

# POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND REVOLUTION

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
WEDNESDAYS 2–4:30 PM, RUFFNER HALL 137  
FALL 2016

PROFESSOR ANNE MENG  
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OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAYS 3–5 PM, GIBSON HALL S284

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine political violence and revolution through a comparative perspective. We will study the causes and consequences of civil wars and military coups, and how the occurrence of violence often interacts with variables such as ethnicity or poverty. We will also engage with theories of revolution and study historical cases of uprisings as well as more recent revolutions. In addition, we will examine how political violence affects the state: can wars facilitate the creation of local or national institutions? Our theoretical discussions will be rooted in studies of specific events, such as the Arab Spring, Chinese revolution, and military coups in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Attendance and Participation – 20%

Attendance and participation are especially important in seminars, and we will take advantage of the small class size to have many student led discussions of the material. Attendance for this class is mandatory. Students are expected to have completed all the assigned readings before class and be prepared to engage in critical discussions of the works.

### 2. Discussion Questions and Papers – 30%

*Discussion Questions (15%):* Each student should email me 2 discussion questions every week by 2 PM on Tuesday before each class.

*Discussion Papers (15%):* Each student is required to write 2 discussion papers throughout the semester. Discussion papers should be posted online at the portal by 2 PM on Tuesday before the class. Students can pick any 2 weeks between August 31 and November 30 that they would like to present. Other seminar participants should read the discussion papers before class and be prepared to discuss them.

Discussion papers should be 2 pages in length and focus on any 2 articles (or book chapters) assigned for that week. The discussion papers should consider the following questions: What is the puzzle the author is trying to explain? What is the argument? What kinds of evidence does the author provide that supports his thesis? Are there any remaining questions that should be discussed? How can we think about the two articles in relation to each other?

Students who wrote discussion papers will be the point person for the seminar that week. We will open the discussion with brief presentations where the student will provide key ideas, themes, and questions that we can discuss.

### **3. Research Paper – 50%**

*Proposal (5%) – due October 12*

*Draft Literature Review and Working Theory (10%) – due November 16*

*Peer Review (5%) – due November 23*

*Final Paper (30%) – due December 9*

The field of authoritarian politics is an active research topic with a number of open questions remaining. The main assignment of this class is to produce a research paper that addresses a question you find interesting and propose a way to test your argument. Your research paper should include all the components of an article published in a political science journal, minus the section presenting empirical results.

Your paper should include the following sections: (1) An introduction that identifies the research question and explains why this question is important. (2) A literature review that summarizes existing research on this topic and a discussion of how your paper relates to these existing studies. (3) Your own theoretical argument and discussion of key factors that you think explain the outcome that you are looking at. (4) Proposed test of your theoretical argument. Your proposed empirical test can be either qualitative or quantitative. For a qualitative proposal, propose case studies you would examine. For a quantitative proposal, identify existing data that you could use to test your hypothesis.

We will write the paper in three main stages. First, a one-page proposal that describes your research question will be due on **October 12**. Second, a draft of the research question, literature review, and working theory (approximately 5-6 pages) will be due on **November 16**. Each student will exchange their draft with an assigned partner and provide feedback on their partner's draft. The feedback should be at least 1 page in length and will be due on **November 23**. The final research paper should be 20 pages doubled-spaced and will be due on **Friday, December 9**.

I highly encourage students to come talk to me during office hours about the research paper throughout the semester, and especially during the proposal stage! I can give you early feedback about the feasibility of the topic and we can discuss possible arguments and strategies for testing the argument.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### *Late assignments*

I **do not** accept late assignments, so please plan ahead and complete all assignments on time. If you really are facing an extenuating circumstance (such as documented medical issue), please come talk to me.

#### *Re-grade policy*

If a grade dispute arises, please provide a one-page memo explaining why you believe the grade you received is incorrect. A copy of the graded assignment should be included along with the memo. Re-grade requests must be submitted within a week from the time the grade was first received. Note that re-grade requests may result in a higher *or lower* grade, so utilize this option carefully.

### *Classroom etiquette*

All cell phones, laptops, tablets, and related devices must be turned off and stowed away during class.

### *Academic Honor Code*

All students are expected to submit work that is a reflection of their own ideas and to properly cite published sources when referencing the ideas of others. If you have any questions about proper citation practices or what constitutes plagiarism, please come talk to me. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

### **SCHEDULE**

We will read all or large sections of the following books. They are all available (new and used) on Amazon and at the campus bookstore.

Jeremy Weinstein. 2006. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Paul Staniland. 2014. *Networks of Rebellion*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Luttwak, Edward. 1968. *Coup d'Etat: A Practical Handbook*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lucien Bianco. 1971. *Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

The rest of the readings can be accessed on Collab. The PDFs of each reading is listed by the author's last name and year.

