

Political Science 73: Special Topics

The Psychological Constructions and Politics of Ethnoconflict

Tuesday 1-4pm

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Hours: T/R 11:30-12:15 W 1-3

This course will examine the complex and troubling origins of a series of conflicts often defined as ethnic in nature. Students will explore alternate discussions of the character of each conflict, including economic and psychoanalytic explanations. In addition students will explore the processes by which enemies are identified and maintained; how collectivities define their membership, and whether reconciliation is possible. Cases include the Former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Chechnya and Cyprus.

The course will be presented in a fashion similar to the traditional seminars here at Swarthmore. Students will be expected to participate in discussions and have completed the requisite readings for each week. Each student will be responsible for leading the discussion and presenting a paper commenting on that week's reading three times during the course of the semester. Students will have the opportunity to revise one of those three papers as a final work product for the course. Each week, those students not presenting will be required to write a two page "reaction" to the week's readings. There will be a Blackboard site associated with the course. Hopefully students will not only post their reactions early on the discussion board, but comment on other's comments.

The following books will be available for purchase. Readings noted as "Documents" on the syllabus will be available on the Blackboard site.

Reading List:

A Clash of Civilizations and Remaking the World Order, Huntington, Samuel (Simon & Shuster, 1998) ISBN: 0684844419

Nations and Nationalism, Gellner, Ernest (Cornell University Press, 1983) ISBN: 0801492637

The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism, Smith, Anthony (Brandeis University Press, 2000) ISBN: 1584650400

The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relationships, Volkan, Vamik, (Jason Aronson, 1994) ISBN: 1568213700

The Fragmentation of Yugoslavia: Nationalism and War in the Balkans, Aleksandar Pavković (St. Martin's Press, 2000) ISBN: 0312230842

Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo, Duijzings, Ger (Columbia University Press, 2000) ISBN: 0231120990

Kosovo: War and Revenge, Judah, Tim (Yale University Press, 2000) ISBN: 0300097255

Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust, Goldhagen, Daniel, (Vintage Books, 1997) ISBN: 0679772685

Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide, Melvern, Linda (Verso Press, 2004) ISBN: 1859845886

Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda, Eltringham, Nigel, (Pluto Press, 2004) ISBN: 0745320007

Allah's Mountains: The Battle for Chechnya, Smith, Sebastian (I.B Tauris, 1998) ISBN: 1860646514

Russia's Restless Frontier: The Chechnya Factor in Post-Soviet Russia, Trenin, Dmitri and Aleksei Malashenko, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004) ISBN: 0870032046

Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics : From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union, Joseph, Joseph S. (Palgrave, 1999) ISBN: 0312227205

Schedule of Topics and Readings:

PART I: Establishing the Ethnic Community

Week One: *A Clash Of Civilizations: Ethnic Conflict and Seeing the Other*

August 30

Readings: *A Clash of Civilizations and Remaking the World Order*, Huntington, Samuel (Simon and Shuster, 1998) entire?
"Political Theories and the Explanation of Ethnic Conflict in the Western World: Falsified Predictions and Plausible Postdictions" Lijphart, Arend in *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World*, Esman, Milton, ed., (Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 46-64, Document #1.
"Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialized Societies" Esman, Milton in *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World*, Esman, Milton, ed., (Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 371-390, Document #2.

Questions: What is an ethnic conflict? Is it one thing? Can we characterize different conflicts as being ethnic or not? This first week looks at some of the bases for conflict. Lijphart explores a series of explanations for decreases in ethnic conflict in Europe. Huntington, on the other hand, offers an explanation for the seeming explosion of ethnic conflicts after the end of the Cold War. What do these two authors have to say to each other? How useful are these perspectives in explaining your own understanding of ethnic conflict?

Week Two: *Building Ethnic Communities: Building Nations*
September 7

Readings: Nations and Nationalism, Gellner, Ernest (Cornell University Press, 1983)
The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism, Smith, Anthony (Brandeis University Press, 2000)
Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe, Miroslav Hroch, (Columbia 2000), Chapters 1-7, 16-18
Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Benedict Anderson, (Verso, 1983), Chapters 1-5, pp. 1-66, Document #3.

Questions: Do ethnic communities just exist or are they created, and if they are created, how, why, and under what circumstances? This week's readings explore the formulation and formation of ethnic communities; they also explore the distinctions between ethnic communities and nations. What are the necessary conditions for a nation to form? Is there a specific sequence of identity formation that leads from clan to ethnic to nation? What are the relationships between identity formation, nation building and capitalism?

