

# Violence and Revolutionary Uprisings: A History

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**Bulletin description** *The Ethics of Political Violence* will explore the history of revolutionary movements from the American Revolution to the birth of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation. This seminar will reconstruct the historical origins of extreme radical organizations in Europe, Asia, Latin America and the United States. The seminar will focus on militant strategies, the adoption of violence and the ethical vision of each movement's mission. How are ethics and political violence connected? Can violence create conditions for justice and liberation? The study of the history and legacies of these revolutionary movements will enrich current understandings of political violence in the context of ongoing international conflict. In addition to political history, students will be exposed to the theory and political philosophy connected to revolutionary action and violence. Some authors that we will read and discuss in this course include Robespierre, Sorel, Fanon, Malcolm X, Hannah Arendt, Carl Schmitt, Zizek, Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, Ulrike Meinhof, Césaire, Memmi and Subcomandante Marcos.

**Detailed description** From Robespierre to Subcomandante Marcos, violence has been an integral part of revolutionary politics. Che Guevara refers to violence as the midwife of new societies. The deliberate adoption of violence as a means of resistance and revolution is the object of this seminar, which will begin with a discussion of Robespierre's manifesto on violence and political terror and will conclude with selected writings by Subcomandante Marcos, the head of the Zapatista movement. The relationship between political violence and social justice will recur through this study of different cases throughout time and world regions beginning with late eighteenth century France and concluding with 1990s Mexico. Is violence justified? Can violence engender a form of revolutionary morality that empowers and restores justice to the popular classes? The course's interdisciplinary approach will enlighten students on the connections between seemingly different facets in society, emphasizing the ongoing dialogues between revolutionary militancy, political manifestos, radical strategy and ethics. This course will enrich the existent curriculum in the field of international history, intellectual and cultural history, international politics and political theory. The course is contributing to a global analysis of violence since the age of the French Revolution to the present, emphasizing the connections between violence, justice, civil disobedience and revolutionary society. Students will explore the relations between political violence and revolutionary strategy, paying attention to key writings by radical militants and political philosophers. This course will fulfill the need to offer an interdisciplinary and multi-regional study of the predominant dynamics between political ideology and collective organization, revolutionary leadership and political strategy, and the legacies of radical politics.

## Course Calendar/Schedule

### ***Week 1: Violence as Revolution: Philosophical Approaches***

#### Readings

Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Dover, 2004)

\*Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence", *Reflections. Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings* (Schocken, 1986)

\*Hannah Arendt, "The Meaning of Revolution", "The Pursuit of Happiness", "The Revolutionary Tradition and its Lost Treasure" *On Revolution* (Penguin Classics, 2006)

Slavoj Žižek, "Fear Thy Neighbors", "Divine Violence", *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (Picador, 2008)

### ***Week 2: Virtue and Terror: Maximilien Robespierre and the French Revolution***

#### Readings

\*Maximilien Robespierre, *Virtue and Terror* (Online)

\*Ruth Scurr, "The Revolution Begins", "Reconstituting France", "The Terror", *Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution* (Holt, 2007)

\*Patrice Higonnet, "The Indisputable Claims of Individual Liberty", "The Limitless Claims of the Public Sphere", *Goodness beyond Virtue: Jacobins during the French Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 1998)

### ***Week 3: Slaves against Masters: The Haitian Revolution and Toussaint L'Ouverture***

#### Readings

C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (Vintage, 1989)

### ***Week 4: Emiliano Zapata, Pancho Villa and the Mexican Revolution: Violence as Justice***

#### Readings

\*Frank McLynn, “The Mexico of Porfirio Díaz”, “The Rise of Zapata”, “The Rise of Villa”, “The Rise of Madero”, “The Fall of Díaz”, *Villa and Zapata* (Basic Books, 2012)

\*Friedrich Katz, “From Outlaw to Revolutionary”, “From Revolutionary to National Leader”, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* (Stanford University Press, 1998)

