

## **Political Violence and Revolution, PLSC 308, Section ID 15226**

Fall 2007

Eastern Michigan University

Tues./Thurs. 9:30 am-10:45 pm, 419 Pray-Harrold

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Off. Hrs.: T/Th 11:00 am-1:00 pm, or by appt.

**Course content and objectives:** Political violence and revolution may seem remote from many people's immediate experience. The mass media's episodic focus on dramatic events, such as the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, will not necessarily provide a useful interpretive framework. By taking a close look at some of these phenomena, with readings that offer first-hand perspectives of participants and insiders, we will go beyond stereotypes about the "extremism" of those "other" people. Students will gain insight into the dynamics of political violence and revolution, and also develop tools for critical and comparative political analysis.

This course focuses on theories and comparative analysis of political violence and revolution. We will pay special attention to 20<sup>th</sup> /21<sup>st</sup> century rebellions and social revolutions, which occurred mainly in the Third World or periphery of the global system. The course contemplates not only the dynamics of contesting state power, but also the transformation of social relations and redefinition of political participation which accompany these processes. We will examine specific cases including the **United States** (exploring themes such as the violence of racism and the criminal justice system); the 1949 revolution in **China** (with particular focus on the Cultural Revolution period of the 1960s and '70s); **Mexico**, focusing on the 1994 Zapatista rebellion and its lessons in the context of the revolution that began in 1910; the longstanding conflict in **Israel/Palestine**; and structures of violence in the **international system** (colonialism/national liberation, Cold War, terrorism).

**Part I** of the course explores the concept of political violence, looking critically at the institutionalized forms of violence that are built into the structures of states and societies (including the U.S.) and the international system; as well as the politics of nonviolent action. **Part II** considers theories of revolution, including various frameworks for explaining why, where, and when revolutions occur, and how societies respond to the organization of political violence. **Part III** examines the dilemmas involved in revolutionary change in selected country cases. Drawing on these cases, **Part IV** takes a comparative approach to several recurring themes, including issues of equality and democracy, violence and world order, and the relation between armed struggle and non-violent social movements.

**Course requirements:** Students are required to do the assigned reading **before** each class, and come prepared to participate in discussion. Students are also expected to follow current political developments in the world. Good sources of news include the daily *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com>), National Public Radio (WEMU, 89.1 FM, news on the hour; <http://news.npr.org>), or the BBC news (broadcast on WUOM, 91.7 FM, 9:00-10:00 am Mon.-Fri.; online at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world>). You are also encouraged to explore alternatives to the mainstream media, for a variety of perspectives on issues relevant to political violence and revolution. Some web sites that may be of interest include:

Independent Media Center

<http://www.indymedia.org>

Free Speech Radio News (also on WCBN, 88.3 FM, 5:30-6:00 pm Mon.-Fri.)

<http://www.fsrn.org>

One World

<http://www.oneworld.net>

Center for International Policy

<http://www.ciponline.org>

Center for Defense Information

<http://www.cdi.org>

Nonviolence Web

<http://www.nonviolence.org>

United for Peace & Justice

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org>

Center for the Advancement of Nonviolence (links)

<http://www.nonviolenceworks.com/snv/links.htm>

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org>

Nonviolence International

<http://www.nonviolenceinternational.net>

Albert Einstein Institution

<http://www.aeinstein.org>

The World Revolution

<http://www.worldrevolution.org>

Stop Violence (Dr. Paul Leighton, EMU/Sociology)

<http://www.stopviolence.com>

Z Magazine

<http://www.zmag.org/weluser.htm>

You are also responsible for regularly checking your email account at <http://my.emich.edu>, where you may occasionally receive announcements and materials relevant to the class. (If you prefer to use another email address, you should set up your “my.emich” account to automatically forward to the other address.)

There will be **three exams** during the semester (including the final). Academic dishonesty, defined in the EMU “Conduct Code and Judicial Structure for Students and Student Organizations,” will be penalized. Exams will cover material from the readings **and** class. **One paper (10 pp.)**, toward the end of the semester, will apply some of the theoretical and comparative frameworks developed in the course to a case or issue of political violence or revolution. Occasional class assignments may include presentations, quizzes, or short written assignments. Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day, and missed exams or quizzes will receive a zero, unless there is a legitimate documented excuse.

