The Specter of Genocide

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Course Description:

Genocide scholars often refer to the 20th century as “the century of genocide.” It is estimated that more than 150 million people were murdered by governments in the 20th century, 20-40 million of them in events that meet the legal definition of genocide in international law. In this course, we explore what a classic collection of essays has called “the specter of genocide.” We begin by discussing the history of the term, its ambiguities, its legal definition and the many controversies surrounding it. We then turn to discuss several case studies that will help us explore some key themes in genocide studies: Rwanda, Cambodia, Indonesia, East Timor, the Armenian genocide and the extermination of the Roma and Sinti by the Nazis.

Course Requirements:

Full attendance.

Weekly reading assignments: Students are required to read the assigned items for every week.

Response papers: Students are required to submit two response papers, each 2-3 pages. Each paper should address one of the main themes discussed in class (perpetrators’ motivations; the politics of genocide; genocidal sexual assaults; relations between genocide and war, etc.), by analyzing the arguments of one or two sources from the syllabus and discuss them in light of the discussions in class.
The final grade is determined by attendance, participation in class that reflects engagement with the reading materials, and the response papers.

**Final paper:** Students may submit a final paper: a short, referat paper or a seminar paper. Short papers are to be submitted by the end of February 2020. Seminar papers are to be submitted by the end of June 2020.

**Reading List:**

1. **What is Genocide?**


http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx


Documentary: *Watchers of the Sky*

Additional reading:


2. **Genocide in Rwanda**

2.1 Historical background
Alison Des Forges, 'Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda' (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), pp. 1-30; 31-64


Documentary: Scream Bloody Murder.

2.2 Ordinary killers


Documentary: Ghosts of Rwanda

2.3 Peace and reconciliation?


2.4 Epilogue: The forgotten genocide in Congo

2. Auto-genocide in Cambodia?


Additional reading:


Documentary: Cambodia Year Zero

3. East Timor: A Forgotten Genocide


Documentaries: *The Act of Killing*

*Death of a Nation*

4. **The Armenian Genocide**


Additional reading:


Richard G. Hovannisian, "Denial of the Armenian Genocide in Comparison with Holocaust Denial," in *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian*


5. The Extermination of the Roma and Sinti (Gypsies)


Additional reading:


6. New Directions in Genocide Research