### **Week 5: Mao Zedong, Guerrilla War and the Reception of Maoism Abroad**

#### Readings

\*Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare* (Selections, Online)

\*Maurice Meisner, “Communism and Marxism”, “Peasant Revolution”, “Utopianism”, *Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait* (Polity, 2006)

\*Richard Wolin, “The Hour of Rebellion”, *The Wind from the East: French Intellectuals, the Cultural Revolution and the Legacy of the 1960s* (Princeton University Press, 2010)

### **Week 6: Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella: Guerrilla Movements and Anti-Imperialism**

#### Readings

\*Carlos Marighella, *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla* (Online)

\*Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Excerpts, Online)

\* Selections from Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (Grove Press, 2010)

\*Ileana Rodríguez, *Women, Guerrillas, and Love: Understanding War in Central America* (University of Minnesota Press, 1996)

### **Week 7: The National Liberation Front in Algeria: Terror and Anti-colonialism**

#### Readings

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove, 2005)

\*Martin Evans, “Undeclared War”, *Algeria: France’s Undeclared War* (Oxford University Press, 2013)

\*Todd Shepard, “The Making and Forgetting of French Algeria”, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Cornell University Press, 2008)

Excerpts from Al Jazeera’s *PLO: History of a Revolution* (2009)

## **Week 8: The Red Army Faction and the Weather Underground: Violence in Affluent Societies**

### Readings

\*Bommi Bauman, *How it all began: The Personal Account of a West German Guerrilla* (Arsenal Pulp, 2012)

\*J. Smith, “Democracy comes to Deutschland”, “Taking up the Guns”, “The May Offensive: Bringing the War Home”, “The Murder of Ulrike Meinhof”, *The Red Army Faction: A Documentary History, Vol.1: Projectiles for the People* (PM Press, 2009)

\* ‘Anarchist Amazons’: The Gendering of Radicalism in 1970s West Germany, *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (November 2010), pp. 351-374.

Ulrike Meinhof, *Everybody talks about the Weather Underground... We Don't* (Seven Stories Press, 2007)

## **Week 9: Ho Chi Minh's Vietcong: The Triumph of the Colonized**

### Readings

Ho Chi Minh and Walden Bello, *Down with Colonialism* (Verso, 2007)

\*Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (Monthly Review Press, 2001)

\*Albert Memmi, “Portrait of the Colonizer”, “Portrait of the Colonized”, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Beacon Press, 1991)

## **Week 10: Malcolm X, the Black Panthers and the Defense of Violence: The Restoration of Dignity**

### Readings

Malcolm X, *Autobiography* (Penguin Classics, 2001)

\*Manning Marable, “Becoming ‘X’”, “The Hate that Hate Produced”, “From Prayer to Protest”, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* (Penguin Books, 2011)

\*Joshua Bloom and Waldo Martin, “Organizing Rage”, “Baptism in Blood”, *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (University of California Press, 2014)

## **Week 11: The Red Brigades: Political Kidnapping and the Rejection of Diplomacy**

### Readings

\*Alessandro Orsini, “The Pedagogy of Intolerance”, “The Sacralization of Politics”, “The Genesis of the Red Brigades”, *Anatomy of the Red Brigades: The Religious Mind-set of Modern Terrorists* (Cornell University Press, 2011)

\*Leonardo Sciacia, *The Moro Affair* (NYRB Classics, 2004)

\*Giorgio, *Memoirs of an Italian Terrorist* (Basic Books, 2003)

\*Carl Schmitt, “Political Theology”, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (University of Chicago Press, 2006)

## **Week 12: Subcomandante Marcos’ War against Neoliberalism: The EZLN and Guerrilla Militancy Today**

### Readings

\*Subcomandante Marcos, “Zapatismo: A Brief Manual on How to Change the World”, “The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle”, *Beyond Resistance: Everything* (Paperboat Press, 2008)

\*Subcomandante Marcos, “Names of the Unnamed”, “One World”, *Our Word is Our Weapon* (Seven Stories Press, 2007)

\*Tom Hayden, “The Word”, *The Zapatista Reader* (Nation Books, 2002)

## **Week 13: Fusako Shigenobu’s Japanese Red Army**

### Readings

\*Yoshihiro Kuriyama, “Terrorism at Tel Aviv Airport and a “New Left” Group in Japan”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Mar., 1973), pp. 336-346.

\*Patricia G. Steinhoff, “Hijackers, Bombers, and Bank Robbers: Managerial Style in the Japanese Red Army”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Nov., 1989), pp. 724-740.

Film Excerpts from *Children of the Revolution* (Shane O’Sullivan, 2010)

## **Week 14: Arab Spring, Black Lives Matter & the Umbrella Movement**

### Readings

\*Julia Clancy-Smith, “Lessons from a Small Place: The Dignity Revolutions in Tunisia, North Africa, and the Globe”, *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings* (Westview Press, 2016)

\*Ibrahim Al-Marashi, “Iraq and the Arab Spring: From Protests to the Rise of ISIS”, *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings* (Westview Press, 2016)

\*Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, “The Double Standards of Justice”, “Black Lives Matter: A Movement, Not a Moment”, *#From Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation* (Haymarket, 2016)

\*Laikwan Pang, “Civil Disobedience and the Rule of Law: Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement”, *Verge*, Vol.2, No.1 (Spring 2016), pp. 170-192.

## **Week 15: Female Suicide Bombers**

### Readings

\*Mia Bloom, “Female Suicide Bombers: A Global Trend”, *Daedalus*, Vol. 136, No.1, On Nonviolence & Violence (Winter, 2007), pp. 94-102.

\*Claudia Brunner, “Occidentalism Meets the Female Suicide Bomber”, *Signs*, Vol. 32, No. 4, War and Terror I: Raced-Gendered Logics and Effects in Conflict Zones (Summer 2007), pp. 957-971.

\*Dorit Naaman, “Brides of Palestine/Angels of Death: Media, Gender, and Performance in the Case of the Palestinian Female Suicide Bombers”, *Signs*, Vol. 32, No. 4, War and Terror I: Raced-Gendered Logics and Effects in Conflict Zones (Summer 2007), pp. 933-955.

Film Excerpts from *The Attack* (Ziad Doueiri, 2012)

### **Bibliography**

Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Harcourt, 1970)

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Penguin, 2006)

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt, 1973)

Étienne Balibar, *Violence and Civility: On the Limits of Political Philosophy* (Columbia University Press, 2016)

Mia Bloom, *Bombshell: Women and Terrorism* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011)

Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2015)

Gérard Chaliand, Arnaud Blin eds., *The History of Terrorism: From Antiquity to Al Qaeda* (University of California Press, 2007)

Caron Gentry, ed., *Women, Gender, and Terrorism* (University of Georgia Press, 2011)

Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (Columbia University Press, 2006)

Mark Jürgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (University of California Press, 2003)

Rosa Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution* (Dover, 2006)

Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (University of Chicago Press, 2007)

Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution* (Grove Press, 1994)

Eric Hobsbawn, *The Age of Extremes* (Vintage, 1996)

Tanya Narozhna, *Female Suicide Bombings: A Critical Gender Approach* (University of Toronto Press, 2016)

Larry Reynolds, *Righteous Violence: Revolution, Slavery, and the American Renaissance* (University of Georgia Press, 2011)

Tina Rosenberg, *Children of Cain: Violence and the Violent in Latin America* (Penguin, 1992)

Ruth Scurr, *Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution* (Holt, 2007)

J. Smith, *The Red Army Faction: A Documentary History, Vol. 1: Projectiles for the People* (PM Press, 2009)

J. Smith, *The Red Army Faction, A Documentary History, Vol. 2: Dancing with Imperialism* (PM Press, 2013)

Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *68* (Seven Stories, 2004)

Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (University of California Press, 2004)