Spring 2013

Religion, Law, War

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Course Description and Content
This course will explore wars of religion and religious views of war. We are living through an era fraught with religious warfare – wars animated by religious conflict and wars that use religious abuse as weapons to demoralize and subdue the enemy. The course will touch upon some major religious traditions and set in dialogue their respective views of war, assess their contributions to the contemporary laws of war, and examine particular historical episodes of religious conflict.

Students should be prepared to do a significant amount of reading each class and to discuss it constructively. Courses work well only when everyone comes prepared for a critical and informed conversation.

Throughout the course we will try to link the readings with contemporary events. Hence, students should keep informed about relevant current events through regular reading of newspapers. You should read a newspaper that provides thorough coverage of international news (for example, The New York Times, Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal). If possible you should also read foreign newspapers. You may also want to watch news on TV. BBC, CNN International, CCTV9 (from China) and Russia Today provide good insight into current events. You will get a better insight if you follow news from different countries.

No computers or other electronic devices are to be used during class.
Assignments and Grading Rules
1. Exams. There will be two in-class exams, a midterm and a final. Use of books and
notes will be prohibited.

2. Group activity – Policy memo and presentation. The class will be divided into groups
of three. Each group will write a 10-15 page policy memo and present their findings. The
presentation must include about 5 Power Point slides which support a 15 minute
presentation.

The topic must be approved by the instructor; it must be directly and explicitly related to
religion and conflict. You can choose a case study or compare two or more cases.

By February 4 you must create the groups and submit a tentative topic title. By February
13 each group must submit a one page paper proposal. I will not grade the proposal, but if
it is not clear you will have to rewrite it until I am satisfied with its content and clarity.
Save the proposal and attach it to your policy memo when you submit it on April 17.

The primary purpose of the policy memo is to stimulate the senior management in your
institution of choice (a governmental institution, an NGO, or an IGO) to engage or
disengage from a certain conflict. Hence, the memo must include four distinct parts – (1)
history of the conflict, (2) current situation, (3) your institution’s (country’s) goals and
role in the conflict, and (4) your policy recommendations. In part 2 (current situation),
provide an overview of the key actors (governmental and non-governmental) and their
relative influence. Explain all potential coalitions (national or international), their goals,
role, and relative power. The paper must include a cover page which identifies the
relevant case(s) and summarizes main recommendations contained within the memo.

3. Class participation and attendance. All students are expected to do the reading in
advance and to take part in the discussion. The quality of class sessions is greatly
enhanced when students are prepared to engage the course material in a constructive
fashion. Participation will be noted and credited to your grade.

Poor attendance (over two absences) will result in a reduction of your grade. Each
absence, beyond the two excused, will reduce your final grade by 2%.

Basis for Grade
Midterm exam .......................30%
Final exam .......................... 30%
Policy memo and presentation..... 30%
Class Participation...............10%
Course Materials

Academic and Professional Integrity
All forms of dishonesty, whether by act or omission, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism and knowingly furnishing false information, are prohibited. Work submitted in the course must be the product of the efforts of the student presenting the work. Contributions of others to the finished work must be appropriately acknowledged.

Disability Services
If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for accommodations, in academic classes, the residence halls, food services areas, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To receive accommodations or assistance, please self-identify at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67. The staff at DSS will help you to develop a plan for accommodations. For more information contact DSS at (973) 313-6003.
Topics and Readings

January 14

*Introduction*
Class participant introductions, course outline, expectations for class assignments, questions.

**Part I: Religious Justifications for Violence**

January 16

Introduction: Why Is Religion Violent and Violence Religious?
Chapter 1. Kautilya, "Forms of Treacherous Fights," the Arthashastra
Chapter 2. Sun Tzu, "Laying Plans," *The Art of War*

January 21

No classes

January 23

Chapter 3. The Bhagavad Gita, The Bhagavad Gita in the Mahabharata
Chapter 4. Soho Takuan, "Annals of the Sword Taia," *The Unfettered Mind*
Chapter 5. The Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy, Exodus

January 28

Chapter 6. The Qur'an, Surah 2 ("The Cow")
Chapter 7. Thomas Aquinas, "Whether It Is Always Sinful to Wage War?" *Summa Theologica*
Chapter 8. Reinhold Niebuhr, "Why the Christian Church Is Not Pacifist"

January 30

Chapter 9. Michael Bray, "A Time for Revolution?" *A Time to Kill*
Chapter 10. Abd al-Salam Faraj, *The Neglected Duty*

February 4

Chapter 11. Meir Kahane, "War and Peace," *The Jewish Idea*
Chapter 12. Shoko Asahara, *Declaring Myself the Christ, Disaster Comes to the Land of the Rising Sun* 77
Chapter 13. 9/11 Conspirator, "Last Instructions of 9/11"

Group Assignment #1 -- create groups; submit a tentative topic title.
Part II: Understanding the Religious Role in Violence

February 6  
Introduction to Part II  
Chapter 14. Émile Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*  
Chapter 15. Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, "Conclusion," *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*

February 11  
Chapter 16. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*  
Chapter 17. René Girard, "Sacrifice," *Violence and the Sacred*

February 13  
Chapter 18. Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans*  
Chapter 19. Maurice Bloch, *Prey into Hunter*

**Group Assignment #2 -- submit a one page paper proposal.**

February 18  
Chapter 21. Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

February 20  
Chapter 24. Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*  
Closing Comments: The Connection between War and Sacrifice

Part III: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking

February 25  
**David Little**, Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance, in Sisk

February 27  
**Midterm exam**

March 4  
Spring Recess – No Classes

March 6  
Spring Recess – No Classes

March 11  
**Nader Hashemi**, Religious Leaders, Sectarianism, and the Sunni-Shia Divide in Islam, in Sisk

March 13  
**George Emile Irani**, Between Intolerance and Coexistence: The Vatican, Maronites, and the War in Lebanon, in Sisk

March 18  
**Micheline Ishay**, Globalization, Religion, and Nationalism in Israel and Palestine, in Sisk

March 20  
**Scott W. Hibbard**, Egypt and the Legacy of Sectarianism, in Sisk

March 27  Rosalind I. J. Hackett, Nigeria's Religious Leaders in an Age of Radicalism and Neoliberalism, in Sisk

April  No Classes

April 3  Mari Fitzduff, Just Enough to Hate-Not Enough to Love: Religious Leaders in Northern Ireland, in Sisk

April 8  Susan Hayward, The Spoiler and the Reconciler: Buddhism and the Peace Process in Sri Lanka, in Sisk

April 10  Sumit Ganguly and Praveen Swam, Piety and Politics: Religious Leadership and the Conflict in Kashmir, in Sisk

April 15  Timothy D. Sisk, Conclusion: From Terror to Tolerance to Coexistence in Deeply Divided Societies, in Sisk

April 17  Group Presentations
  Policy memos due

April 22  Group Presentations

April 24  Group Presentations

April 29  Group Presentations

May 1  Group Presentations

May 6  Last day of classes
  Final exam