SEMMER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Fall 2014
Discipline: Comparative Politics
PLCP 3000: Political Tyranny, Violence and Genocide
Division: Upper
Faculty Name: Jack Bielasiak

Pre-requisites: None.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Time and time again, history has witnessed the rise of political leaders who turned against other racial, ethnic, or political groups and committed mass murder in the name of a better tomorrow. Hitler and Stalin, by their ideas and actions, defined much of the past century. Less renowned leaders, in all corners of the world, preached hate towards other people, and defined politics as the struggle between good and evil. What enabled these leaders to mobilize entire communities, even nations, to perpetrate mass destruction?

To answer the question, the course examines major instances of political tyranny and mass murder in the past century. We consider Stalin and the Soviet Terror, Hitler and the Holocaust, and their more recent imitators, the “little Hitlers” and “little Stalins.” We study collective violence in countries along our voyage, under the fascist regimes in Spain and Portugal, during apartheid in South Africa, and under the dictators in Argentina and Brazil, as well as the most extreme form of violence, the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

For each case, we look at political leaders and conditions to understand the rise of tyranny, and examine political developments and ideological arguments leading to violence and genocide. We also address the question of responsibility through the eyes of perpetrators, victims and bystanders, and pay special attention to the responses of the international community to mass murder.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will become knowledgeable about how violence emerges and is used as a political tool to advance diverse ideological and national projects. They will gain insights how perpetrators mobilize to inflict harm on others, how victims cope with assaults, and how bystanders respond to extreme forms of violence. In particular, the aim is to understand how the international community responds to acts of violence and genocide, and assess the options of humanitarian aid, intervention, and judicial punishment.

Another major objective is to learn about the international moral and legal norms for the prevention of mass murder, and to appreciate how the world – and we – can become more than bystanders. Students also will learn about different forms of violence in the major cases of political violence in the past century, as well as in the countries and regions visited during the voyage.
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Eric D. Weitz
TITLE: A Century of Genocide
PUBLISHER: Princeton UP
ISBN #: 0-691-00913-9 paperback 
DATE/EDITION: 2003

AUTHOR: Linda Melvern
TITLE: Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide
PUBLISHER: Verso
ISBN #: 1 85984 588 6 paperback 
DATE/EDITION: 2004

AUTHOR: Gerard Prunier
TITLE: Darfur: A 21st Century Genocide
PUBLISHER: Cornell UP
ISBN #: 978 0 8014 7503 0 paperback 

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Southampton- August 23:

Weitz, pp. 1-15

A2-August 27: Soviet Terror: Perpetrators
Weitz, pp. 16-32, 53-64

St. Petersburg: August 28- 31

A3- September 2: Holocaust: Perpetrators
Weitz, pp. 32-52, 102-119

Hamburg: September 4-7

A4- September 8: Holocaust: Victims
Weitz, pp. 119-143

A5-September 15: Holocaust: Bystanders

Antwerp: September 11
Le Havre: September - 15

A6- September 17: Soviet Terror Victimization
Weitz, 74-101

Dublin: September 19 -22

A7-September 23: Forms of Violence
TBA

A8- September 25: Fascism and Violence

Lisbon: September 26
Casablanca: October 2-5

A9- October 7: Cambodia: Purification
   Weitz, pp. 144-164

Study Day: October 9

A10- October 10: Cambodia: Legacies
   Weitz, pp. 164-189

A11- October 12: Rwanda Genocide
   Melvern, Conspiracy to Murder, chaps. 1-6

Study Day: October 18

A12- October 19: Rwanda: Responses
   Melvern, Conspiracy to Murder, chaps. 7-11

A13- October 21: Midterm

Study Day: October 22
A14- October 24: Apartheid and Violence
Cape Town: October 25 - 29

Study Day: October 30

**A15- November 1: Bosnia: National Communism**
Weitz, pp. 190-209

Study Day: November 3

**A16- November 4: Bosnia: Ethnic Cleansing**
Weitz, pp. 209-235

**A17- November 6: Genocide: Definitions and Conventions**

Study Day: November 7

**A18- November 9: Authoritarianism**

Buenos Aires: November 11-15

**A19- November 16: Humanitarian Intervention**
Gareth Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Brookings, 2008), chap. 2

**A20: November 18: Violence in Authoritarian States**
TBA

Rio de Janeiro: November 19-21

Study Day: November 22

**A21- November 24: Darfur Genocide**
Prunier, *Darfur*, chaps. 1-3

Study Day: November 26

**A22- November 27: Darfur and International Responses**
Prunier, *Darfur*, chaps 4-6

**A23- November 29: Responsibility and Justice**
FIELD WORK
Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Please do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of our field lab.

