Central European University, Budapest  
Department of History  
Department of Political Science  

Revolutions and Civil Wars in the Twentieth Century: a Comparative Analysis

M.A. Course, 4 Credits, Fall 2017 (from September 18 to December 8)  
Prof. Julian Casanova  
email: casanova@unizar.es

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The comparative historical analysis of revolutions and civil wars calls for interdisciplinary dialogue between sociology, political science, and history. Revolutions and civil wars bring radical changes in social structures as well as in states’ functions and political structures that must be studied both internally and internationally. After an introductory overview of the main interpretative frameworks offered by sociology, political science and historiography, the course will turn its focus to a critical review of the most recent socio-historical research and debates concerning revolutions, civil wars and counter-revolutions in the Twentieth Century, with special emphasis on the Peasant Revolutions, the Russian Revolution, Fascism and the Spanish Civil War. Students will be encouraged to develop comparisons with other time periods and other regions of the world.

Readings:

A huge body of literature exists on the large and important themes that we shall pursue in the course.

The following books are specially recommended:

ARMITAGE, David, Civil Wars. A History in Ideas, Yale University Press, 2017  
DEFRONZO, James, Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2011  


COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course is organised into lectures and seminars. Typically the first meeting of the week is a lecture, while the second is a seminar. Regular participation in discussions is necessary and expected. During the seminars students are expected to reflect critically on the mandatory readings and to engage in discussions. Questions and stimulating interaction during the lectures will be positively evaluated as well.

The items marked with an asterisk (*) under each week topic are mandatory. Each student will have to take part in one 25 minutes presentation in a group of 2, in the seminars devoted to the case studies, depending on the number of participants in the course. A general class discussion will follow.

Grade relevant features of the presentation will be: adequate representation of the literature processed and critical, innovative and stimulating thought. I will assist you with identifying core readings for the presentations.

There will be a final historiographic essay (ca. 7-page) to compare and evaluate the viewpoints of three authors on the same subject. The students should be able to elaborate a thesis/argument and support it with evidence taken from the texts. Please note that class attendance is required.

GRADING:

The final paper will weigh 50 percent of the grade. The remaining 50 percent will be assigned for presentations (30 percent) and participation in discussions (20 percent).

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THEIR ASSESSMENT

The overall grade will primarily indicate the ability of the students to comprehend the ways revolutions and civil wars bring radical changes in social structures as well as in states’ functions and political structures that must be studied both internally and internationally. The learning outcomes of the master program are supported and measured by the present course in the following ways: The ability to deploy effective oral
presentation and discussion skills is assessed through the seminars. The skills to analyze historical events and evaluate them in a comparative perspective are reflected by the final paper. The discussions and final paper will also measured the ability of students to elaborate a critical review of the most recent socio-historical research and debates concerning revolutions and civil wars in the Twentieth Century.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1
Session 1: Course description, content and works of relevance to the course
Session 2: History and Social Sciences

Part 1: Theories

Week 2: Revolution: Theories and History

Readings:
- DEFRONZO, James, “Social Movements and Revolutions”, in Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, pp. 9-37
- ZAGORIN, Perez, “Theories of Revolution in Contemporary Historiography”, Political Science Quarterly, LXXXVIII, 1(March 1973), pp. 23-52

Session 2: Seminar (Discussion):
Week 3: Civil Wars. War and Revolution
Readings:
*LOSURDO, Domenico, “Two Centuries Under Discussion: Historical Revisionism”, in *War and Revolution*, pp. 1-30

Week 3: Civil Wars. War and Revolution
Readings:
*KALYVAS, Stathis N., “Concepts”, in *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars*, pp. 16-31

Session 2: Seminar (Discussion)

Week 4: From Barrington Moore to Theda Skocpol: The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions
Readings:

Session 2: Seminar (Discussion)
-*SKOCPOL, Theda, “Introduction” and “Conclusion”, in Social Revolutions in the Modern World, pp. 3-22 and 301-344

Part II: History (Case Studies)

Week 5: Peasant Revolutions: From México to Cuba
Readings:
-WOLF, Eric R., Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century, Harper & Row, 1969

Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)

Week 6: War, Revolution and the Rise of Communism
Readings:
-DEFRONZO, James, “The Russian Revolutions and Eastern Europe”, in Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, pp. 39-93

**Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)**

**Week 7: Civil War in Europe, 1914-1945**

**Readings:**
---“Empires, Nations, Minorities”, in *Dark Continent*, pp. 40-76.

**Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)**

-GERWARTH, Robert, “The Central European Counter-revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War”, *Past and Present*, no.200 (August 2008), pp. 175-209
-KALYVAS, Stathis N., “Barbarism”, in *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, pp. 52-86.
Week 8: Fascism: Revolution or Counterrevolution? A comparative perspective

Readings:
  --- *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The 'Fascist' Style of Rule*, Routledge, 1995.

Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)

Week 9: Civil War and Revolution in Spain 1936-1939

Readings:
  --- “The Republic at war”, in *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, 236-274

**Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)**

**Week 10: Postwar. Europe in the Aftermath of World War II.**

**Readings**

**Session 2: Seminar (Presentations)**

**Week 11:**


**Readings:**
- *AUER, Stefan, “The Revolutions of 1989 revisited”*


Session 2: Wars, Nations and Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe (Discussion):
Readings:

Week 12: Final Paper Due