

The Holocaust & Genocide: Religion and Conflict, Peace, & Aftermaths

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The School for Conflict Analysis & Resolution

George Mason University
CONF 499:001 (Undergraduate, Upper Division Directed Study)
CONF 695:004 (PhD & MS Registration)

Location & Time:

Arlington Campus
Founders Hall Room 470
Thursdays, 1:30–4:15 pm

Contact & Office Hours:

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Hours: Thus. 12:30, before class

Course Background

In the 19th and 20th centuries, hundreds of millions of people around the world were forcibly removed from their homelands, or massacred, on the basis of their group identity. Oftentimes, those who committed this violence did so to destroy the group, as a group. Over 200 million people died because of genocidal, colonial violence in the Americas alone. Often, genocidal violence in colonial and imperial encounters occurred along the lines of race—a socially constructed, pseudo-scientific concept. By the turn of the century, genocidal violence was occurring along the lines of religious belonging and national identity. Nationality was frequently defined by ethnicity, race, language, culture, and sometimes gender—but it was also frequently defined as religion, as well. This process was evident when the Nazi party defined Jews as a biological race and a nation, and sought to destroy the Jews as a group.

For members of almost every religious community in the world, the Holocaust has sparked movements to seek deeper interfaith relationships. For many Jews, the Holocaust presents a challenge to the covenant between the Jewish people and God. For many Christians, the Holocaust raises questions of why Christians did not resist Nazism more strongly, how Christianity contributed to anti-Judaism, why many Christian organizations supported the rise of National Socialism in Germany, and what Christianity should teach about other faiths after the Holocaust. For many Muslims, the Holocaust raises questions about the general nature of anti-Semitism and anti-Islamic sentiments, and the controversies surrounding the relationship between the Holocaust and the foundation of the state of Israel. This semester, we will look specifically at the intersection of Religion and the Holocaust, with an eye towards understanding the larger relationship between religion and genocide—before, during, and after mass violence.

The course will raise several questions:

- What can the Holocaust teach us about the role of religion in conflict—before, during, and after mass violence?
- Is religion just another socially constructed “thing” that shapes conflicts like any other social institution or social identity? Or, is there something specific about religion in conflict?
- How can we apply knowledge from the field of Conflict Analyses and Resolution to better understand the Holocaust specifically, and genocide more broadly?

Course Overview & Description

To begin answering these questions, this course presents a unique opportunity to George Mason University students to use the resources, archives, and collections of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as primary course materials. This opportunity is made possible by the generosity of the USHMM's Program on Ethics, Religion and the Holocaust, and the librarians and research staff of the Museum, who are volunteering their time to assist our inquiry into this field this semester.

The focus for this semester will be on the *role of religious actors and institutions before, during, and after the Holocaust*. We will employ a Conflict Analysis and Resolution lens to study the changing dynamics of Jewish-Christian relations in Europe, and Jewish-Muslim relations in North Africa and the Middle East, before, during, and after the Holocaust (we will also discuss the limitations of CAR lenses to studying genocide). The course will contain a comparative element, where we apply what we have learned about religion and the Holocaust to other cases of genocide. This will allow us to consider larger questions about religion in motivating or preventing genocide, or in shaping memory, justice, reconciliation, and peace processes in post-genocidal contexts.

During the first week of class, students will be introduced to the USHMM's resources in these areas, including primary source materials that have been under-utilized in scholarship as well as the online resources of the USHMM. PhD students will be using the archives at the Museum over the course of the semester. They will be required to write an original research essay on primary source materials, and to submit that article to a peer-reviewed journal. MS students and BS/BA students will use USHMM online resources for their final papers, unless they wish to engage in the primary research/journal article assignment.

Students will be encouraged to conduct research for their paper on any aspect of religion and the Holocaust. However students are not limited to writing their final papers on religion, and can use any resources that the USHMM offers for their final papers.