Week Three: *Identity, Psychology, and the Creation of Self-Identity*
September 14

Readings: "The Clash Within: Intrapsychically Created Enemies and Their Roles in Ethno-Nationalist Conflict" Murer, Jeffrey in Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox, Worcester, Kent, Ungar, Mark, and Bermanzohn, Sally eds., (Routledge, 2002), pp.209-225. Document #4
"The Familiar Becomes the Foreign(er): The Roles of Abjection and Established Pathological Mourning in the Forming of National Identity" Murer, Jeffrey, 1999 typescript, Document #5
The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relationships, Volkan, Vamik, (Jason Aronson, 1994)
Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, Kristeva, Julia (Columbia University Press, 1982) Chapters 1-3 pp. 1-89, Document #6

Questions: If nations or ethnicities are "imagined communities" how do they affect our consciousness? Is identity belonging? Why do we need to belong to something larger than ourselves? This week's readings explore the psychological aspects of nation, ethnic and community. These readings explore how identities are established in the praxis of belonging, to use John Borneman's phrase. Can we use the psychoanalytic to explain the formation of such communities? How do you assess the explanatory power of this tool of analysis?

PART II: The End of Yugoslavia

Week Four: *Ethnic Conflict as Economic Resource Competition*

September 21

- Readings: “A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation Across Ethnic Terrain”
Williams, Brackette F., *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 18 (1989):401-444,
Document #7
The Fragmentation of Yugoslavia: Nationalism and War in the Balkans,
Aleksandar Pavković (St. Martin’s Press, 2000) Chapters 1-8, pp. 1-124
“Some Causes of Political Change in Modern Yugoslavia, Bridge, Susan in
Ethnic Conflict in the Western World, Esman, Milton, ed., (Cornell University
Press, 1977) pp. 343-370, Document #8.
“Opposition as a Component of Ethnic Self-Consciousness” Porshnev, B.F., in
Ethnicity and Resource Competition in Plural Societies, Despres, Leo A., ed.,
(Mouton Publisher, 1975) Document #9.

- Questions: Much of the media presentations of the Bosnian and Kosovar Wars accepted ethnicity as an essentialized identity. Brackette Williams offers an alternative construction of ethnicity: groups involved in resource competitions. What resources were at stake at the outset of the Yugoslav Wars? What precipitated the conflict? Were the media correct in asserting that Croats will always be Croats and probably always hate Serbs?

Week Five: *The Collapse of Yugoslavia and the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*

September 28

- Readings: The Fragmentation of Yugoslavia: Nationalism and War in the Balkans,
Aleksandar Pavković (St. Martin’s Press, 2000), Chapters 9-11 + Epilogue pp.
125-210 (Chapter 12 for next week)
“Bosnia: Of Myths and Maps” in From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An
Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict, Eller, Jack David,
(University of Michigan Press, 1999) Chapter 6, pp. 243-296, Document #10
The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention,
Burg, Steven and Paul Shoup, (M.E. Sharpe, 2000), Chapters 3 & 4 pp. 62-188,
Documents #11 & 12.

- Questions: How did events in Bosnia differ from those in Slovenia or Croatia? What made circumstances in Bosnia so violent? Was Bosnia different from other republics in Yugoslavia? How was history utilized to mobilize mass action? Was there a particular stratum which was most readily mobilized? If so, why was it so ready for action? How did the peace accords affect patterns of ethnic identification? Nearly ten years after the peace settlement what do you believe will happen in Bosnia?

Week Six: *Where it Began and Where it Ended: Kosovo and the Collapse of Yugoslavia*
October 5

Readings: Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo, Duijzings, Ger (Columbia University Press, 2000)
Kosovo: War and Revenge, Judah, Tim (Yale University Press, 2000)
Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War, Mertus, Julie (University of California Press, 1999), Chapters 3 & 4 135-226, Documents #13 & 14.

Questions: Compare Bosnia and Kosovo. How was Kosovo different from Bosnia? What resources might be at stake in Kosovo? Who wanted what in Kosovo, and how did that differ from events or desires expressed in Bosnia? Can a multi-ethnic society be rebuilt in Kosovo?

Week Seven: *Spring Break*
October 12

Readings: Go read something peaceful and relaxing

PART III: Overcoming Colonial Legacies through Genocide?

Week Eight: *Monsters and Everyday People*
October 19

Readings: Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust, Goldhagen, Daniel, (Vintage Books, 1997), Chapters 6-12, & 15, pp. 181-326, 375-415 [chapters 13 & 14 optional]

Questions: Who are killers? What does it take to transform someone from everyday citizen to killer? Can everyone kill? What stops people from engaging in violence? What are the most important lessons to be learned from the Goldhagen text? How should participants in killings be dealt with in society? Are people who participate in ethnic violence evil?

