GENOCIDE (IR202)

Course duration: 54 hours lecture and class time (Over three weeks)

Summer School Programme Area: International Relations, Government and Society

LSE Teaching Department: Department of International Relations

Lead Faculty: Dr Jens Meierhenrich and Professor Karen E. Smith (Dept. of International Relations)

Pre-requisites: At least one introductory course in the social sciences (e.g. political science, international relations, sociology, economics), history or law. The course is aimed at undergraduate students interested in international politics and international human rights policy and law. Students could also come from the policy-making and NGO communities, and from those wishing to embark on a career in the policy-making and/or NGO communities in this area.

Course content: The ongoing conflicts in Syria and Myanmar have ensured that genocide and other mass atrocities are once again headline news. But why do men (and women) kill? Why do they kill in large numbers? How do they kill? What, if anything, is gained by destroying, in whole or in part, a real or imagined enemy by way of genocide? And what can be done to eradicate this ‘odious scourge’ of humankind, which has claimed more than 100 million lives in the past century? In answer, this interdisciplinary course analyses the genocidal behaviour of all kinds of actors – from colonialists to terrorists.

Many empirical cases will be discussed, including the Americas, Australia, South West Africa, the Ottoman Empire, the Soviet Union, Germany, East Pakistan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Cambodia, Guatemala, Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sudan and Syria. In the first part of the course, we cover the origins and development of genocidal campaigns, their impact on the maintenance of international peace and security, and their consequences for the reconstruction and development of states and the building of nations, ancient and contemporary.

In the second part, we assess the prospects for preventing genocide and other mass atrocities, by analysing the role that domestic and international courts and tribunals have played in the punishment of international crimes; the development and spread of prevention norms, such as the responsibility to protect; and the creation of preventive policies by international organisations, notably the United Nations, the United States and the European Union. Although aimed at undergraduate students interested in international politics and international human rights policy and law, more advanced students from the policy-making and NGO communities are also welcome.

Course structure: The course is taught over 12 sessions during the three-week term, comprising one three-hour lecture and one 1.5-hour class per session. Students are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions. Students must make one presentation to the class, on which they will be assessed, and must write one short essay in class at the end of week 1, on which they will also be assessed. These assessments will not count towards the final mark, but will help students to gauge their academic progress during the term.

Course content is subject to change. Last updated: December 2017
Assessment: Formative assessment consists of one presentation and one short essay in class at the end of week 1. These assessments will not count towards the final mark. Summative assessment is based on an essay of 1500 words, due at the end of week 2, and one unseen two-hour written exam at the end of the third week. The essay mark is worth 25% of the final mark, and the exam mark is worth 75% of the final mark. The precise time and location of the final exam will be confirmed during the programme.

Course materials: All course materials are available via the LSE Library. However, students are advised to purchase Jens Meierhenrich, ed., Genocide: A Reader (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), which contains many additional readings to which reference will be made.

Schedule of session topics and readings:

Part One: History and theory of genocide

Session 1 Monday: Introduction and overview

Introduction to the course: discussion of course outline and course assessments. History of the word ‘genocide’ and of the international convention on genocide. Debates about the meaning of the term, in general and in relation to specific events. Definition of mass atrocities, and the international legal framework regarding mass atrocities.

Required readings:


Primary sources:


Additional readings:

Cooper, John, [*Raphael Lemkin and the Struggle for the Genocide Convention*](Houndmills: Palgrave, 2008).


Class questions:

1. What are the differences between genocide and crimes against humanity?
2. Is there anything wrong with the definition of genocide in the 1948 Convention?

Session 2 Tuesday: Why do genocides happen?

Required readings:


Additional readings:


*Class questions:*

1. What are the causes of genocide?

*Session 3 Wednesday*: How do genocides unfold?

*Required readings:*


*Additional readings:*


*Class questions:*
1. Is the Holocaust unique?

Session 4 Thursday: How is genocide reported?

Required readings:


Additional readings:


Class questions:

1. Do journalists have particular responsibilities to identify and report mass atrocities?

Session 5 Friday: What happens after genocide? (I)

Required readings:


*Additional readings:*


*Class questions:*

1. Can one come to terms with genocide?

*In class: short essay (30 minutes):* EITHER: Describe, critique and defend the legal conception of genocide OR Is the Holocaust relevant for understanding the Rwandan genocide?

