COMPARATIVE GENOCIDE

Fall 2015
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Tue/Thur 2:00-3:15pm
103 Gore Hall
Office hours: T/Th 10:30-11:30am, 30 West Delaware Ave. # 102

Course Description:

The Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin coined the term “genocide” in the aftermath of the Jewish Holocaust. However, the phenomenon that Lemkin defined as genocide had taken place before the Holocaust, and has taken place again since then. In this course we will examine the phenomenon of genocide during the 20th and 21st centuries, in comparative and historical perspective. We will study seven cases: 1) the Armenian genocide in 1915; 2) the Jewish Holocaust, 1933-1945; 3) Soviet persecutions in the 1930s and 1940s; 4) Cambodia, 1975-1979; 5) Rwanda, 1994; 6) the former Yugoslavia, 1992-1995; and 7) Darfur, 2003. During the last part of the course we will explore how genocide has been put on trial, and how it has been commemorated. We will conclude with a discussion about the genocidal crimes of ISIS in Syria and Iraq in the present day, and explore the question of whether (and how) genocide can be prevented.

Our goals in this class are the following:

1. To understand the causes, warning signs, courses, and aftermath, of genocidal acts during the 20th and 21st centuries.
2. To identify the similarities and differences between several cases of mass killing.
3. To identify why and how states in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia turned to mass killing of different populations in pursuit of their political, religious and economic goals.
4. To understand what has motivated people to participate in committing mass murder.
5. To study the response of the international community (and the United States in particular) to the repeated occurrence of genocidal violence around the world.
6. To understand how various countries remember, prosecute, and compensate victims of genocide.

Required Texts: Both texts are available for purchase in the University bookstore, and will also be on two-hour reserve at Morris Library. All additional readings will be posted on Sakai.

Jens Mehrenreich, *Genocide: A Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2014). In the syllabus this book is identified simply as Reader.


Online resources about genocide: Use the websites listed in *Genocide: A Reader*, pp. 487-489.
Student Responsibilities:

Short Paper: 10%
Due in class, October 6.
In three double-spaced pages, provide a concise definition of genocide, and apply that definition to the history of either the Holocaust or the Armenian genocide. You should identify specific examples from either genocide that meet the definition of genocide. You may use the definition in the United Nations Genocide Convention, or other scholars’ definitions. No outside research is required for this paper: write using your own words and ideas, without quoting or citing other sources.

Midterm: 25%
In class, October 15. The midterm will consist of identification questions and short essays. You will be asked to write about excerpts from our two textbooks and materials discussed in lectures.

Second, Revised Paper: Comparing Genocides: 25%
Due in class, November 19.
You will revise and expand your first paper. In six double-spaced pages, compare the genocide that you discussed in your first paper with another genocide that we study over the course of the semester. You may choose any case, but you must compare the two genocides using at least four criteria (for example: perpetrator propaganda, ideology, motives, methods of destruction, treatment of women, victim responses, etc.). We will discuss the second paper in more detail later.

Final Exam: 25%
Date TBD. Like the midterm, the final exam will consist of identification questions and short essays based on readings from our textbooks and lectures.

Attendance and Participation: 15%
Attendance will be taken. If you cannot attend class because of illness, religious observance, or a personal emergency, please have it documented and let me know. If you miss a class, please seek the details of the lecture that you missed from your fellow students, or see me during office hours.

Note on Participation:
Our classes will involve both lectures as well as discussions as a class and in smaller groups. You should complete the assigned readings prior to the date they are listed on the syllabus, and bring the readings to class. Please arrive on time, and silence all phones and mobile devices. All forms of social media—texting, Facebook, chatting, etc.—are strictly prohibited while in class. Failure to respect this rule will result in a reduced participation grade.

Academic Integrity:
All students are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication. For more information on what constitutes academic integrity, and actions that will be taken if those principles are violated, consult the UD Reference Guide to Academic Integrity at http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html.