**Grades** will be calculated as follows:

Exams (3 exams, 20% each)	= 60%
Paper (10 pp.)	= 20%
Class participation, including attendance, class assignments, surprise quizzes & presentations	= 20%
	100%

**Course readings** marked with an asterisk\* are contained in an electronic **Coursepack**, which you can download for free and print at <http://reserves.emich.edu> (click on “Electronic Reserves & Reserves Pages,” select Political Science Department and Richard Stahler-Sholk/PLSC 308, and enter the password which you will be given on the first day of class). Other readings are in the following books, available at any of the bookstores that serve the EMU campus:

**Abu-Jamal**, Mumia. All Things Censored. N.Y.: Seven Stories Press, 2001.

**Heng**, Liang, & Judith **Shapiro**. Son of the Revolution. N.Y.: Random House/Vintage, 1984.

**Johnson**, Chalmers. The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic. N.Y.: Henry Holt & Co., 2004.

**Tolan**, Sandy. The Lemon Tree: An Arab, A Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East. N.Y.: Bloomsbury, 2006.

## **PART I: CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

### INTRODUCTION

Th Sept. 6

### MICRO & MACRO PERSPECTIVES

- T Sept. 11 - \*Farmer, Paul, “On Suffering and Structural Violence: Social and Economic Rights in the Global Era,” Ch. 1 in Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 29-50  
- Abu-Jamal, pp. 15-30, 242-3, 288-301  
- Tolan, pp. vii-23
- Th Sept. 13 - \*King, Jr., Martin Luther, “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” in William F. Grover & Joseph G. Peschek, eds., Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (N.Y.: Addison-Wesley Longman, 1999), pp. 268-75  
- \*Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” [excerpt from Malcolm X Speaks, 1965], in Manfred B. Steger & Nancy S. Lind, eds., Violence and its Alternatives (N.Y.: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), pp. 169-71  
- \*Arendt, Hannah, “From *On Violence*,” in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, eds., Violence in War and Peace (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 236-43

## THE STATE AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

- T Sept. 18 - Abu-Jamal, pp. 34-75  
- \*Tilly, Charles, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (eds.), Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-87
- Th Sept. 20 - Abu-Jamal, pp. 76-183, 262-5  
- Tolan, pp. 24-122

## CYCLES OF VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENT ACTION

- T Sept. 25 - Abu-Jamal, pp. 194-241, 272-87, 303-10  
- \*Seidman, Gay W., "Blurred Lines: Nonviolence in South Africa," PS: Political Science & Politics, Vol. 33, No. 2 (June 2000), pp. 161-7  
- \*Schock, Kurt, "Nonviolent Action and Its Misconceptions: Insights for Social Scientists," PS: Political Science & Politics, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Oct. 2003), p. 705-12  
- \*Hallinan, Conn, "How the Irish Can Save the Middle East," Foreign Policy In Focus, FPIF Commentary, 8 Aug. 2006, pp. 1-4  
- Tolan, pp. 123-91
- Th Sept. 27 - Johnson, pp. 1-65  
- Tolan, pp. 192-264  
- \*Thich Nhat Hanh, "We Have the Compassion and Understanding Necessary to Heal the World" and "Compassion is Our Best Protection," in Melvin McLeod, ed., Mindful Politics: A Buddhist Guide to Making the World a Better Place (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2006), pp. 130-8 and 273-83  
- \*King, Jr., Martin Luther (with introduction by George McGovern), "Beyond Vietnam," in Clayborn Carson and Kris Shepard, eds., A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (N.Y.: Warner Books, 2001), pp. 133-64

## **PART II: COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

### EMPIRES, COLONIES, AND NATIONAL LIBERATION

- T Oct. 2 - \*Handelman, Howard, "Revolutionary Change," The Challenge of Third World Development, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), pp. 199-226  
- \*Fanon, Frantz, The Wretched of the Earth, excerpts [1961], In Omar Dahbour & Micheline R. Ishay, eds., The Nationalism Reader (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1995), pp. 274-83.  
- \*Gandhi, Mohandas K. (Mahatma), various excerpts [1909-47], in Micheline R. Ishay, ed., The Human Rights Reader (N.Y.: Routledge, 1997), pp. 349-59
- Th Oct. 4 - Johnson, pp. 67-215

## “ETHNIC CLEANSING,” GENOCIDE, AND STATE COLLAPSE

- T Oct. 9 - \*Berkeley, Bill, “Road to a Genocide,” in Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (eds.), The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention (N.Y.: Basic Books, 2002), pp. 103-16  
- \*Robinson, Geoffrey, ““If You Leave Us Here, We Will Die,”” in Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (eds.), The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention (N.Y.: Basic Books, 2002), pp. 159-83
- Th Oct. 11 - \*Nordstrom, Carolyn, “Making Things Invisible,” in Shadows of War: Violence, Power, and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 25-39.  
- \*Power, Samantha, “Raising the Cost of Genocide,” in Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (eds.), The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention (N.Y.: Basic Books, 2002), pp. 245-64

## TERRORISM AND WORLD ORDER

- T Oct. 16 - Johnson, pp. 217-53  
- \*Claridge, David, “State Terrorism? Applying a Definitional Model,” Terrorism and Political Violence, Autumn 1996, pp. 47-63  
- \*Falk, Richard, “The Terrorist Foundations of Recent U.S. Foreign Policy,” in Alexander George (ed.), Western State Terrorism (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 102-20
- Th Oct. 18 - \*Bush, George W., “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People” (Washington, DC: White House Office of the Press Secretary, 20 Sept. 2001)  
- \*bin Ladin, Osama, “Full Transcript of bin Ladin’s Speech,” Aljazeera.net, 30 Oct. 2004  
- \*Chomsky, Noam, “Who Are the Global Terrorists?,” in Ken Booth & Tim Dunne (eds.), Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order (N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, May 2002).  
- \*Feffer, John, and John Gershman, “Just Counter-Terrorism,” Foreign Policy in Focus, 5 July 2007.

