JPM717: Presentation Handout

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Reading’s Title: Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations

**1. Summary of the Reading**

*What is the reading about? What is the author’s main thesis and conclusions?*

The reading is about rethink International Relations’ engagement with the notion of empire from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s Empire with a strikingly different angle of vision. In particular it focus on Hardt and Negri’s genealogy of sovereignty, and their claim that imperialism in the old-fashioned sense is over and that Westphalian models of the international obscure the role of imperial relations in world politics. In the sense that thick’set of social relations, consisting of social and cultural flows often take place in a context of imperial hierarchy and by retrieving the imperial thus offers a way out of the territorial trap set by Westphalia.

In the conclusion the authors of article assert that a world composed of competing and potentially warring powers, whether states or other entities, is not the kind of world Hardt and Negri describe under the rubric of Empire. In direct contrast to the idea that the old imperialism is over, American policy analysts are resurrecting the language of empire and turning to Rome and Pax Britannica for inspiration.

**2. Critical Analysis**

*What are the strong and weak points of the argument?*

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s assert that there is no anymore US imperialism but the birth of a post-imperial international system. Because US do not seek to foster a world of closed spaces under US sovereignty or that defeat in Vietnam was for the political administration irreversible defeat of US imperialism. But the authors of article mention that US later came up with renewal of US interventionism, including a war on Central America and US support for freedom fighters in Afghanistan and elsewhere. And that is hard to perceived as irreversible defeat of US imperialism. Not their thought (Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s ) about nuclear weapons which make war between state powers unthinkable about about atomic bombs. Because these nuclear technologies limited the sovereignty of most of the countries of the world what is a primary element of the traditional definition of sovereignty but Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey mentioned cases like India and Pakistan directly contradict their assertions, as does the possibility of the use of weapons of mass destruction in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

And I this consider use of this historic facts as a strong argument against their presumptions.

**3. Relation to the Main Reading**

*How does the argument relate to, and/or expand the argument of the main reading to which it is linked in the syllabus?*

Genealogy of society genealogy of sovereignty both readings ares considering genealogy of these two terms. And that terms have changed over the time but some people still in IR remain centred on the logic of a modern system of sovereign states or society from 19. century and have then been projected onto alien historical and cultural contexts. Westphalia, apply only to limited periods of history and in particular regions, principally Europe (Eurocentrism pervading IR). And according to Hardt and Negri the Westphalian era is at an end, but at the same time they still accept its relevance for the preceding centuries. Because understanding sovereignty requires locating it in histories of European expansion and engagement with the world outside the West because these conceptions have shaped the international system.