



The Specter of GENOCIDE MASS MURDER IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Edited by
Robert Gellately
and Ben Kiernan

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“This wonderful collection addresses all the important questions: How modern is genocide? Can various cases be compared? Why has genocide been committed by such different kinds of states, from liberal democracies to vicious dictatorships? And how can we balance claims for justice with the need for objective scholarship? Everyone should read this book. It is an emotionally wrenching experience, and one that will make every reader think about modern human history in ways few of us learned in school.”

– Daniel Chirot, Professor of International Studies and Sociology,
University of Washington

“The comparative study of genocide is an evolving field characterized by great complexity and often competing approaches, dispositions, and interpretations. The editors of *The Specter of Genocide* clearly succeed in preserving the specificity of the individual cases while also demonstrating the necessity and worth of comparative analysis. Without ignoring the past, the volume focuses on the age of modernity and the direct relationship between ideology, state power, and total war and the perpetration of genocidal acts. It is sure to find broad application in scholarship and in the classroom.”

– Richard G. Hovannisian, AEF Chair in Modern Armenian History,
UCLA

The Specter of Genocide

MASS MURDER IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Genocide, mass murder, and human rights abuses are arguably the most perplexing and deeply troubling aspects of recent world history. This collection of essays by leading international experts offers an up-to-date, comprehensive history and analysis of multiple cases of genocide and genocidal acts, with a focus on the twentieth century. The book contains studies of the Armenian genocide, the victims of Stalinist terror, the Holocaust, and imperial Japan. Several authors explore colonialism and address the fate of the indigenous peoples in Africa, North America, and Australia. As well, there is extensive coverage of the post-1945 period, including the atrocities in the former Yugoslavia, Bali, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, East Timor, and Guatemala. The book emphasizes the importance of comparative analysis and theoretical discussion, and it raises new questions about the difficult challenges for modernity constituted by genocide and other mass crimes.

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The Specter of Genocide

MASS MURDER IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

The Study of Mass Murder and Genocide

ROBERT GELLATELY AND BEN KIERNAN

The twentieth century has been well described as an “age of extremes.”¹ There were two world wars, major revolutions, colonial and anticolonial conflicts, and other catastrophes. All too often mass murder of noncombatant civilians marred these conflicts. The murders were usually state-sponsored or officially sanctioned.² Indeed, by midcentury the pattern struck some scholars as so alarming that they began groping for new words to describe it. The Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin introduced the concept of genocide in a small book published during the Second World War.³ Later he helped prod the United Nations into formulating its Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948. The convention defined genocide broadly as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”⁴ These acts included killing or causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group and also deliberately inflicting conditions on a people such as “to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” The convention condemned measures like the prevention of births so that a people would die out and forcible transfer of a group’s children to another group. Because the Genocide Convention is a good starting point for discussion of the phenomenon, we analyze both its nature and its implications.

In 1945–46 the victorious Allies convened the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. These trials were partly justified in law as setting the precedent of holding leaders and other perpetrators responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes. At about the same time, the

1 The concept is from Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991* (New York, 1994).

2 T. Bushnell et al. (eds.), *State Organized Terror: The Case of Violent Internal Repression* (Boulder, 1991).

3 Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (Washington, D.C., 1944).

4 The text of the convention is reprinted in the Appendix (pp. 381–84).

establishment of the United Nations opened the possibility of creating an international court that could try such crimes as genocide. During the next decades, however, the Nuremberg precedent was something of a dead letter. The International Criminal Court was created only in 2002, opposed by the United States, China, India, and Iraq, among others. Worse, state-sponsored mass murder had even begun to increase toward the end of the twentieth century. New varieties of international crimes came into being during the 1980s and 1990s, encapsulated by the repugnant term “ethnic cleansing.” Though used before, the term was now given new currency.⁵

This book was conceived in the context of continuing reports of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and a wide range of other mass crimes still occurring in various parts of the globe, including East Timor, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia. We survey here a wide variety of mass murders and genocidal activities, but we make no claim to have covered all the cases. It is our hope that these studies will contribute to understanding the social, political, and psychological dynamics of the murderous side of the modern world.

Why has it taken so long for many scholars to get seriously involved in genocide research? Throughout the twentieth century individual scholars and survivors wrote and spoke out about the mass crimes against civilians they witnessed. Nevertheless, the sustained study of genocide and other forms of mass murder has been remarkably slow to start, although it accelerated in the 1990s.⁶ For example, only fairly recently have most (but not all) specialists agreed that the mass murder of the Armenians by the Young Turks was genocide, perhaps even the first twentieth-century case. The Armenian minority in Ottoman Turkey had been subject to sporadic persecutions over the centuries, and these were stepped up with pogrom-like massacres in the late nineteenth century. With the outbreak of the First World War, the Young Turk government proceeded far more radically against the Armenians. Inspired by rabid nationalism, Turks drove the

5 In Yugoslavia during World War II, Chetnik leaders had proposed “cleansing the lands of all non-Serb elements” and of “all national minorities.” See Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of “Ethnic Cleansing”* (College Station, Tex., 1995), 18. For a more general examination, see Andrew Bell-Fialkoff, *Ethnic Cleansing* (New York, 1996).

6 See, e.g., Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven, 1990); Helen Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective* (London, 1993); George J. Andreopoulos (ed.), *Genocide: Conceptual and Historical Dimensions* (Philadelphia, 1994); Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons, and Israel W. Charny (eds.), *Genocide in the Twentieth Century: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts* (New York, 1995); Kurt Jonassohn with Karin Solveig Bjornson, *Genocide and Gross Human Rights Violations in Comparative Perspective* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1998); Levon Chorbajian et al., (eds.), *Studies in Comparative Genocide* (London, 1999); Israel Charny (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Genocide* (Oxford, 1999).