Course Requirements, PhD

The course will culminate in 1) a final paper based on original primary source research, submitted to an academic journal for publication; and 2) a student-run conference hosted by S-CAR the following semester. Students and the professor will meet weekly to discuss the research and build a bibliography of secondary sources.

Course Requirements, MS and BA/BS upper division guided research

The course will culminate in 1) an 8-page final paper synthesizing course readings and research using USHMM online resources to answer a concise research; and 2) a tiered writing assignment that applies course knowledge and uses the USHMM's genocide prevention and genocide education resources to critically analyze on-going genocides in the world. These include:

- a. 300-word "what would you do?" reflective free-write essay
- b. 300-word Genocide Alert (for Genocide Watch) (audience: policy makers)
- c. 500-700 word op-ed (for Genocide Watch) (audience: civil-society)

- d. 500-word Country/Case Analysis (for Genocide Watch) (audience: activists, aid workers, the staff members working for policy makers, highly interested policy makers)
- e. 500-word Action Memo, applying creative solutions to a rigorous, empirically-based conflict analysis (audience: US Atrocity Prevention Board & UN Special Advisor's Office for Genocide Prevention)

Cross-cutting Themes in the Course

The Holocaust is challenging to think about from a conflict analysis lens, or even a reconciliation lens, because there was no conflict *per se* between Nazi German perpetrators and Holocaust victims, including Jews, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, gays, the disabled, and many others. How do we think about identity-based violence and conflict when the traditional frameworks used for conflict analysis fail to explain what happened? In this context, can the peace studies lens help us think about ethnic and religious difference and violence?

The course will offer students an opportunity to engage the subject matter through their own interests in some of the following fields, such as:

Interfaith Dialogue & Peace Education

Interfaith dialogue efforts around the legacy of the Holocaust inspired a long inquiry over the question of how people learn to understand and respect other traditions, and how to promote interfaith understanding within communities. It was this line of inquiry, in turn, that introduced the teaching of the Holocaust and genocide into secular curricula and peace education.

Narrative Studies & Memory Studies

Why do people, at the social level and as individuals, remember the Holocaust in certain ways and not others, empathizing certain things and diminishing others? What is at stake in these frames of memory? If they wish, students will have the opportunity to write papers from the framework of narrative studies or memory studies, using the USHMM's extensive collection of the USC Shoah Foundation's Oral History Collection; Photo Archives; Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archives; or Ephemeral Film collection. Students can also use the USHMM's resources on memorials and memorialisation.

International Relations, International Law, and Humanitarianism

Students may also be interested using the USHMM's American Friends Service Committee archives to study the Quaker response to the Holocaust and efforts to rescue the Jews; the USHMM's archives on foreign policy and diplomatic responses to the Holocaust, and international law; or any of the following:

- Prewar communal life of victim groups in affected areas of Europe and North Africa
- Nazi rise to power
- Nazi racial "science" and the propaganda campaign against Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and other targeted groups in Germany during the 1930s
- Flight of victim groups from Nazi-occupied Europe and refugee communities in various countries
- World response to the rise of Nazism and the persecution of Jews and other targeted groups
- Nazi occupation policies and practices

- Roundups, deportations, and murder of European Jewry
- Mass shootings conducted by the Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing squads) as well as other German and indigenous police and auxiliary units
- Ghettos, concentration camps, labor camps, and killing centers
- Fate of Poles, Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, the mentally and physically handicapped, Soviet prisoners of war, and other targeted groups during the war
- Persecution of and by indigenous populations
- Nazi collaborators
- Regimes of the Nazi satellite states and their treatment of the populations under their control
- Resistance to Nazi policies and actions
- Rescue efforts and Bricha
- Life in hiding during the Holocaust
- Discovery, disclosure, and liberation of the concentration and death camps
- War crimes trials and the search for and apprehension of war criminals
- Experiences and testimonies of victim groups following liberation
- Jewish experiences in displaced persons (DP) camps and elsewhere
- Legal and illegal immigration to Palestine, the United States, and other countries
- Victim reparation and compensation
- Holocaust memorialization and commemoration
- Contemporary documentation regarding Holocaust deniers

Course Requirements and Materials

The course is structured as a graduate research seminar, with weekly readings selected purposefully to engage students within major debates in scholarship on Religion and the Holocaust and genocide. The course is designed in order to privilege individualized learning, with projects developing through close involvement with the professor and colleagues in class discussions.

