Overview:

The question of how to remember past atrocities and genocides has become a crucial one during our time - not only because the Human Rights regime has produced new standards of moral claims, but more importantly, because such recognition has clear economic, political and societal implications. The main goal of this class is to discuss multiple relationships between the Holocaust remembrance and memorialization of other genocides and to further explore the side effects of such intertwining. The aim is to familiarize students with the main concepts of memory politics in post-conflict and post-genocide environments, with the role the Human Rights regime plays in those settings, the types of commemorative practices various mnemonic groups produce, the trade-offs and dilemmas they face and the ways Holocaust memory is being brought to the fore as a platform for articulating national interests. The course is designed to address and analyze themes of memory and denial; mechanisms of justice and redress, including the role international laws on genocide play in claiming particular rights and benefits.

Based on examples mainly from the former Yugoslav states and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but not restricted to them, this course will examine many of the key questions that frame the debate on memory politics in post-conflict societies. What is meant by “collective memory” and how does such remembrance figure in constructing identities in the present? How and why do sites of collective memory (historic places, textbooks, museums, commemorations) acquire emotional and political importance? What moral choices are involved in representing past events as “genocides” as opposed to “ethnic cleansings” or “mass-murders”? In what particular post-conflict settings is the Holocaust remembrance activated and why? Is the Holocaust a single universally shared memory or the template through which other genocides and historical traumas are perceived, presented or shuttered? Does the Holocaust really have the capacity to serve as a universal memory and to replace other traumatic memories around the globe or does it merely enable a language for their articulation and thus create a wider context that provides a reframing of the past?

A variety of case studies and different theoretical approaches will be used to examine memory as an active, value-laden process of symbolic and real recognition in which multiple stories about the past contend for acknowledgment, moral judgment, and
emotional impact. The course will combine reading materials, documentary movies and discussions and is designed to direct students to choose and frame their research papers on their own, allowing them to pursue projects that extend their own interests and foster dialogue about contemporary issues of memory and memorialization and the impact the Holocaust has on memorialization of other genocides.

Course requirements:

- Obligatory attendance
- Keeping up with weekly reading assignments
- Active participation in all classes.
- Short in-class presentation (20%). Each week different student/s will present a brief abstract of one of the articles given for that week. It is anticipated to present a brief abstract twice during the semester. The presentation should take about 10 minutes and will be used to provoke a debate in the classroom on the topic in question.
- One-on-one meetings during the course to determine and contextualize future research papers.
- Submission of a research paper (80%). Students will conduct a small scale ethnographic research and write an essay (10-15 pages) on one aspect of issues related to Holocaust memory in other genocide discourses in any national setting. Detailed instructions will be provided in class.

Learning objectives:

- To introduce the class to selected theoretical and methodological approaches of memory studies in relation to post-conflict/post-genocide societies, and to address challenges, dilemmas and obstacles in claiming a “genocide”.
- To provide students with the different theoretical approaches of Holocaust memory and to discuss, through a variety of case studies, both commonalities and differences in the way different strategies of Holocaust remembrance are employed, embraced, instrumentalized, appropriated or denied by different segments in post-conflict societies.

Course plan

Week 1: Framing genocides in post-conflict societies

Required Reading:

- Recommended:
Available at:
http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/AxisRule1944-1.htm


**Week 2 and 3: Human Rights, genocides and memory politics**

Movie screening:
- “Watchers of the Sky”, documentary, 120 min

Required Reading:
- Recommended:

**Week 4: Remembering atrocities**

Required Reading:
- Recommended:

**Week 5: Between genocide memorialization and genocide denial: The case of Srebrenica**

**Movie screening:**

• “A cry from the grave” documentary, 105 min.

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended:**

• Pollack E Craig (2010) “Intentions of burial: mourning, politics, and memorials following the massacre at Srebrenica.” Death Studies. 27(2) 125-142.


**Week 6: Srebrenica: A war over genocide**

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended:**


Week 7: Negotiating Truth in Israel and Palestine

Required Reading:


Recommended:


Week 8: Nakba vs. Holocaust

Required Reading:


http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2015.1042396


Recommended:


Week 9: Nakba – a genocide?

Required Reading:

• “Full text of Mahmoud Abbas’s speech to the UN” (2014) http://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-abbas-speech-to-un/

Recommended:

Week 10: Between the unique and universal: the Holocaust as a moral measurement

Required Reading:

Recommended:

Week 11: The Holocaust as a multidirectional memory

Required Reading:

Recommended:

Week 12: Holocaust as a screen-memory

Required Reading:


Recommended


Week 13: Remembering by resolution

Required Reading:


Recommended:


Week 14: Alternative frames of memory: the Far East

Required Reading:

• Kidron Carol (2009) "Toward an Ethnography of Silence: The Lived Presence of the Past among Holocaust Trauma Descendants in Israel.” Current Anthropology 50:1, 5-27.

Recommended: