PSC 570: Civil Order and Civil Violence

Prof. Bethany Lacina
Wednesdays, 4-6:40pm
Harkness 329

Civil order undergirds all other political processes. This course covers how violence is regulated—primarily by states but through other mechanisms, as well. The readings cover five approaches to civil order, what it is and how it is sustained. Each conception of civil order implies a different account—in some cases a few different accounts—of when and why unregulated violence occurs, as well as the character of that violence.

There are a large number of topics in the study of civil violence that we will not cover, for example: explanations of why individuals participate in violence, problems of organizing armed groups including state militaries, strategic and tactical uses of violence, patterns of violence and warfighting within conflicts, conflict termination, peacemaking and post-conflict societies, international interventions in civil conflict, and particular types of violence—e.g., communal violence, electoral violence, criminal violence, genocide, ethnic cleansing. Also, this course is heavily weighted toward introducing the major theories of the state and violence. However, to contribute new research in this field, one also needs to become familiar with the empirical literature on these topics.

Instructor

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 10-12

Course Requirements

1. Students must attend every class. A student who misses class must get in touch with me within 24 hours of the start of the missed class period and then complete a make-up assignment. Students who do not follow this procedure will have an unexcused absence.

2. All students, whether auditing or taking the course for credit, must do the reading. The course schedule below lists readings under two headings: readings for class and readings for the comprehensive exam. Students who incorporate this course into their International Relations or Comparative Politics field exams will be responsible for the latter, in addition to the course readings. For the comprehensive exam, students are also responsible for the entirety of all books (except edited volumes) assigned during the course, although only portions of books are assigned during the course.

3. Six response papers. For six of the weekly sessions students will write a paper of 1,000 to 1,750 words. Three of the six papers must be completed in weeks 2-7; three must be completed in weeks 8-14. Papers should offer an analysis of one or more readings for the
week. Readings from other courses may also be incorporated. Students may not write a paper for a week when they will not be in class.

The papers should not merely summarize the reading. Examples of what a paper might do:

- Choose a point of conflict between readings and defend one of the readings on this point
- Apply one author’s critique of existing work to another reading; make an argument regarding how the critique does or does not undermine that reading
- Point out logical inconsistencies or important omissions from the theory in one or more readings; show that the errors or omissions are non-trivial
- Identify shortcomings in the empirics in one or more readings and explain why and to what extent those shortcomings might undermine the author’s conclusions
- Describe a research frontier (theoretical or empirical) that the readings suggest; explain how that research follows from the readings and defend its likely value

Papers must be completed by 10AM on the day of the seminar, with copies posted on the class website. Late work is not accepted.

Papers will be graded only as satisfactory or unsatisfactory, although I will provide comments to each student. I will post some examples of satisfactory papers on the course website. Late papers are automatically deemed unsatisfactory. A paper is automatically deemed unsatisfactory if the student does not attend class.

All students must write a paper for the second week of class. A student who does not earn a satisfactory grade on that paper must write the papers for subsequent weeks until they have handed in at least one satisfactory paper.

4. All students must read the papers of the other students before the seminar meets and be prepared to comment on those papers.
Course grade

Final course grades will be determined using the chart below.

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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| A     | 6 satisfactory papers  
       | No unexcused absences  
       | Consistent reading of assigned materials and other students’ papers in advance of the seminar and evidence of preparation to comment on them |
| A-    | 6 satisfactory papers |
| B+    | 5 satisfactory papers  
       | No unexcused absences  
       | Consistent reading of assigned materials and other students’ papers in advance of the seminar and evidence of preparation to comment on them |
| B     | 5 satisfactory papers |
| B-    | 4 satisfactory papers |
| C     | 3 satisfactory papers |
| E     | <3 satisfactory papers |
Class schedule

Reading for the week must be completed by all students before class.

1. September 4: Introduction to the course
   No reading.

2. September 11: Civil order as the defense of property rights
   
   Reading for the week:
   Anderson, Perry. 1974. Lineages of the Absolutist State. NLB. Part I: Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5. (128 pages)

   Reading for the comprehensive exam:

3. September 18: Civil violence as a challenge to property rights
   
   Reading for the week:

   Reading for the comprehensive exam:

4. September 25: Civil order as a protection racket
   

Reading for the comprehensive exam:

5. October 2: Civil violence as banditry

Reading for the week:
Reno, William. Warlord Politics in an African State. Lynne Rienner. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4. (132 pages)

Reading for the comprehensive exam:

6. October 9: Civil violence as racketeer competition

Reading for the week:

Reading for the comprehensive exam:
7. October 16: Civil violence as the failure of state institutions

Reading for the week:


Skocpol, Theda. 1979. States and Social Revolutions. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2. (109 pages)


Reading for the comprehensive exam:


8. October 23: Civil order as incorporation

Reading for the week:


Reading for the comprehensive exam:


9. October 30: Civil violence as resistance to incorporation

Reading for the week:

Migdal, Joel S. 1988. Strong Societies and Weak States. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7. (142 pages)

Scott, James C. 2009. The Art of Not Being Governed. Yale University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (177 pages)
Reading for the comprehensive exam:


10. November 6: Civil order as legitimate practice

Reading for the week:


Reading for the comprehensive exam:


11. November 13: Civil violence as contested legitimacy

Reading for the week:


Scott, James C. “The erosion of patron-client bonds and social change in rural Southeast Asia.” The Journal of Asian Studies 32(1). (33 pages)


Reading for the comprehensive exam:


12. November 20: Civil order as national legitimacy

Reading for the week:


**Reading for the comprehensive exam:**


**November 27: No class**

13. **December 4: Civil violence as contested national legitimacy**


**Reading for the comprehensive exam:**


14. **December 11: Violence as legitimate practice**

**Reading for the week:**

Ghassen-Fachandi. 2010. “*Ahimsa*, identification, and sacrifice in the Gujarat pogrom.” *Social Anthropology* 18(2). (21 pages)


**Reading for the comprehensive exam:**