Late Work Policy:
Late papers will automatically be marked down one grade step per day. Example: a paper that is submitted two days late that would have received a B+ will receive a B- instead. If you have a legitimate excuse (e.g., extreme illness), please get it documented, and make sure to let me know about your situation as early as possible, and not on the assignment due date.
Schedule of Lectures and Readings:

**Tue. Sept. 1** In-class introduction

**Thur. Sept. 3** Concepts and Legal Definitions

- Yehuda Bauer, “Is the Holocaust Unique?” in Reader, pp. 96-98.

**Tue. Sept. 8** Origins of 20th Century Genocide: 19th Century European Imperialism and Racism

- David Maybury-Lewis, “Colonial Genocide,” in Reader, pp. 82-84.

**Thur. Sept. 10** Armenian Genocide, 1915, part 1: Introduction

- Ugur Ümit Üngör, “The Armenian Genocide, 1915” (on Sakai)
- Donald Bloxham, “Cumulative Radicalization and the Armenian Genocide,” in Reader, pp. 200-203.

**Tue. Sept. 15** No class—Rosh Hashanah

**Thur. Sept. 17** Armenian Genocide, 1915, part 2: Cultural Genocide

- David Nersessian, “Cultural Genocide,” in Reader, pp. 80-82.
- Peter Balakian, “Raphael Lemkin, Cultural Destruction, and the Armenian Genocide,” focus on pp. 57-72 (on Sakai).
Tue. Sept. 22  Armenian Genocide: part 3: Raphael Lemkin and International Responses

Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Preface and Chaps. 1, 2

Thur. Sept. 24  The Jewish Holocaust, 1933-1945, part 1: Introduction

Maria van Haperen, “The Jewish Holocaust” (on Sakai).

Tue. Sept. 29  The Jewish Holocaust, part 2: Causes and Motives

Ian Kershaw, “Explaining the Holocaust,” in *Reader*, pp. 119-121.


Thur. Oct. 1  The Jewish Holocaust, part 3: Perpetrators


Tue. Oct. 6  The Jewish Holocaust, part 4: The Camp World and Modern Mass Murder

FIRST PAPER DUE


Thur. Oct. 8  The UN Genocide Convention, 1948

Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Chaps. 3, 4, 5.

Tue. Oct. 13  Communism and Mass Killing in the USSR: Was it Genocide?


Thur. Oct. 15  Midterm in class


Guest Lecture, Mark McLeod, Professor of History at the University of Delaware.

Thur. Oct. 22  The Cambodian Genocide, part 2: The International Response

Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Ch. 6.

Film in class: “The Nine Lives of Norodom Sihanouk”

Tue. Oct. 27  The Cambodian Genocide, part 3: Memories, Meaning, and Consequences

Loung Ung, *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*, pp. 56-78 (on Sakai)


Evan Gottesman, “Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge,” in *Reader*, pp. 283-86.


Maria van Haperen, “The Rwandan Genocide, 1994” (on SAKAI)


Tue. Nov. 3    The Rwandan Genocide, part 2: Perpetrators, International Responses


Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Ch. 10.

Thur. Nov. 5  The Former Yugoslavia, 1992-1995, part 1: War in Bosnia

Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Ch. 9.


Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Ch. 11.

Thur. Nov. 12  Genocide in Darfur


**Tue. Nov. 17  Prosecuting Genocide**

Samantha Power, *A ‘Problem From Hell’*, Ch. 13.

**Thur. Nov. 19  Reflections on Comparison**

SECOND, REVISED PAPER DUE

Discuss papers and reflect on comparative approaches in class.

**November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break**

**Tue. Dec. 1. The Politics of Holocaust Memory in Ukraine**


Guest lecture: Sofia Grachova, Visiting Scholar, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: Holocaust Memory in Ukraine since 1991

**Thur. Dec. 3  Atrocities in the Middle East Today: ISIS in Syria and Iraq**


**Tue. Dec. 8  Predicting and Preventing Genocide**


**Thur. Dec. 10  Predicting and Preventing Genocide**

Gregory Stanton, et. al., “Emerging Paradigms in Genocide Prevention” (on Sakai).


**FINAL EXAM DATE TBD**