

POLS 3011/3291: Comparative Study of Genocide in the 20th Century Summer 2 2010

Who today still speaks of the massacre of the Armenians? A. Hitler

One death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic. J. Stalin

This can't be possible in this day and age. This is not 1942. This is 1975.
C. Twining, U.S embassy, Thailand

We must forge an unshakable oath with all civilized people that never again will the world stand silent, never again will the world fail to act in time to prevent this terrible crime of genocide.
J.Carter

MTWR 1:15-3:15 Brewster C-101
Office hours: MTWR 11:15-12, 3:30-4:30,
and by appointment

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There have been many atrocities throughout human history, and they are likely to continue. This is not a flaw of primitives; the 20th century spawned some of history's worst atrocities, and highest body counts. The word Genocide was coined reflecting this reality, and the practice has been a particular blot on its history. We will study the nature, scope and definitions of genocide, differentiating it from other forms of atrocities, exploring arguments concerning the various types of genocide, e.g., the classic case (racial, national, religious or ethnic genocide), as opposed to mass murder based on ideology, especially communist programs. We will explore the domestic political practices and social conditions which support, and the international factors which allow for (or fail to prevent) genocide.

Our primary cases will be Cambodia (1975-1979) and Rwanda (1994). We will also reference other episodes, such as Armenia, the Holocaust, the Ukraine terror famine, Japan in China, Bangladesh, al Anfal in Iraq, Bosnia, and Sudan. We will study the Genocide Convention; we will watch several movies, both theatrical movies and documentaries.

Read prior to class, and come prepared to participate.

Learning Objectives:

- identify various episodes of genocide and genocidal atrocities, and their common or unique qualities; identify the varieties of genocidal episode, and their motivations;
- define genocide; identify Raphael Lemkin, and his historical role in the definition and outlawing of genocide;
- explain what kind of regimes commit genocidal atrocities, and why;
- explain why people (individuals) participate in genocidal atrocities; the circumstances under which societies are caught up in genocidal frenzies;
- explain the international circumstances, or domestic politics of outside regimes, which create obstacles to interference with genocidal atrocities.
- list and discuss the potential policies which might prevent or remedy genocidal atrocities (pros/cons?).
- summarize and describe the two primary cases; compare them with other episodes.

Grading: (10 point scale)

20% midterm exam

15% paper #1

15% Participation

15% paper #2

20% final exam

15% paper #3

Readings: (available in Student Store & UBE)

Samantha Power, "A Problem from Hell" America in the Age of Genocide. NY: Harper 2002. (hereafter

Power)

S. Totten, W.S. Parsons, I.W. Charney, eds., Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views. 2nd ed. New York: Garland. (hereafter **Century**)

Introduction

June 25

Why study Genocide?

Structure of the course, assignments; Definition of Genocide?

Power preface; Century, foreword

June 28

Time Line of International Context in the Twentieth Century

Imperialism and its Collapse; War, Communist Expansion, Nation-building, Cold War, Decolonization, New World dis-Order

June 29

Before the Holocaust

Herero (1905), Armenians (1915), Ukraine (1932), Nanking (1937)

Power ch.1; Century ch.1-3

June 30

The Holocaust (1933-1945); Raphael Lemkin and the Genocide Convention

Power ch. 2-5; Century ch.4-6

July 1

What is Genocide? Discussion of debated cases

Paper #1 DUE

Cambodia

Power ch.6; Century ch.11

July 6

movie: The Killing Fields

July 7-8

Case Background: International context, inc. colonialism, Vietnam, and the Cold War; Domestic context, inc. civil war & fatigue; Ideology, inc. Maoist ideology, Pol Pot & the Khmer Rouge, Communist ideologies of Collectivization, utopian social engineering

July 12

movie: S21: the Killing Machine of the Khmer Rouge

Paper #2 Due

July 13

Conclusions on Cold War politics, Collectivization as Genocide; aftermath?

July 14

foreign policy; domestic politics of national interest and non-intervention

July 15

Exam

Rwanda

Power ch.10; Century ch.10,13

July 19 **movie: Hotel Rwanda**

July 20-21 Case Background: International context (Somalia), regional context (Rwanda-Burundi, Uganda); Domestic (Hutu-Tutsi, Hutu Power regime); Genocide; preparation, coverage, aftermath (including reprisals, Zaire, regional conflict); International responses

July 22 Conclusions on Rwanda, race murder, obedience, the ideology of scapegoats; aftermath?

July 26 **movie: Ghosts of Rwanda**
Paper #3/Policy Brief Due

Common threads? Unique Qualities? Lessons?

Power ch.13,14; Century 16,17

July 27-29 Qualities of Genocidal regimes; what regimes are more likely to commit mass murder of civilians? How to get people to participate? Moral choices: Resistance & Complicity? Heroes & resisters, and their consequences; Aftermath? Observers; Lessons from each case? Enforcement & the International Community; Conclusions?

July 31 **final exam**
Friday

May 27, 2010 draft