

REL5195.01 (& 4190.01)
Religion and Genocide
Prof. Twiss
Summer 2011, Session A
Wednesdays, 2-4:45 p.m.
Dodd Hall 207

Exploration of the ways in which religious ideology, rhetoric, and institutions may contribute to or otherwise support genocidal activity, as well as inquiry into distinctive religious responses to the aftermath of genocide, regarding, for example, interpretation, accountability, reconciliation, and prevention. Particular attention to the interdisciplinary study of the Holocaust, Bosnia, and Rwanda, as well as their comparison. Requirements: at least two seminar presentations, in student teams, and critical engagement throughout the course (50%); and a final research term paper (50%).

Syllabus of Readings (*=textbook order)

Introduction

May 11: "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" (adopted 1948; in force, 1951), available at many websites; Berel Lang, "The Evil in Genocide," in John K. Roth (ed.), *Genocide and Human Rights: A Philosophical Guide* (Palgrave, 2005), ch. 1 (essay to be distributed or posted).

Holocaust

May 18: Richard L. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz: History, Theology, and Contemporary Judaism*, 2nd Edition (Johns Hopkins, 1992)*, chs. 1-6 (history & interpretation of the Holocaust).

May 25: Essays by R. Ericksen (Kittel & Protestant theologians), S. Heschel (the Aryan Jesus), B. Griech-Poelle (Bishop von Galen), and D. Bergen (German military chaplains), in Omar Bartov and Phyllis Mack (eds.), *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Berghahn, 2001)*, chs. 2-5.

Bosnia

June 1: Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (California 1998)*, entire.

Rwanda

June 8: Timothy Longman, *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda* (Cambridge 2011)*, chs. 1-6 (national churches).

June 15: Longman, chs. 7-concl. (local churches); essay by C. de Lespinay (churches & genocide in East Africa) in Bartov & Mack, ch. 7.

Comparison

June 22: Jacques Semelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide* (Columbia, 2007)*, chs. I-II (imaginary constructs, social destructiveness, and sacrificial violence); Thomas Simon, "Genocide, Evil, and Injustice: Competing Hells," in Roth, ch. 6 (to be distributed or posted).

June 29: Semelin, chs. III-IV (war, media, and dynamics of mass murder).

July 6: Semelin, chs. V-concl. (impunity, politics, and the rhetoric of "never again").

Responses

July 13: Rubenstein, chs. 7-10 (the Holocaust and Jewish theology); essays by J. Geddes (religious rhetoric), Arne Gron (limits of ethics), and P. Dews (philosophical responses) in Thomas Brudholm and Thomas Cushman (eds.), *The Religious in Responses to Mass Atrocity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2009)*, chs. 1-3.

July 20: Essays by A. Duff (punishment of perpetrators), N. Biggar (forgiveness & just war), and T. Brudholm (forgiveness) in Brudholm & Cushman, chs. 4-6.

July 27: Essays by J. Torpey (coming to terms with the past), D. Philpott (transitional justice), T. Cushman (discourse of apology), and B. Turner (cosmopolitanism and exclusion) in Brudholm & Cushman, chs. 7-10.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes. Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official university activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Honor Policy: The FSU Academic Honor Policy outlines the university's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up their pledge to "be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University" (FSU Academic Policy found at <http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>). The policy of the Department of Religion is that all violations of the FSU honor code, even first offenses, will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment and will be reported to the Office of the Dean of the Faculties. Additional sanctions may be imposed by FSU as part of the procedure for resolving academic honor allegations.

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Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and subject to change with advance notice.