Proposal #1
Holocaust Memorials in Hamburg

The field lab is divided into two main components. The first is a visit to the Neuengamme concentration camp (located in the outskirts of Hamburg) and its memorial sites, dedicated to several different categories of victims. The second part consists of visits to of the several Holocaust memorials in the city, for example the Black Form, Square of the Deported Jews, or the Anti-Fascist memorial.

A central aim of the visits is for students to reflect on the nature of the commemoration, and learn about the different victims of Nazism. The second is to think about what the memorials tell us about the perpetrators and the legacies of Nazi rule and the Holocaust.

Prior to the filed lab, students will read excerpts from Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men and Daniel Goldhagen, Willing Executioners, and engage the debate about responsibility for the killings of Jews and other victims of the Nazi state.

Field Lab Paper: A short paper (ca. 6-8 pp) linking the memorials in the camp and in the city to the issue of responsibility for the Nazi terror and the Holocaust. First, this requires reflection on the visual message of the memorials, their underlying symbolism, and current status in Germany’s historical legacy. Second, the task is to connect these observations to the excerpts from Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men and Daniel Goldhagen, Willing Executioners, and engage the debate about responsibility for the killings of Jews and other victims of the Nazi state.

Field Assignments: Student Journal describing political memorials in other port cities, to reflect on how different countries represent and observe key political events and especially how these countries cope with the legacies of violence. This may involve reflections on the Memorials of Political Repression in St. Petersburg, the District Six Museum in Cape Town, and similar memorials in other port cities. The aim of the journal is for students to engage in cross-national comparison of the politics of memory, the depiction of victims and the perpetrators of violence.
Proposal # 2  
South Africa: Violence from Slavery to Apartheid

A tour and discussion of key sites associated with the violent political history of the country, as a means to understand the evolution of violence as a control and resistance site. The filed lab will include visits to sites of the colonial empire such as the Rhodes memorial and Dutch East Indian Co. gardens, The Slave memorial and Old Slave market; and examination of artifacts and information on apartheid in the District Six museum. Students will be asked to examine the role violence has played in different phases of political development in South Africa, and compare the different mechanisms of control and coercion associated with each period. They will also be asked to link the past history of violence to the current expression of violent behavior in the political life of South Africa.

Field Lab Paper: A short paper (ca. 6-8 pp) contrasting three memorials and sites from different periods of South Africa’s history, in terms of their visual message, their underlying political symbolism, and current relevancy to politics. Second, to connect these observations to the functioning of the political regimes in existence at the time of the events portrayed by the memorials. A third task is to evaluate the legacy of violence for contemporary politics in the country.

Field Assignments: Student Journal describing political memorials in other port cities, to reflect on how different countries represent and observe key political events. The aim of the journal is for students to engage in cross-national comparison of the role violence plays in different political settings and circumstances.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

Midterm Exam: (multiple choice and essay question) 25%
Final Exam (comprehensive, multiple choice and essay question) 25%
Field Lab Paper and journal entries 25%
Participation (attendance, in-class assignments, active discussion) 25%

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Samuel Totten, Willam S. Parsons, and Israel W. Charny, eds.
TITLE: Century of Genocide
PUBLISHER: Routledge
ISBN #: 0-415-94430-9

AUTHOR: Daniel Chirot
TITLE: Modern Tyrants
PUBLISHER: Princeton UP
ISBN #: 0-691-02777-3
DATE/EDITION: 1994

AUTHOR: Adam Jones
TITLE: Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction
PUBLISHER: Routledge
ISBN #: 978-0-415-48619
DATE/EDITION: 2011, 2nd ed.

AUTHOR: Raul Hilberg,
TITLE: Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders
PUBLISHER: HarperCollins
ISBN #: 0-06-019035-3
DATE/EDITION: 1992

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
Students will read brief excerpts from original documents associated with the different instances of violence and genocide. These include eyewitness accounts, ideological justifications, international treaties, a court indictments and judicial proceedings. The documents will be made available in electronic form on the course server.

HONOR CODE
Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of
what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].”