PhD students will be expected to submit a preliminary bibliography of secondary sources to the professor by Week 4, and a research proposal by Week 8. Final papers submitted to the professor must conform to the submission guidelines of an academic journal (including word count requirements, and citation style).

Due dates and grading are as follows:

Week 2—1 page reflection on USHMM visit	(0% of final grade)
Week 4—List of Secondary Sources	(10% of final grade)
Week 6—Draft Proposal Due	(10% of final grade)
Week 8—Annotated Outline & Proposal Due	(10% of final grade)
Week 10—Rough Draft Due	(10% of final grade)
Week 12—Working Draft Due	(10% of final grade)
Week 15—Final Papers Due	(40% of final grade)

Final Grade = Research Project (90%) + Participation (10%)

MS, BA/BS students due dates are as follows:

Week 2—1 page reflection on USHMM visit	(0% of final grade)
Week 3—300 word “what would you do?”	(10% of final grade)
Week 5—300 word Genocide Alert	(10% of final grade) (Re-write due week 10)
Week 7—500-700 word op-ed	(10% of final grade) (Re-write due week 10)
Week 9—500 word Country/Case Analysis	(10% of final grade) (Re-write due week 10)
Week 11—500 word Action Memo	(10% of final grade)
Week 15—8 page essay	(40% of final grade)

Final Grade = Writing (90%) + Participation (10%)

Course Readings

Required purchases:

- 1) *Totally Unofficial: The Autobiography of Raphael Lemkin* (Yale UP, 2013).
- 2) Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009, must get 2nd ed. or later).
- 3) Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (Oxford UP, 1992)
- 4) Aomar Boum, *Memories of Absence: How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco* (Stanford UP, 2013)
- 5) Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford UP, 2009)

The books above are required purchases. Any edition is fine for these books, except Doris Bergen's. Please make sure you purchase this book for editions published in 2009 or later.

All other books on the syllabus are on reserve at the George Mason Arlington library. Graduate students are expected to place an Interlibrary Loan Request for each title listed on the syllabus, or find a way to buy used copies cheaply.

Undergraduate students are expected to read listed sections of each book at the library, and copy/scan parts of each book they find interesting and valuable.

All students must bring books to class (undergraduates must bring copies and scans to class).

Course Schedule

1/21 Week 1 What is Genocide?

- Movie: *Path to Nazi Genocide*, USHMM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRcNq4OYTyE>
- Photocopy handout of Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Chapter 1 (for definitions of genocide).
- Copy of the UN Genocide Convention

**** Friday 1/22 **** Visit the US Holocaust Memorial Museum

****Meet Outside the Museum at 9:30 AM, sharp!**

Please come to the 15th Street entrance doors (not 14th street) to enter**

Doug Irvin-Erickson's Cell Phone for Directions and Emergencies: 917-543-1462

PhD & MS students, 9:30 to 2:30

BA, BS, students, 9:30 to 12

Morning 9:30 until 12 (All students)

- Private tour of the Museum main exhibit before the museum opens
- Introduction to the Museum's genocide and atrocity prevention resources

Afternoon 12 until 2:30 (PhD Students, and those wishing to do primary research)

- Lunch for those students who will stay for the afternoon. Order your lunch from this menu, and tell them you are part of the George Mason University Group:
<http://www.ushmm.org/information/museum-cafe/onthego-bag-lunch-menu>
- 12:15 to 1:30, lunch time conversation with current Visiting Scholars at the Museum
- 1:30 to 2:30, archive and research resources tutorial for PhD students (and MS, BA/BS students who wish to do final papers using primary archival sources at the USHMM)

