

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

Voyage: Fall 2014

Discipline: Comparative Politics

PLCP 3500: Political Tyranny, Violence and Genocide

Division: Upper

Faculty Name: Jack Bielasiak

Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38

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, under the dictators in Latin America, as well as the most extreme form of violence, the genocides in Rwanda 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 mass atrocities and genocide, and assess the options for 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 #: 9 781844 675425 paperback
DATE/EDITION: rev. ed. 2006

AUTHOR: Gerard Prunier
TITLE: Darfur: A 21st Century Genocide
PUBLISHER: Cornell UP
ISBN #: 978 0 8014 7503 0 paperback
DATE/EDITION: 2008, 3rd ed.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Southampton- August 23
Orientation- August 24

B1- August 26: Introduction
Weitz, pp. 1-15

B2-August 28: Soviet Terror
Weitz, pp. 53-101

St. Petersburg: August 30- September 1

B3- September 2: Holocaust: Perpetrators
Weitz, pp. 16-52, 102-119

B4- September 4: Holocaust: Victims
Weitz, pp. 119-143

Gdansk: September 5-7
Rostock: September 8-9

B5- September 11: Holocaust: Bystanders
Raul Hilberg, Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders (HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 195-268

B6- September 13: Genocide: Prevention and Punishment

Scott Straus, "Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide," Journal of Genocide Research, 3:3, Nov. 2001, 349-375.

Paul Boghossian, "The Concept of Genocide" Journal of Genocide Research 12:1-2, 69-80.

Antwerp: September 14-16

Le Havre: September 17 - 19

B7- September 21: Violence and Responsibility

Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland (HarperPerennial, 1993) chap. 18

Daniel Goldhagen, Lecture Presentation of Hitler's Willing Executioners

B8- September 23: Political Terror

Weitz, chap. 4

Dublin: September 24-27

B9- September 29: Fascism and Violence

Javier Rodrigo, "Fascism and Violence in Spain: A Comparative Update" International Journal of Iberian Studies 25:3, 2012, 183-199

Javier Rodrigo, "Exploitation, Fascist Violence and Social Cleansing: A Study of Franco's Concentration Camps," European Review of History 19:4, August 2012, 553-573.

Lisbon: Oct 1-3

Cadiz: October 4-5

B10- October 6: Causes and Types of Violence

Charles Tilly, Politics of Collective Violence (Cambridge UP, 2003), chap. 1

Casablanca: October 8-11

B11- October 12: Rwanda Genocide

Melvern, Conspiracy to Murder, chaps. 1-6

B12- October 14: Rwanda: Responses

Melvern, Conspiracy to Murder, chaps. 7-12

Dakar: October 16-19

B13- October 20: Review

B14- October 22: Midterm

B15- October 24: Mass Violence in Darfur

Prunier, Darfur, chaps. 1-3

Takoradi/Tema: October 25-28

B16- October 30: Darfur and International Responses

Prunier, Darfur, chaps 4-6

B17- November 1: Prevention Principles

Gareth Evans, The Responsibility to Protect (Brookings, 2008), chap. 2

Study Day November 2

B18- November 4: Intervention and Peacekeeping

Dieter Janssen, "Humanitarian Intervention and the Prevention of Genocide" Journal of Genocide Research 10:2, June 2008, 289-306.

B19: November 6: Authoritarianism and Violence

Greg Grandin and Gilbert Joseph, eds. A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America's Long Cold War (Duke UP, 2010), Introduction (pp. 1- 42)

T. David Mason, "The Political Economy of Death Squads" International Studies Quarterly, 33, 1989, 175-198.

Rio de Janeiro: November 7-9

Salvador: November 12-14

B20- November 16: Ethnic Conflicts

Stefan Wolff, Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective (Oxford UP, 2006) chap. 3
Weitz, chap. 5

B21- November 18: Justice after Mass Killings

Adam Jones, Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction (Routledge, 2001, 2nd ed.) chap. 15.

Catherine Gegout, "The ICC: Limits, Potential and Conditions for the Promotion of Justice and Peace," Third World Quarterly 34:5, December 2013, 800-818.

