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.

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 2\textsuperscript{nd} due to Labor Day.

Lecture 9: Tiananmen

*Gate of Heavenly Peace (Movie)*


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*