Follow up Q&A 2:30 to 3:30

- Personalized Q&A for students who have specific questions about specific archives and wish to talk about research interests

1/28 Week 2 The Holocaust & Genocide

- Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*

Recommended for all students:

- David Crowe, *The Holocaust: Roots, History, Aftermath* [On Reserve] [A good, comprehensive introductory text]

Recommended for MS & PhD students:

- Yehuda Bauer, *History of the Holocaust*.

Due: 1-page reflection on USHMM visit

2/4 Week 3 Before the Holocaust: Europe

- Continue discussion of Bergen
- Raphael Lemkin, *Totally Unofficial*, Chapter 1

MS & PhD, pick 3

BA/BA, pick 1

- Arcadius Kahan, "Vilna; The Sociocultural Anatomy of a Jewish Community in Interwar Poland," *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, (Chicago UP, 1986).
- Ezra Mendelsohn, "The Jewish Response: Jewish Politics in Poland in the 1920's," *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars*, (Indiana UP, 1983), pp. 43-63.
- Victor Karady, "The Jewish Bourgeoisie of Budapest," Anna Szalai (ed.), *In The Land of Hagar* (Publishing House Tel Aviv, 199) pp. 145-154.
- Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Anti-Semitism*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1990, pp. 1-11.
- Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. I.* (Harper Collins, 1997), Chp 3.
- Michael Matsas, *The Illusion of Safety: The Story of the Greek Jews During World War II* (Pella Publishing Company 1997), Chapter 2, 29-127.
- Moshe Mishkinsky, "The Jewish Labor Movement and European Socialism," *Journal of World History*, 11 (1968) pp. 284-296.
- Yehoshua Mathias, Doron Niederland, and Shifra Kolat, *The Jewish Existence in the Diaspora in the 20th Century* (Yad Vashem Board of Education, Ma'alot Publishing, 1994), pp. 31-38.
- David Crowe, *The Holocaust: Roots, History, Aftermath* [On Reserve; ISBN: 9780813343259] (Especially Chapters 1 & 2)
- Spector, Wigoder, and Wiesel, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life Before, During, and After the Holocaust* [On Reserve; ISBN: 9780814793565]

MS, BS/BA Due: 300 "what would you do" essay due

2/11 Week 4 Before the Holocaust: North Africa & Middle East

- Holly Huffnagle, "Peaceful Co-existence? Jewish and Muslim Neighbors on the Eve of the Holocaust," *East European Jewish Affairs*.
- Ethan B. Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North African to France* (Harvard UP, 2015), Chapter 1-3

Recommended:

- Sarah Sussman's articles from the USHMM's website. (google search them) "Jews of North Africa," "Jewish Oppression and Resistance in French North Africa," "North African Jews in Vichy France"
- Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Saharan Jews and the Fate of French Algeria* (U of Chicago, 2014).

MS & PhD Due: List of Secondary Sources

2/18 Week 5 The Road to the Final Solution & Politics of Anti-Semitism

- Stephen Eric Bronner, *A Rumor About the Jews* (Oxford UP, 2000), Chapters 2 & 3.
- Christopher Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy* (U of Nebraska, 2007), Chapters 1 & 2.
- Raphael Lemkin, *Totally Unofficial* Chapter 2-4.
- Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, Chapters 8 (The Legal Status of the Jews) & 9 (Genocide)

Recommended for MS & PhD students:

- Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (Yale UP)

MS & BS/BA Due: 300-word Genocide Alert

2/25 Week 6 The Holocaust

- Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People*, Part 1 & 2.
- Doris Bergen, "Catholics, Protestants, and Christian Antisemitism in Nazi Germany," *Antisemitism in Nazi Germany* 329-348.