Week Nine: *A Project of Murder in Rwanda*
October 26

Readings: Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide, Melvern, Linda (Verso Press, 2004)
"Rwanda and Burundi: When Two Tribes Go to War?" in From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict, Eller, Jack David, (University of Michigan Press, 1999) Chapter 5, pp. 195-242, Document #15
"Competition Within Ethnic Systems in Africa" Skinner, Elliott in *Ethnicity and Resource Competition in Plural Societies*, Despres, Leo, ed., (Mouton Publishers, 1975), pp. 131-157, Document #16

Questions: What is the relationship between clan identity and ethnic identity? What impact does the colonial legacy have on Rwanda? How is ethnicity different in Rwanda from Bosnia or Kosovo? How is it the same? Who were the perpetrators of violence in Rwanda? Why was the violence so extensive? Were the perpetrators evil?

Week Ten: *Sorting Out the Dead: Tribunals and Trials in Rwanda*
November 2 (DO NOT FORGET TO VOTE!)

Readings: Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda, Eltringham, Nigel, (Pluto Press, 2004)
“From Victim to Victimhood: Truth Commissions and Trials as Rituals of Political Transition and Individual Healing,” Humphrey, Michael. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* Vol. 14 (2) 2003 pp. 171-188 Document #17
“Retributive justice: the gacaca courts in Rwanda,” Corey, Allison and Sandra F. Joireman. *African Affairs*, Vol. 103(410) pp. 73-90, Document #18
“Fierce Debate Divides Scholars of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide,” Sharley, Jeffrey. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 3, 2001 Vol. 47 (47) pp. A16-20, Document #19
“International law - genocide - U.N. tribunal finds that mass media hate speech constitutes genocide, incitement to genocide, and crimes against humanity,” *Harvard Law Review* June 2004 Vol.117 (8) pp. 2769-2776 Document #20

Questions: Are tribunals and truth commissions effective in dealing with the aftermath of ethnic violence? What are the main purposes of such bodies? Should they mete out punishment? Should they be able to mete out capital punishment? What is the difference between a Truth and Reconciliation commission and a tribunal? Are there circumstances when one body is more appropriate than the other?

PART IV: Ethnic Conflict, States and Terrorism

Week Eleven: *Islam, Post-Coloniality and Identity*
November 9

Readings: “Political Islam: Inclusion or Violence?” Ghadbian, Najib in Violence and Politics: Globalization’s Paradox, (Routledge 2002), pp. 90-106, Document #21

Questions: What is the relationship between religion and ethnicity? Is religious violence different from ethnic violence? What is special about Islam? Is Islam special? What are the goals of political Islam? Who find these goals attractive? What are the major tenants of Political Islam? Is there only one political Islam?

Week Twelve: *Ethnic Politics or Ethnic Terrorism*
November 16

Readings: Allah’s Mountains: The Battle for Chechnya, Smith, Sebastian (I.B Tauris, 1998)

Blood Lines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic terrorism, Volkan, Vamik, (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), Chapters 3, 5, & 10, pp. 36-49, 81-100, 156-167, Documents # 22-24

Questions: What is the relationship between the political struggle and violence in Chechnya and Islam? Is this a religious war? What are the Goals of the Chechens? What resources are at stake? Is the situation in Chechnya more similar to Rwanda, Bosnia or Kosovo, or is it completely different? What sparked the violence in Chechnya? Are the Chechen rebels terrorists?

Week Thirteen: *Chechnya's Impact Upon Russia: Excuse for the Abuse of Power?*

November 23

Readings: Russia's Restless Frontier: The Chechnya Factor in Post-Soviet Russia, Trenin, Dmitri and Aleksei Malashenko, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004)
"National interest versus state interest: theoretical concepts and political reality (a roundtable)" *A.I. Nikolaev, et al Russian Politics & Law*, Nov-Dec 2000 Vol. 38 (6) pp. 6-77, Document #25
"Terrorism in the former Soviet Union: a primer, a puzzle, a prognosis," *Pluchinsky, Dennis A. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, April-June 1998 Vol. 21 (2) pp.119-148, Document #26

Questions: Who benefits from the war in Chechnya? Why did Russia invade a second time? How does Russian identity gain from the war in Chechnya? What makes a Russian? Why do the Russians consider the Chechen rebels terrorists? Did this week's readings change your mind from last week?

Week Fourteen: *Resolution or Unresolvable?*

November 30

Readings: The Broken Olive Branch: Nationalism and the Cyprus Problem, Anastasiou, Harry (Ooligan Press, 2004)
Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics : From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union, Joseph, Joseph S. (Palgrave, 1999)
Blood Lines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic terrorism, Volkan, Vamik, (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), Chapters 6 & 7 pp. 101-136 Documents # 27 &28

Questions: What can we learn from the experiences on Cyprus? Do you believe the situation is resolvable? What impact does European Union membership have on the ethnic tensions in Cyprus? Does EU membership create resource competition or ameliorate it? Can the lessons of Cyprus be applied to other conflicts? How would they be applied to the other case from the semester?

Week Fifteen: *When do Violent Politics Become Genocide?*

December 7

Final Discussions, predictions, reflections, dinner, wine