

### **HIS 392/ The Holocaust: History and Meanings**

I. Required Readings:

Elie Wiesel, *Night* (1961)

Otto Friedrich *The Kingdom of Auschwitz* (1994)

Richard L. Rubenstein & John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz; The Holocaust and its Legacy*, rev. ed. (2003)

Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men; Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1998)

Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness; An Examination of Conscience* (1973)

“Crucifixion chapters in Mathew (26-28); Mark (14-16); Luke (22-23); John (18-19)

II. E-Reserve Readings in Jackson Library: (available online)

Short Texts by the Church Fathers on the Jews

III. Films:

A number of films in addition to those listed in the syllabus will be shown during the semester, sometimes in place of lecture.

IV. General Information:

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Office Hours: MWF 9:30-10:45 AM; and by appointment

V. Course Requirements:

- a. **Course Papers:** Students are required to turn in four short papers (see syllabus for dates) based on course readings. Detailed instructions will follow.
- b. **Examinations:** Mid-Term Exam will be on March 5<sup>th</sup> and the Final Exam On May 10<sup>th</sup> (Monday) from 8:00-11:00AM)
- c. **Class Discussion:** Given the size of the class, general discussion will be impossible. I will, however, try to reserve five minutes at the end of every class for questions and more if desired.

VI. Learning Goals:

- Students will understand the general background to the Holocaust
- Students will understand the long history of anti-Semitism
- Students will understand the implications the Holocaust has for understanding our own world
- Students will have an appreciation for the various interpretations scholars have adduced for the Holocaust
- Students will understand how the Holocaust has reshaped our understanding of religion, human psychology, and history
- Students will have an appreciation of how various scholarly disciplines contribute to an understanding of the Holocaust
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VII. Grading Policy

Mid-Term Exam (25 %); Final Examination 40 %); Course papers (35%)

## COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 12 Course Introduction

### Problems of Studying the Holocaust

Reading Assignments: R & R: Prologue & Ch.12  
Wiesel, *Night*; Friedrich, *Auschwitz*

Jan. 14 Why is the Holocaust so Problematic?  
“ 16 Examining Elie Wiesel’s *Night*  
“ 19 MLK Holiday  
“ 21 Examining the Otto Friedrich’s *Kingdom of Auschwitz*

### Why the Jews?

Reading Assignments: R & R: Chs. 1-4  
Gospel Accounts of the Crucifixion  
E-Reserve Texts by Church Fathers

Jan. 23 Film: “The Longest Hatred”  
“ 26 Jew-Hatred before Christianity (*Wiesel/Friedrich paper due*)  
“ 28 Anti-Semitism in Early Christianity (The Gospel Accounts)  
“ 30 The Church Fathers and the Jews  
Feb. 2 Jews in the Middle Ages  
“ 4 Jews and the Reformation (*Church Fathers paper due*)

- “ 6 The Enlightenment and Modern Anti-Semitism
- “ 9 The “Jewish Question” – Emancipation and Assimilation
- “ 11 The Emergence of Modern Racism – Aryans and Semites
- “ 13 The Science of Eugenics and Racial Purification
- “ 16 Germans and Jews in 1900
- “ 18 World War I and the Jews: The Birth of “World Jewry”
- “ 20 “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion”

### **Why the Germans?**

Reading Assignments: R&R, Ch. 5

- “ 23 The Emergence of Hitler and National Socialism
- “ 25 1920s: Decade of German Crisis
- “ 27 Hitler and Charisma
- Mar. 1 The Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship
- “ 3 Review for the Mid-Term

March 5----MID-TERM EXAM

### **The Nazi Search for a Solution: 1933-1939**

Reading Assignment: R&R, Ch. 5

- Mar.15 1933- The Nazi Search for a Solution to their “Jewish Question”
- “ 17 Population Policy, Eugenics, and Anti-Semitism
- “ 19 Defining the Jew: “Aryan Paragraph” to the Nuremberg Laws
- “ 22 Why Wasn’t Emigration a Solution?
- “ 24 Enlarging the “Jewish Question” – Annexing Austria
- “ 26 Nov. 9, 1938: The “Night of Crystal” Pogrom
- “ 29 Goering becomes “Coordinator” of Jewish Policy

### **The Making of the Final Solution: 1939-1945**

Reading Assignment: R&R, Ch. 6,7,8,9,10,11

Browning, *Ordinary Men*

Sereny, *Into That Darkness*

- “ 31 1939: War and the “Racial Revolution” (T-4)
- Apr. 2 1939-1940: Nisko and Madagascar
- “ 5 Ghettoization in Eastern Europe
- “ 7 1941: The Decision for Mass Murder
- “ 9 Spring Holiday
- “ 12 Establishing the Death Camps: 1941/1942
- “ 14 “Ordinary Men” or “Ordinary Germans”? (*Browning paper due*)
- “ 16 Film: “Obedience” (on the Milgram experiments)

- “ 19 The Universe of Auschwitz/Treblinka – Franz Stangl
- “ 21 The “Jewish Councils”/ Resistance or Collaboration
- “ 23 What did the world know? When did it know it?
- “ 26 Film: “Weapons of the Spirit” (*Sereny paper due*)
- “ 28 Holocaust Denial
- “ 30 The Problem of Holocaust Memory
- May 3 The World After Auschwitz

**Final Exam -- Monday, May 10 (8:00-11:00 AM)**

**HIS 392 (Spring 2004 Syllabus)**