

Ethics of Civil and Political Society: Leadership and Revolt

Summer II 2013

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Office Hours: 1:30 – 2:30 SSB 328

Lecture: T/Th 11:00 AM – 12:50 PM, WLH 2204

Section: 1 M/W 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM, SEQUO 148

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2 M/W 10:00 Am – 10:50 AM SEQUO 148

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Course Summary

Recent events have highlighted the need for clear thinking about the nature and morality of radical political action and the response of political authorities to those acts: What actually constitutes a *revolutionary* action, and when is such action morally and ethically appropriate—perhaps even necessary—and when not? What is the ethical difference between “civil disobedience” and “revolution,” and what does this amount to in practice? What constitutes “violence,” and under what circumstances do we judge political violence to be acceptable?

Moreover, how do we judge the *response* of political authorities to different kinds of political resistance—violent and non-violent, civil disobedience and revolution? What theories of legitimacy or justification underlie these responses, and when are repressive measures of varying levels of intensity acceptable? What, broadly speaking, is the moral and/or political basis of the use of violence by political leaders?

In this course we will consider these questions through a survey of classical writings on revolution and political order.

Grade Break Down:

Section Attendance and Participation	20%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	25%
Final Paper	35%

Week 1: Introduction: Politics, Individual, Community

Lecture 1: Introduction – Politics and Violence

Max Weber- “Politics as a Vocation” pages 1-9, 22-34.

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/ethos/Weber-vocation.pdf>

Lecture 2: City versus Citizen

Sophocles – *Antigone*

Week 2: The Ethics of Leadership

Lecture 3: Leadership and the Making of Political Order

Machiavelli - *The Prince*

Lecture 4: Leadership and Revolution – 20th Century Communism

V.I. Lenin – selected writings

Rosa Luxemburg- selected writings

Paper 1 due in Wednesday at beginning of lecture

Week 3: Civil Disobedience and Political Violence

Lecture 5: On Civil Disobedience

Henry David Thoreau - “Civil Disobedience”

Martin Luther King, Jr.- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

Hannah Arendt – “Civil Disobedience”

Lecture 6: Political Violence

Malcolm X – “Ballot or the Bullet”

Walter Benjamin – “Critique of Violence”.

Week 4: Ethics of Revolution

Lecture 7: The Problem of Political Order

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (selections)

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (selections)

Bashar al-Assad, *Speech*

Lecture 8: Liberal and Republican Ethics of Revolution

John Locke, *Second Treatise* (selections)

Thomas Paine – *Common Sense*

Immanuel Kant- *Metaphysics of Morals* (selections)

English Bill of Rights (1689)

American Declaration of Independence (1776)

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789)

Paper 2 due Wednesday at beginning of class

Week 5: Case Studies

No Section Monday September 2nd due to Labor Day.

Lecture 9: Tiananmen

Gate of Heavenly Peace (Movie)

Tang Tsou, “The Tiananmen Tragedy: The State-Society Relationship, Choices, and Mechanisms in Historical Perspective”

Lecture 10: Egypt-Arab Spring and Conclusion

Speeches of President Obama and Secretary Clinton

Relevant Blog, News, and Op-ed pieces

Final Paper due during Final Exam time