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Dear AP Modern European History Student,

Fairfield's Advanced Placement History teachers have always sought to emphasize a strong foundation in knowledge of politics, religion, philosophy, art and economics as support for an authentic collegiate experience. This year, in an effort to present these topics in a way that is both engaging and relevant, I've decided to modify the APMEH summer reading assignment by giving you greater latitude in deciding what will be read. Rather than focus on a single book, you will choose from a selection of essays all focused on the same topic: ***REVOLUTION***. My hope is to encourage more thoughtful and creative written responses to the tasks described below by allowing you to be guided by your own interests, while at the same time concentrating on the nature of what is, arguably, the driving mechanism for the modern era.

There is no doubting revolution's importance to the optimism and progress that are essential to the "modern" – without it, for example, we would never have broken from a seemingly interminable Medieval past Despite this, however, the ways it has been perceived have varied significantly since the era began in the 14th century: one moment it is lionized, and another, trivialized. French Philosopher Simone Weil suggests a provocative beginning point for our discussions, *"one magic word today seems capable of compensating for all sufferings, resolving all anxieties, avenging the past, curing present ills, summing up all future possibilities: that word is revolution …This word has aroused such pure acts of devotion, has repeatedly caused such generous blood to be shed, has constituted for so many unfortunates the only source of courage for living, that it is almost a sacrilege to investigate it; all this, however, does not prevent it from possibly being meaningless."* In other words: revolution is impossible!

Next year in APMEH, you will investigate the concept of revolution, evaluate its origins and key components, and determine its viability in the Modern era.

Using "Lapham's Quarterly – Revolution", Spring edition 2014 (you can buy at Barnes and Noble for ~$17 or use the following link: http://www.laphamsquarterly.org/magazine/)

1. Read:
   - Crowd Control, page 17,
   - Hannah Arendt Restores the Definition, page 32 (this is not available online and will be given during the June meeting as a handout),
   - Simone Weil Demystifies the Word, page 195, and
   - Three articles from **EACH** of the magazine sections: "Stirrings", "Uprisings", and "Evaluations."

2. Write:
   - A brief (3-4 sentences) description of each document identifying title and author, general historical context, and three significant ideas from the essay (these may be bulleted), then, using information from the Latham essays and the course textbook,
   - A 5-6 page (Times New Roman, 12pt font, double spaced) essay that describes a response to the following: ***What is "revolution"?***
   - In your paper you must include:
     a. the defining characteristics of "revolution" based on analyses of Arendt and Weil,
     b. the different forms that revolution can take,
     c. an explanation of why some revolutions succeed and others fail, and
     d. reference to AT LEAST three specific revolutions (these are not limited to European Revolutions)
   - A note on additional sources:
     a. Utilize your textbook whenever possible
     b. All websites/articles referenced must be reputable historical sources (**no Wikipedia**). We encourage you to access the school databases that can be found at: http://fairfieldwardelmc.weebly.com/databases.html
     c. All outside sources must be cited in proper MLA format.

IMPORTANT: I am interested in seeing your synthetic writing skills on this assignment. Though some explanation of historical context is necessary, you should strive to emphasize analysis and evaluation over mere description. One of the first activities of the year will be to address the implications/expectations of revolution in the modern era – this essay should crystallize the arguments you'll use during this discussion.