Recommended:

- Robert Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in Nazi Germany*.
- <http://churchesandtheholocaust.ushmm.org/?xgi=4a1XIF70nS2UiO>

PhD Due: Draft Research Proposal

3/3 Week 7 The Holocaust

- David Motadad, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (Skim Chpl 1; Read Chp. 2, Read Part II – Skim part III).
- Aomar Boum, “Partners in Anti-Semitism: Muslims and Jews Respond to Nazism in French North African Colonies, 1936-1940,” *The Journal of North African Studies*.

MS, BA/BS Due: 500-700 word Op-Ed

3/10 Week 8 SPRING BREAK

PhD Due: Email Annotated Outline and Proposal during Spring Break.

3/17 Week 9 Resistance & Religion

- Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People* Part III, Resistance & Guilt

Recommended:

- Carol Rittner, *The Courage to Care: Rescuers of the Jews During the Holocaust*.
- Joseph Rudavsky, *To Live With Hope, To Die With Dignity: Spiritual Resistance in the Ghettos and Camps*.
- Lucien Steinberg, *Not as a Lamb: The Jews Against Hitler*

MS, BA/BS Due: 500-word Country/Case Analysis

3/24 Week 10 After the Holocaust: Memory (& Recreating a Plural Society?)

- Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People* Part IV, The Inability to Mourn
- Aomar Boum, *Memories of Absence: How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*, Part 1 beginning to page 108.

PhD Due: Rough Draft Due

3/31 Week 11 After the Holocaust: Memory (& Recreating a Plural Society?)

- Aomar Boum, *Memories of Absence: How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*, Part 1 pp. 109 to the end.
- Film: *Heart of the Other* & Khaled Mahameed.

Recommended:

- Alan L. Berger, *Post-Holocaust Jewish-Christian Dialogue*
- Marc Gopin, *Between History and Armageddon*.

MS, BA/BS Due: Action Memo

- 4/7 **Week 12** **After the Holocaust: Memory (& Solidarity and Inclusive Histories?)**
- Raphael Lemkin, *Totally Unofficial* (Rest of the Book)
 - Raphael Lemkin and the UN Coalition of Arab Delegates, *Prosecuting France for Genocide in Algeria*. [SKIM! This is a very technical & legal document]
 - Douglas Irvin-Erickson, "A Forgotten Solidarity: Jews and Muslim Against the 3rd Reich and the 4th Republic," forthcoming article.
 - A. Dirk Moses, "Genocide," *Australian Humanities Review* 55 (2013): 22-44.
 - A. Dirk Moses, "The Holocaust and World History: Raphael Lemkin and Comparative Methodology," in *The Holocaust and Historical Methodology*, Dan Stone, ed., 272-289 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

PhD Due: Working Draft Due

- 4/14 **Week 13** **Memory (& Inclusive Histories and Cosmopolitanism for Peace?)**
- Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford UP)

Recommended:

- Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider. *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (University of Pennsylvania Press).

- 4/21 **Week 14** **Comparative Approaches to Theology, Recovery & Peace**
- Continue discussion of Rotherberg
 - Peter Admirand, *Amidst Mass Atrocity and the Rubble of Theology* (Cascade, 2012) PDF of selected chapters on Blackboard.

Recommended:

- TK Nakagaki, *Swastika: The Debasement and Possible Resurrection of an Ancient Spiritual Symbol* (Tentative Title: Forthcoming Palgrave). Covers Buddhist & Jewish memory of the symbol of the Swastika.
- Leonard Grob and John Roth, eds., *Encountering the Stranger: A Jewish-Christian-Muslim Trialogue*.
- Rittner, Roth and Whitworth, *Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches?* (Aegis, 2004). Order from the library. PDF of select chapters on Blackboard.
- Thomas Brudholm, *The Religious in Responses to Mass Atrocity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2008). Order from the library. PDF of select chapters on Blackboard.

- 4/28 **Week 15** **CONCLUSION**

Final Papers Due