The Specter of Genocide

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Course Description:

The 20th century has been dubbed 'The Century of Genocide' by genocide scholars. It is estimated that 260 (!) million people were murdered by governments in the 20th century, 40-80 million of them in events that meet the legal definition of genocide in international law. The course will examine the specter of genocide. We will familiarize ourselves with the history of the term, its ambiguities, its legal definition and the many controversies over what genocide actually means. We will examine particular case studies – From the 1915 Armenian genocide, through the genocide of the Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) in WWII, the Cambodian 'auto-genocide' and the Indonesian occupation of East-Timor in the 1970s, to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Through these case studies, we will discuss the (sometimes) genocidal legacies of European colonialism, modern racism, extreme nationalism, ideological revolutions and the power of the modern state.

Course Requirements:

Full attendance.

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

Essay papers: Students are required to submit three essay papers, each two pages long. Each paper should address one reading item, analyzing its main argument and presenting an opinion (for instance, is it convincing; could there be another
explanation for the events/phenomena discussed; is it consistent with what you know of other genocides or cases of mass murder; does it neglect some important historical/political/moral issues, etc., according to the context).

The final grade is determined by attendance, participation in discussions during class and the essay papers.

**Final paper:** Students may submit a final research paper: either an exercise (a short, ten page long paper) or a seminar paper. Exercises must be submitted by September 30, 2016. Seminar papers must be submitted by the end of January 2017.

**Reading List:**

1. **What is Genocide?**


   [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx)

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


3. The Armenian Genocide


4. **Auto-genocide in Cambodia**


5. **Indonesian Occupation of East Timor**


6. **The Murder of the Roma (Gypsies)**


### 7. Genocide: Past, Present, Future