### **Week 1 (8/24): Introduction**

#### **Week 2 (8/31): Why does conflict occur? An overview**

Nicholas Sambanis. 2004. "What is a civil war? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 814-858.

Stathis Kalyvas. 2001. "New" and "Old" Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics* 54(1): 99-118.

Barry Posen. 1993. "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict." *Survival* 35(1): 27-27.

### **Week 3 (9/7): Ethnicity and Violence**

David Lake and Donald Rothchild. 1996. "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict." *International Security* 21(2): 41-75.

James Fearon and David Laitin. 2000. "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity." *International Organization* 54(4): 845-877.

Daniel Posner. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

#### **Week 4 (9/14): Poverty and Violence**

James Fearon and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97(1), 75-90.

Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56: 563-595.

Nicholas Sambanis. 2004. "Using Case Studies to Explain Economic Models of Civil War." *Perspectives on Politics* 2(2): 259-279.

\*\*Nicholas Sambanis. 2001. "Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(3): 259-282.

#### **Week 5 (9/21): How rebel-group structure affects violence**

Jeremy Weinstein. 2006. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Part I (Chapters 1-4) "The Structure of Rebel Organizations"

Lindsay Heger, Danielle Jung, and Wendy Wong. 2012. "Organizing for Resistance: How Group Structure Impacts the Character of Violence." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24:743-768.

#### **Week 6 (9/28): Why are some rebel organizations more durable?**

Paul Staniland. 2014. *Networks of Rebellion*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Chapters 1-3 (theory), 4 (Kashmir)

Jenna Jordan. 2014. "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark." *International Security* 38(4): 7-38.

#### **Week 7 (10/5): Post-conflict governance**

Carrie Manning. 2004. "Armed Opposition Groups into Political Parties: Comparing Bosnia, Kosovo, and Mozambique." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 39(1): 54-76.

John Ishiyama and Anna Batta. 2011. "Swords Into Plowshares: The Organizational Transformation of Rebel Groups Into Political Parties." *Communist and Post Communist*

*Studies* 44: 369-379.

Virginia Page Fortna and Reyko Huang. 2012. "Democratization after Civil War: A Brush Clearing Exercise." *International Studies Quarterly* 56: 801-808.

Terrence Lyons. 2016. "The Importance of Winning: Victorious Insurgent Groups and Authoritarian Politics." *Comparative Politics* 48(2):167-184.

**Week 8 (10/12): \*\*Class Cancelled\*\***  
**[Research Proposal due]**

**Week 9 (10/19): The Coup d'état**

Edward Luttwak. 1968. *Coup d'Etat: A Practical Handbook*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3.

James Quinlivan. 1999. "Coup-proofing: Its Practices and Consequences in the Middle East." *International Security* 24(2): 131-165.

**Week 10 (10/26): Causes and Consequences of Coups**

John Londregan and Keith Poole. 1990. "Poverty, The Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power." *World Politics* 42(2): 151-183.

Philip Roessler. 2011. "The Enemy Within: Personal Rule, Coups, and Civil War in Africa." *World Politics* 63(2): 300-346.

Naunihal Singh. 2014. *Seizing Power*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (Theory), 7 (USSR)

**Week 11 (11/2): Theories of Revolution**

Theda Skocpol. 1976. "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18(2)

Jack A. Goldstone 2001. "Toward a fourth generation of revolutionary theory." *Annual Review of Political Science* 4:139-187.

Timur Kuran. 1991. "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989." *World Politics* 44(7):48.

**Week 12 (11/9): Revolutions and State Building**

Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. 2012. "Beyond Patronage: Violent Struggle, Ruling Party Cohesion, and Authoritarian Durability." *Perspectives on Politics* 20(4), 869-889.

Dan Slater. 2010. *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2.

Anne Meng. 2016. "Legacies of Violence: Armed Conflict and Ruling Party Durability in Authoritarian Regimes," Manuscript.

**Week 13 (11/16): The Middle East and Arab Spring**  
**[Draft Literature Review and Working Theory due]**

Eva Bellin. 2004. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 36(2): 139-157.

Lisa Anderson. 2011. "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya," *Foreign Affairs* 90(3): 2-7.

Jack Goldstone. 2011. "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011," *Foreign Affairs* 90(3): 2-7.

James Fallows. 2011. "Arab Spring, Chinese Winter," *Atlantic Monthly* 308(2): 50-58.

Macolm Gladwell. 2010. "Small Change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted," *The New Yorker* 86(30): 42-49.

**Week 14 (11/23): Thanksgiving break – No class**  
**[Peer Review comments due]**

**Week 15 (11/30): Case Study: The Chinese Revolution**

Lucien Bianco. 1971. *Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. Focus on Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7.

**\*[December 9: Final Research Papers Due]\***