**\*\* Exam #1 in class, Th., Oct. 18) \*\***

## **PART III: REVOLUTIONS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE**

### WHY REVOLUTION? STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

- T Oct. 23 - \*DeFronzo, James, “Social Movements and Revolutions,” in Revolutions & Revolutionary Movements, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2007), pp. 7- 31  
- \*Collins, Joseph, “Imagine You Were a Nicaraguan,” in Nicaragua: What Difference Could a Revolution Make?, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1986), pp. 13-19  
- \*Castro, Fidel, “History Will Absolve Me,” in Philip Brenner et al., eds., The Cuba Reader: The Making of a Revolutionary Society (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1989), pp. 31-5

- \*Guevara, Ernesto “Che,” “Man and Socialism in Cuba,” in Philip Brenner et al., eds., The Cuba Reader: The Making of a Revolutionary Society (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1989), pp. 83-8
- Th Oct. 25 - \*Marx, Karl, & Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” [1848], in Goldstone, Jack A., ed., Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003), pp. 23-31
- \*Skocpol, Theda, & Ellen Kay Trimberger, “Revolutions: A Structural Analysis,” in Goldstone, ed. Revolutions, pp. 63-9

#### MAO AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

- T Oct. 30 - \*Dietrich, Craig, People’s China: A Brief History, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), pp. 10-32
- Heng & Shapiro, pp. vii-29
- Th Nov. 1 - Heng & Shapiro, pp. 30-60

#### CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN CHINA: VIOLENCE WITHOUT END?

- T Nov. 6 - Heng & Shapiro, pp. 61-160
- Th Nov. 8 - Heng & Shapiro, pp. 161-241

#### UNFULFILLED PROMISES OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

- T Nov. 13 - \*LaBotz, Dan, “From Mexican Revolution to One-Party State,” in Democracy in Mexico: Peasant Rebellion and Political Reform (Boston: South End Press, 1995), pp. 43-63
- \*Weinberg, Bill, Homage to Chiapas: The New Indigenous Struggles in Mexico (N.Y.: Verso, 2000), pp. 66-117
- Th Nov. 15 - \*Marcos, Sub-Commander, “A Tourist Guide to Chiapas,” Monthly Review, Vol. 46, No. 1 (May 1994), pp. 8-18.
- \*Stahler-Sholk, Richard, “Massacre in Chiapas,” Latin American Perspectives, 25(4), Jul. 1998, pp. 63-75
- Abu-Jamal, pp. 266-70
- T Nov. 20 **\*\* Exam #2 (in class, T Nov. 20) \*\***

[Thanksgiving recess]

### PART IV: RETHINKING REVOLUTION AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

#### OUTCOMES AND AFTEREFFECTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

- T Nov. 27 - Heng & Shapiro, pp. 242-92
- Th Nov. 29 - \*Mamdani, Mahmood, “From *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*,” in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, eds., Violence in War and Peace (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 468-74.
- \*Soyinka, Wole, “From The Burden of Memory: The Muse of Forgiveness,” in Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, eds., Violence in War and Peace, pp. 475-77

## VIOLENCE AND ITS ALTERNATIVES IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

- T Dec. 4      - Johnson, pp. 255-312  
                 - \*Ignatieff, Michael, "The American Empire; The Burden," The New York Times Magazine, 5 Jan. 2003  
                 - \*Roy, Arundhati, "Instant-Mix Imperial Democracy (Buy One, Get One Free)," address at The Riverside Church, NY (Center for Economic and Social Rights, 13 May 2003)
- Th Dec. 6     - \*Starhawk, "How We Really Shut Down the WTO," in Mike Prokosch and Laura Raymond, eds., The Global Activist's Manual: Local Ways to Change the World (N.Y.: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2002), pp. 134-9  
                 - \*Ackerman, Peter, and Jack DuVall, "The Mythology of Violence" and "The New World of Power," in A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict (N.Y.: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 457-91

**\*\* Paper due, Thursday, Dec. 6, at beginning of class \*\***

- T Dec. 11     **\*\* FINAL EXAM : in class, T Dec. 11\*\***