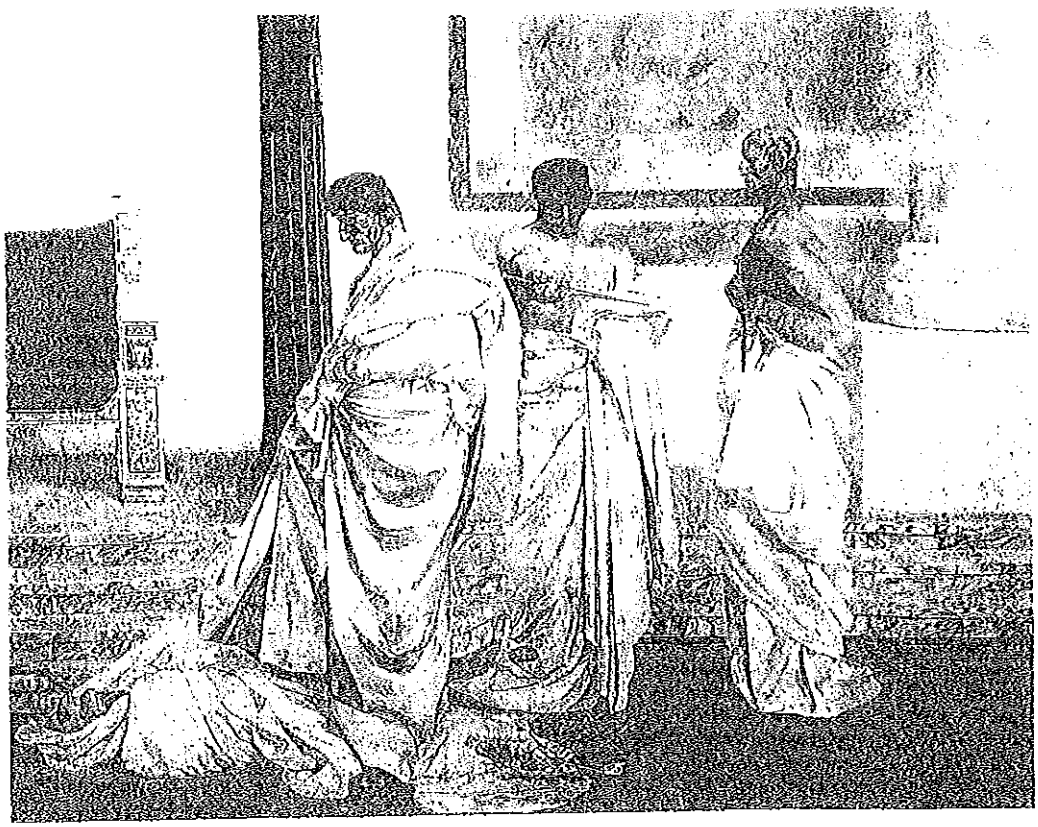
Also, please remember that you will be required to submit your assignment to turnitin.com by 11:59pm on August 28th. Login information will be given in our June 13th meeting and on the first day of class.

SUGGESTED READING: World War Z by Max Brooks. Yes: this is a book about a zombie pandemic (not, perhaps, what you'd expect for summer reading in an AP history class), but its premise is to answer a question important to definition of the human social condition: "*in responding to a crisis, which should take precedence: group security or individual rights*?" An appropriate response to this question is necessary in defining the Western conception of morality and as such will act as touchstone and reoccurring theme in our studies in APMEH.

See me with any questions/concerns regarding the above before June 18th (I will be checking school e-mail over the summer, but only sporadically). Until then, be certain to have a wonderfully historical vacation and I look forward to seeing you in class next August!

Sincerely,

Stephen O'Brien



Death of Julius Caesar, by Max Klinger, 1919.

1963: Chicago

HANNAH ARENDT RESTORES THE DEFINITION

The word *revolution* was originally an astronomical term which gained increasing importance in the natural sciences through Nicolaus Copernicus' *On the Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres* [*Nuremberg*, page 130]. In this scientific usage, it retained its precise Latin meaning, designating the regular, lawfully revolving motion of the stars, which, since it was known to be beyond the influence of man and hence irresistible, was certainly characterized neither by newness nor by violence. On the contrary, the word clearly indicates a recurring, cyclical movement; it is the perfect Latin translation of Polybius' *anacyclosis*, a term which also originated in astronomy and was used metaphorically in the realm of politics. If used for the affairs of men on earth, it could only signify that the few known forms of government revolve among the mortals in eternal recurrence and with the same irresistible force which makes the stars follow their preordained paths in the skies. Nothing could be further removed from the original meaning of the word *revolution* than the idea by which all revolutionary actors have been possessed and obsessed, namely, that they are agents in a process which spells the definite end of an old order and brings about the birth of a new world.

If the case of modern revolutions were as clear-cut as a textbook definition, the choice of the word *revolution* would be even more puzzling than it actually is. When the word first descended from the skies and was introduced to describe what happened on earth among mortal men, it appeared clearly as a metaphor, carrying over the notion of an eternal, irresistible, ever-recurring motion to the haphazard movements, the ups and downs of human destiny, which

have been likened to the rising and setting of sun, moon, and stars since times immemorial. In the seventeenth century, where we find the word for the first time as a political term, the metaphoric content was even closer to the original meaning of the word, for it was used for a movement of revolving back to some preestablished point and, by implication, of swinging back into a preordained order. Thus, the word was first used not when what we call a revolution broke out in England and Oliver Cromwell rose to the first revolutionary dictatorship, but on the contrary, in 1660, after the overthrow of the Rump Parliament and at the occasion of the restoration of the monarchy. In precisely the same sense, the word was used in 1688, when the Stuarts were expelled and the kingly power was transferred to William and Mary. The Glorious Revolution, the event through which very paradoxically the term found its definite place in political and historical language, was not thought of as a revolution at all, but as a restoration of monarchical power to its former righteousness and glory.