*Session 6 Monday:* What happens after genocide? (II)

*Required readings:*


**Additional readings:**


**Class questions:**

1. Consider the ways in which genocide and other mass atrocities affect states and their neighbours.

**Part Two: Domestic and international responses to genocide and mass atrocities**

**Session 7 Tuesday:** Responses to genocide in the 1990s and early 2000s; case studies of Rwanda; Srebrenica; Darfur.

**Required readings:**


Additional readings:


Class questions:

1. What lessons did the UN learn from its experiences with mass atrocity situations in the post-Cold War world?

Session 8 Wednesday: Understanding UN responses to genocide and mass atrocities

Structure and operation of the UN. How has the UN responded to purported genocides and other mass atrocities? What can the UN do? What prevents UN action?

Required readings:

Gallagher, Adrian, *Genocide and its Threat to Contemporary International Order* (Houndmills: Palgrave Mamillan, 2014), chapter 5 (pp. 89-121).


**Additional readings:**


**Class questions:**

1. Who or what is to ‘blame’ if the UN does not prevent or stop mass atrocities?

**Session 9 Thursday:** Understanding responses by states and regional organisations to genocide and other mass atrocities

Responsibilities of states to prevent or stop mass atrocities. Cold War: the role of neighbouring states in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and Cambodia; the role of former colonial powers and the superpowers. Post-Cold War:
the role of ‘great powers’, former colonial powers, and neighbours. The role of the African Union, the European Union, and the League of Arab States in responding to genocide and other mass atrocities.

Required readings:


Additional readings:


UN Secretary-General, ‘The role of regional and subregional arrangements in implementing the responsibility to protect’, document no. A/65/877, 28 June 2011. Available here:


**Class questions:**

1. Can states be forced to prevent or stop mass atrocities?
2. Are regional organisations better placed to prevent or stop mass atrocities than the UN?

**Friday – ESSAY DUE** by 3 pm

No lecture or class

**Session 10 Monday**: Lessons learned I: Domestic and international responses: holding individuals to account in domestic and international tribunals. Who puts genocide and other mass atrocities on trial? History and functioning of international tribunals, from Nuremberg to the ICC. History and functioning of domestic tribunals and truth commissions. Assessments and critiques of tribunals.

**Required readings:**


Additional readings:

Beth Dougherty, ‘Right-Sizing International Criminal Justice: The Hybrid Experiment at the Special Court for Sierra Leone’, *International Affairs*, vol. 80, no. 2, 2004, pp. 311-328


Class questions:

1. What are the pros and cons of prosecuting individuals for mass atrocities?

Session 11 Tuesday: Lessons learned II: the development of R2P

The responsibility to protect (R2P). The implementation of R2P by the UN, states, and regional organisations.

Required readings:

Bellamy, Alex J., ‘From Tripoli to Damascus? Lesson learning and the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect’, *International Politics*, 51: 1, 2013

Gallagher, Adrian, ‘The promise of pillar II: analysing international assistance under the Responsibility to Protect’, *International Affairs*, vol. 91, no. 6, 2015.

Additional readings:


Evans, Gareth, *The responsibility to protect: ending mass atrocity crimes once and for all* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institutions, 2008)


Class questions:

1. Assess the utility and desirability of R2P.

Session 12 Wednesday: What can really be done about genocide and other mass atrocities? The development of the international prevention agenda.

Required readings:


**Additional readings:**


Smith, Karen E., ‘Mass Atrocity Prevention: Forever Elusive or Potentially Achievable?’, *Politics and Governance*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2015. See also the other articles in vol. 3, nos. 3 and 4 of *Politics and Governance*.


Zartman, I. William, ‘Preventing identity conflicts leading to genocide and mass killings’ (New York: International Peace Institute, November 2010)

**Class questions:**

1. ‘It is impossible to prevent genocide’. Discuss.

**Thursday – no lecture: time for revision**

**Friday - EXAM**
Credit Transfer: If you are hoping to earn credit by taking this course, please ensure that you confirm it is eligible for credit transfer well in advance of the start date. Please discuss this directly with your home institution or Study Abroad Advisor.

As a guide, our LSE Summer School courses are typically eligible for three or four credits within the US system and 7.5 ECTS in Europe. Different institutions and countries can, and will, vary. You will receive a digital transcript and a printed certificate following your successful completion of the course in order to make arrangements for transfer of credit.

If you have any queries, please direct them to summer.school@lse.ac.uk