

Topics in Comparative History: Imperialism and Mass Violence

Wednesdays 6-9p.m.

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Course Description

This course explores the darkest side of 19th- and early 20th-century empires: mass violence against citizens, subjects, and populations with which they had a dominance relationship, within the broader context of the political, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions of imperialism. Through case studies of the Native Americans, the Spanish-Cuban war, the Philippines-American War, the genocide of the Herrero and Nama, the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and the crimes committed by the Japanese Imperial army in WWII, the course examines imperial ideologies and policies, practices of population control, counter-insurgency, and outright mass murder and genocide in comparative perspective. Victim agency and resistance, as well as legacies of the aftermath of mass violence, are examined in each case.

Class discussions will help sharpen students' analytical skills. Presentations will help improve public speaking skills, while papers will hone the students' ability to present arguments in an organized manner. Early in the semester, time will be allocated to discuss guidelines and best-practices in writing and public speaking. A second and third discussion on writing will be held the week after the first response papers are submitted, and the session following the mid-terms. The sessions dedicated to the analysis of primary sources aim at familiarizing students with an array of challenges that working with primary documents pose.

Course Texts

All readings will be posted on Blackboard. Each week's folder has two sub-folders: "Required reading" and "Suggested readings." Students are encouraged to consult the suggested readings folder for additional insight on a particular week's discussion topic, and when preparing their presentations.

Book chapters

Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2002)

Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism* (London: Pearson, 2006)

Richard H. King and Dan Stone, eds., *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation, Race, and Genocide* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007)

Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (London: Basic Books, 2002)

Samuel Totten, ed., *Century of Genocide* (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2004)

David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

Glenn Anthony May, *Battle for Batangas: A Philippine Province at War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991)

John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006)

Jeremy Sarkin, *Germany's Genocide of the Herero* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2011)

Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford University Press, 2007)

Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000)

Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: the Concentration Camp* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

Primary sources

Robert D. Ramsey III, ed., *A Masterpiece of. Counter guerrilla Warfare: BG J. Franklin Bell in the Philippines, 1901–1902* (The Long War Series. Occasional Paper 25). Full PDF available online at: <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/carl/download/csipubs/ramseyop25.pdf>

Wolfgang Gust (Ed.), *The Armenian Genocide: Evidence from the German Foreign Office Archives, 1915-1916* (New York: Bergahn, 2014)

Articles

In addition to chapters from the aforementioned books and primary sources, the readings will include scholarly articles pertinent to each week's theme. They include:

Jonathan Hyslop, "The Invention of the Concentration Camp: Cuba, Southern Africa and the Philippines, 1896-1907," *South African Historical Journal*, 63:2, 251-276.

Women's Anti-Imperialism, "The White Man's Burden," and the Philippine-American War: theorizing Masculinist Ambivalence in Protest," *Gender and Society*, 23: 2, 244-270.

Benjamin Madley, "Patterns of Frontier Genocide 1803-1910: The Aboriginal Tasmanians, the Yuki of California, and the Herero of Namibia," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 6:2, 167-192.

Henning Melber, "How to Come to Terms with the Past: Revisiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia," *African Spectrum*, 40:1, 139-148.

Course requirements

Attendance and Class participation (10%): Students are expected to attend classes and participate in discussions. Students must clear **all** absences, excused or unexcused, with me, and provide documentation if requested. Unexcused absences will affect final grade (half a grade will be lowered for 2-3 unexcused absences). Any student who misses **four or more** sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Short presentation (15%): Each student will make one presentation (15 minutes) about a topic related to the class readings. Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint, Prezi, or other multi-media tools. Video footage is allowed, provided that it does not exceed 5 minutes, and it does not count toward a student's presentation time. Refer to signup sheet on Blackboard for dates of presentations.

Response papers (20%): Each student will write **three** response papers (3-4 pages, double spaced), examining one important aspect of the assigned (or suggested) readings. Response papers are *not* summaries of readings.

Mid-term (25%): Each student will select 3 of 5 questions and answer them (each answer 2-3 pages, double spaced). The mid-term exam is take-home.

Final paper (30%): Each student will write a 6-8 page paper on a topic related to the course, and previously agreed with the professor.

Workshops on primary sources: The two workshops will provide the students with an opportunity to examine primary sources related to the readings first-hand, and discuss the challenges of working with the sources under study, the insights they provide, and their shortcomings.

Notes:

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner.

Plagiarism: Cutting and pasting from other sources in written assignments and PowerPoint presentations will result in a failing grade. No exceptions are made!

Students are required to sign the **Rutgers Honor Code Pledge** to receive credit. Type the following phrase and sign under it: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment.”

Course Schedule

Sept. 2 Introduction

Sept. 9 Discussion on imperialism

Reading: Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*

Suggested reading: Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism* (Chapter 1)

Sept. 16 The Native Americans

Reading: David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust*, pp. 97-146.

Suggested reading: Benjamin Madley: “Patterns of Frontier Genocide”

Sept. 23 ‘Counter-insurgency’ in the Philippines

Reading: Glenn Anthony May, *Battle for Batangas*, pp. 242,-285.

Suggested reading: Erin L. Murphy, “Women’s Anti-Imperialism”
(Response paper 1 due)

Sept. 30 Workshop 1 on primary sources

Reading: Robert D. Ramsey III, ed., *A Masterpiece of Counterinsurgency Warfare*

Oct. 7 The Spanish in Cuba

Reading: John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, pp. 193-224

Suggested reading: Jonathan Hyslop, “The Invention of the Concentration Camp”

Oct. 14 The Germans in South West Africa

Reading: Samuel Totten, *Century of Genocide*, pp. 15-51

Suggested reading: Jeremy Sarkin, *Germany’s Genocide of the Herero*, pages TBA

Oct. 21 World War I

Reading: TBA
(Response paper 2 due)

Oct. 28 The Armenian Genocide

Reading: Samuel Totten, *Century of Genocide*, 53-90
Suggested reading: Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, pages TBA

Nov. 4 Workshop 2 on primary sources

Reading: Wolfgang Gust (Ed.), *The Armenian Genocide*, pages TBA

Nov. 11 World War II

Reading TBA

Nov. 18 The Holocaust

Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror*, pages TBA
(Response paper 3 due)

Nov. 25 Japan

Reading: Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women*, pages TBA

Dec. 2 Arendt, Imperialism, and Mass Violence

Reading: Richard H. King and Dan Stone, eds., *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History*, pages TBA

Dec. 9 Confronting the Imperial Past

Reading: Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, pages TBA
Henning Melber, "How to Come to Terms with the Past"