The fact that the word *revolution* meant originally "restoration," hence something which to us is its very opposite, is not a mere oddity of semantics. The revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which to us appear to show all evidence of a new spirit, the spirit of the modern age, were intended to be restorations. It is true, the civil wars in England foreshadowed a great many tendencies which we have come to associate with what was essentially new in the revolutions of the eighteenth century: the appearance of the Levellers and the formation of a party composed exclusively of lowly people, whose radicalism came into conflict with the leaders of the revolution, point clearly to the course of the French Revolution; while the demand for a written constitution as "the foundation for just government," raised by the Levellers and somehow fulfilled when Cromwell introduced an "Instrument of Government" to set up the Protectorate, anticipates one of the most important achievements, if not the most important one, of the American Revolution. Yet the fact is that the short-lived victory of this first modern revolution was officially understood as a restoration, namely as FREEDOM BY GOD'S BLESSING RESTORED, as the inscription runs on the great seal of 1651.

In our context it is even more important to note what happened more than a century later. For we are not here concerned with the history of revolutions as such, with their past, their origins, and course of development. If we want to learn what a revolution is—its general implications for man as a political being, its political significance for the world we live in, its role in modern history—we must turn to those historical moments when revolution made its full appearance, assumed a kind of definite shape, and began to cast its spell over the minds of men,

If there was ever a just war since the world began, it is this in which America is now engaged.
—Thomas Paine, 1778

quite independent of the abuses and cruelties and deprivations of liberty which might have caused them to rebel. We must turn, in other words, to the French and the American revolutions, and we must take into account that both were played in their initial stages by men who were firmly convinced that they would do no more than restore an old order of things that had been disturbed and violated by the despotism of absolute monarchy or the abuses of colonial government. They pleaded in all sincerity that they wanted to revolve back to old times when things had been as they ought to be.

This has given rise to a great deal of confusion, especially with respect to the American Revolution, which did not devour its own children and where therefore the men who had started the "restoration" were the same men who began and finished the revolution and even lived to rise to power and office in the new order of things. What they had thought was a restoration, the retrieving of their ancient liberties, turned into a revolution, and their thoughts and theories about the British constitution, the rights of Englishmen, and the forms of colonial government ended with a declaration of independence.

But the movement which led to revolution was not revolutionary except by inadvertence, and "Benjamin Franklin, who had more firsthand information about the colonies than any other man, could later write in all sincerity, 'I never had heard in any conversation from any person drunk or sober the least expression of a wish for a separation or hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America.'" Whether these men were "conservative" or "revolutionary" is indeed impossible to decide if one uses these words outside their historic context as generic terms, forgetting that conservatism as a political creed and an ideology owes its existence to a reaction to the French Revolution and is meaningful only for the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And the same point, though perhaps somewhat less unequivocally, can be made for the French Revolution; here too, in Alexis de Tocqueville's words, "One might have believed the aim of the coming revolution was not the overthrow of the old regime but its restoration." Even when in the course of both revolutions the actors became aware of the impossibility of restoration and of the need to embark upon an entirely new enterprise, and when therefore the very word *revolution* had already acquired its new meaning, Thomas Paine could still, true to the spirit of a bygone age, propose in all earnestness to call the American and the French revolutions by the name of "counterrevolutions." This proposition, odd indeed from the mouth of one of the most "revolutionary" men of the time, shows in a nutshell how dear the idea of revolving back, of restoration, was to the hearts and minds of the revolutionaries. Paine wanted no more than to recapture the old meaning of the word *revolution* and to express his firm conviction that the events of the time had caused men to revolve back to an "early period" when they had been in the possession of rights and liberties of which tyranny and conquest had dispossessed them. And his "early period" is by no means the hypothetical prehistorical state of nature, as the seventeenth century understood it, but a definite, though undefined, period in history.

From On Revolution. *Arendt studied under Martin Heidegger at the University of Marburg and completed her dissertation, "St. Augustine's Concept of Love," under Karl Jaspers at the University of Heidelberg in 1929. She came to the U.S. in 1941 and over the next twenty-five years published* The Origins of Totalitarianism, The Human Condition, *and* Eichmann in Jerusalem, *in which she coined the phrase "the banality of evil" to help explain Adolf Eichmann's role in the Holocaust. She died at the age of sixty-nine in 1975.*

Castles Beneath Cities, by Brad Downey, 2008. Amsterdam, Netherlands.