Study Day - November 19

B22- November 21: Legacies and Remembrance

Weitz, pp. 236-254

Paul Miller, "Contested Memories: The Bosnian Genocide in Serb and Muslim Minds," Journal of Genocide Research 8:3, 2006, 311-324.

Bridgetown, November 22-24

B23- November 26: The Cuban Revolution

James DeFronzo, Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, 4th ed. (Westview Press, 2011), chap. 5.

B24- November 28: Review Session

Havana November 29-December 2

Study Day: December 3

B25 FINAL: December 5

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.

Field Lab: Memorializing Victims of Political Violence

Gdansk, September 5

The field lab is divided into two components. The first is a visit to the Stuthoff concentration camp (located in the outskirts of Gdansk), dedicated as a memorial to Holocaust victims. The site includes exhibits about the operation of the camp and different methods of mass destruction (including a documentary film). A central aim of the visit is to learn about different victims of Nazism, and to reflect on the nature of victim commemoration. It is also an opportunity to think about what the exhibits tell us about the perpetrators and the legacies of Nazi rule and destruction. The second part consists of visits to memorials in Gdansk that commemorate victims of violence, notably the Solidarity Monument to the Fallen Shipyard Workers and the Westerplatte WWII memorial. The purpose of the visits is to examine and consider different forms of political violence and their victims.

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 exhibits, their underlying symbolism, and 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, which we will read prior to the field trip. The aim of the paper is to engage the debate about responsibility for the killings of Jews and other victims of the Nazi state.

Field Assignments: Student Journal describing memorials of political violence in three 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 Political Prisoner in Antwerp, Monument to Soldiers of Overseas War in Lisbon, African Renaissance Monument in Dakar, Revolution Square: José Martí Monument in Havana, 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, and the commemoration of political events associated with violence.

FILMS about Violence and Genocide

The following movies will be available for viewing on the ship's CCTV. While the films deal with a variety of themes, they all portray instances of political violence, ethnic conflict or genocide. You should view the films for class discussion. Select three movies and write a one-page commentary that identifies and explains the nature of the conflict depicted in the film that culminates in violence.

Triumph of the Will (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935)
Schindler's List (Steven Spielberg, 1993)
The Lodz Ghetto (Alan Adelson, Kate Taverna, 1988)
Sarah's Key (Giles Paquet-Brenner, 2010)
Z (Costa-Gravas, 1969)
Battle of Algiers (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966)
Hotel Rwanda (Terry George, 2004)
Sometimes in April (Raoul Peck, 2005)
Sand and Sorrow (Paul Freedman, 2007)
State of Siege (Costa-Gravas, 1972)
Missing (Costa-Gravas, 1982)
Che, part 2 (Steven Soderbergh, 2009)

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

Midterm Exam: (multiple choice and essay question)	30%
Final Exam (comprehensive, multiple choice and essay question)	30%
Field Lab Paper and journal entries	20%
Participation (attendance, in-class assignments, active discussion)	20%

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
DATE/EDITION: 2004, 2nd ed.

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

Charles Tilly, Politics of Collective Violence (Cambridge UP, 2003), chap. 1

Raul Hilberg, Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders (HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 195-268

Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland (HarperPerennial, 1993)

Daniel Goldhagen, Lecture Presentation of Hitler's Willing Executioners

Javier Rodrigo, "Fascism and Violence in Spain: A Comparative Update" International Journal of Iberian Studies 25:3, 2012, 183-199

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Gareth Evans, The Responsibility to Protect (Brookings, 2008), chap. 2

Dieter Janssen, "Humanitarian Intervention and the Prevention of Genocide" Journal of Genocide Research 10:2, June 2008, 289-306.

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Paul Miller, "Contested Memories: The Bosnian Genocide in Serb and Muslim Minds,"
Journal of Genocide Research 8:3, Sept. 2006, 311-324.

James DeFronzo, Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, 4th ed. (Westview Press,
2011), chap. 5.

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.

For each written assignment for this course, the student must pledge 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]."