

Honors 327

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Revolution and Philosophy

Often inspired and preceded by great thinkers, revolutions shape the ideas and actions of those who watch the flames. This course examines, in turn, four of the world's great revolutions – the revolt of Jesus and the Jews against the Romans in first century Judea, the English Revolution of 1640-1660 that unleashed the modern revolutionary in the personality of the Puritan zealots, the French Revolution of 1789, which, after being inspired by Rousseau, resulted in the Rights of Man, the terror and the rise of Napoleon, and the Russian Revolution of 1917 inspired by the writings of Marx and leadership of Lenin.

Course Requirements

In-class participation (50%)

Papers (40%)

Final Exam (10%)

Books

Books are listed in order that we will read:

Seven required books/ one optional book >>

Reza Aslan, Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth

Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks

ISBN: 978-0-8129-8148-3 (paper)

Blair Worden, The English Civil Wars 1640-1660

Publisher: Phoenix Paperbacks

ISBN: 978-0-7538-2691-1

Michael Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints

Publisher: Harvard University (paper, 2nd edition)

ISBN: 978-0674767867

New \$29/ buy used...

Rousseau, On the Social Contract with Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy

(edited Roger D. Masters) [Buy THIS edition edited by Roger Masters]

Bedford/ St. Martin's

ISBN-10: 0312694466

James Miller, Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy
Yale University Press (1996) (get used copies/ they are available)
ISBN-10: 0300035187
Out of Print: buy used

Albert Soboul, A Short History of the French Revolution (OPTIONAL)
University of California Press
ISBN-10: 0520034198

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Communist Manifesto
Verso
ISBN-10: 1859848982

Edmund Wilson, To the Finland Station
Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (1972 or 2012 editions)
ISBN-10: 0374533458

NOTE on where to Purchase:

You can purchase all the books online, but Worden, Rousseau, Soboul (optional), Marx, and Wilson should be available at the Chapman bookstore. You need to order Aslan (Zealot) and Walzer (Saints) and Miller (Dreamer) on Amazon or another online source.

Note on Course Approach and Reading Load:

We have a number of good books on the course list and I have worked to make the reading load manageable. We will be reading about one book every two weeks and discussing the themes and issues raised in class. As an Honors Class, this is very much a class where you and your fellow students will be discussing reading and I, as the faculty member, will help guide the discussion. Most of you will come to class with very little background knowledge -- that is just fine. All that is required is intellectual curiosity and a commitment to do the reading and come to the class with questions, ideas and thoughts you want to share with the others.

Zealot was a New York Times #1 Bestseller and is beautifully written. *To the Finland Station* by the literary critic Edmund Wilson gets similar rave reviews. Rousseau is a wonderful writer if not always easy to understand -- and thus we will debate about what he really means. The Miller book *Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy* will help us understand the French philosopher. Worden's book is a good basic historical overview of the English revolution (a confusing period) and Michael Walzer's *The Revolution of the Saints* provides us with a stimulating interpretation by one of the nation's top contemporary political theorists. With both Walzer and Miller (two high-level political science books) we will read specific chapters closely and skim and skip others. *The Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels is the 2nd best seller of all time after the Bible and a relative quick read.

Weekly Assignment: List of questions for discussion: emailed to Prof. O’Leary day before the class by 8 p.m.

Course Plan

This is an honors seminar with the readings and student responses to the reading forming the core of the course. Students will be exposed to four major revolutions that helped shape the modern world.

Part One: Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth exposes us to the historical Jesus as a Jewish revolutionary, not the Christ figure of later Christianity. We are exposed to the passion, chaos and violence of the first century.

Week 1, Feb. 1 and Feb. 3 – Introduction and Zealot, xvii-70

Week 2, Feb. 8 and Feb. 10 – Zealot (Part II and III, pp. 73-216)

Part Two: the English Revolution, 1640-1660 and beyond to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. This is a messy, confusing revolution that is difficult to understand but had profound implications for the founding of the United States.

Week 3, Feb. 15 and Feb. 17 – Zealot and Blair, English Revolution (Ch. 1-2, pp. 1-76)

Paper #1: Zealot: Reaction paper – Due Feb. 15

Week 4, Feb. 22 and Feb. 24 – Blair, The English Revolution (Ch. 3-5, pp. 77-165)

Week 5, Feb. 29 and March 2 – Blair and Walzer, Revolution of the Saints, (pp. vii-65)

Week 6, March 7 and March 9 – Walzer, Revolution of the Saints (pp. 300-320)

Interlude: John Locke Invents America

Week 7, March 14 and March 16 – Glorious Revolution/

English Revolution outcome

O’Leary, “John Locke Invents America”

Paper #2: Making Sense of the English Revolution – Due March 14

Spring Break: Week 8, March 21 and March 23, No Class

Part Three: the French Revolution of 1789-1799. This is the great revolution that ended feudalism and gave birth to the modern world.

Week 9, March 28 and March 30, Rousseau, Social Contract, (Intro, 3-34, Book I & II)

Miller, Dreamer of Democracy (pp. 1-104 skim, pp. 105-122 read closely)

Week 10, April 4 and April 6, Rousseau, Social Contract (Book III & IV)

Miller, Dreamer of Democracy (pp. 123-210)

Week 11, April 11 and April 13, Dynamics of French Revolution

Lecture Notes: French Revolution 101

Film: History Channel The French Revolution

Wilson, To the Finland Station (Part One, skim)

Paper #3: Rousseau – Due April 11

Part Four: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and the Birth of Communism. Growing up after the French Revolution, Marx was fascinated by the possibility that there could be another revolution unleashed by the working class against the victors of the French Revolution, the bourgeoisie.

Week 12, April 18 and 20, Marx, The Communist Manifesto, pp. 33-77_
Wilson, To the Finland Station (Part Two, 1-10, pp. 83-209

Week 13, April 25 and 27, Wilson, To the Finland Station

Week 14, May 2 and May 4, Wilson, To the Finland Station (Part Two, 11-16)
(Part Three, 1-6)

Paper #4: Marx – Due May 4

FINALS

Week 15, May 9-

Grading

Attendance plays a critical role in your success since the course happens in the classroom and missed classes can't be made up.

Do the reading before class. Give yourself time to think about main themes and arguments in what was assigned, come prepared, don't be shy, speak up and contribute to the class discussion. Classroom participation is critical to your grade.

Chapman University's Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx.

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In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services

if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

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