (2006): 229-49.

- Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire. A History of American Expansion* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

- William E. Odom and Robert Dujarric, *America's Inadvertent Empire* (Yale University Press, 2004).

- Anthony Pagden, 'Imperialism, Liberalism and the Quest for Perpetual Peace,' *Daedalus* 134.2 (2005): 46-57.

- Arundhati Roy, *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (South End Press, 2004).

- George Steinmetz, 'Return to Empire: The New U.S. Imperialism in Comparative Historical Perspective,' *Sociological Theory* 23.4 (2005): 339-67.