Armenians from their homes and massacred them in such numbers that outside observers at the time remarked that what was happening was “a massacre like none other,” or “a massacre that changes the meaning of massacre.”⁷

Although we do not have reliable figures on the death toll, many historians accept that at a minimum between 800,000 and 1 million people were killed, often in unspeakably cruel ways. Unknown numbers of others converted to Islam or in other ways survived but were lost to the Armenian culture. At the time a number of influential people spoke out against these atrocities, most notably the distinguished historian Arnold J. Toynbee, but only in the past several decades have scholars devoted anything like sustained attention to this human catastrophe. Two essays in this volume deal with important aspects of the topic, but much more remains to be said.⁸ There is more than enough evidence to suggest that the mass murder of the Armenians was a genocide, as that crime was subsequently defined in the United Nations Genocide Convention of 1948. In this volume we treat this mass murder and other state-sponsored genocides as belonging to the same category of crime. Any surviving perpetrators of the Armenian genocide could certainly have been held to account in an international criminal court – if only international enforcement of the Genocide Convention had not had to wait for the convening of the Ad Hoc International Criminal Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda in The Hague in the 1990s, or the first permanent International Criminal Court in 2002.⁹

The study of mass murder and genocide took a major turn because of reactions to the atrocities committed by the Third Reich. On the one hand, the number of people killed in the Second World War in Europe as a whole was truly staggering, greater than in all the other wars fought in Europe since 1870. More than half of those killed in the Second World War were civilian noncombatants. In addition to the victims of bombing raids, millions were put to death as part of deliberate Axis plans to kill them because they belonged to groups or nations arbitrarily defined as “enemies.” The wartime killing in Europe could not be pushed aside, as too often happened when mass murder occurred in some distant land. The persecution of the Jews reached genocidal proportions in the heart of Europe. The Nazis even had plans for serial genocides. Had they succeeded, other nations would have been wiped out as identifiable cultures. As Gellately shows in his essay

7 See the remarks of contemporaries cited in Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), 37.

8 For a full-scale study and the literature, see Vahakn N. Dadrian, *History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, 3rd rev. ed. (Providence, 1997).

9 For a brief account, see “For Crimes of International Law, a Guide,” *Boston Globe*, July 23, 2001.

in this book, survivors would have been exploited as hapless helots. The Japanese also had far-reaching plans in the Pacific, which Gavan McCormack discusses in his essay. In both cases, the plans were stopped before they could be fully implemented. The war crimes of both states were publicized in postwar trials. At Nuremberg in 1945–46, the Nazi murder of the Jews was prosecuted as one of several “crimes against humanity,” but, as a leading historian of the Holocaust puts it, the crimes against the Jews as such “never assumed a prominent place” at Nuremberg.¹⁰ The term “Holocaust” began to be widely used only in the 1960s and later, and sustained professional study of what happened to the Jews began later still.¹¹

It is true, however, that the 1948 United Nations convention against genocide was formulated in the shadow of Auschwitz. Lemkin had wanted to criminalize and prosecute what he described as “the criminal intent to destroy or to cripple permanently a human group. The acts are directed against groups, as such, and individuals are selected for destruction only because they belong to these groups.”¹² Nevertheless, for many decades no charges of “genocide” were ever brought, so that in the 1950s and 1960s, when the Genocide Convention was discussed at all, it remained more of a rhetorical than a judicial device for use in the Cold War against the opposing superpower. Soon enough even accusations of genocide faded away.¹³

In the past two decades or so, a conjuncture of events has sparked renewed concern about genocide, mass murders, and grave human rights abuses of all kinds. The American public in particular grew far more attentive to the Holocaust beginning in the mid-1970s with a gradual introduction of Holocaust Remembrance days and other forms of commemoration.¹⁴ By the latter 1980s various cities had opened Holocaust museums, and in 1993 the United States government dedicated a new U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. By that time scholars around the world were engaged as never before in the study of the Third Reich. Historians and jurists alike began to see patterns in state-sponsored mass murders, so that during the past two decades, just as the study of the Holocaust greatly increased, so too can we see many more studies of various cases of mass murder and human rights abuses.

10 Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Hanover, 1987), 4.

11 For numerous relevant contributions, see Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (eds.), *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed and the Reexamined* (Bloomington, 1998).

12 Cited in Andreopoulos, *Genocide*, 1.

13 See Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston, 1999), 101.

14 Israel introduced a Holocaust Day of Remembrance on April 7, 1959. Such a day was introduced in the United States in 1979. See James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Memory* (New Haven, 1993), 270–72.

The attention of the West to mass murder of all kinds was also fueled from the 1960s and 1970s onward by reports of the systematic mass murder and genocide committed by the Suharto regime in Indonesia and East Timor, and by the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia.¹⁵ These cases, the worst postwar mass murders in Asia, heralded a new chapter in the modern history of genocide. In this book, Leslie Dwyer and Degung Santikarma analyze the wave of killings that swept the Indonesian island of Bali in 1965. From Africa came news of other mass murders, such as those in Burundi in 1972 and in Ethiopia from 1974, which Edward Kissi's chapter compares with those in Cambodia. A major turning point was reached in 1994 with the genocide in Rwanda. Initial reports of what was happening were downplayed until investigators brought out the truth, alas, mainly after the genocide had been brought to an end by Rwandan opposition forces. Robert Melson discusses the Rwanda case here. Those events, and hardly less horrific conflagrations in East Timor (again) in 1999, Bosnia in 1991–95, and elsewhere, helped to stimulate far more concern about mass murder and human rights abuses in our contemporary world. In this volume John Taylor examines what happened in East Timor from 1975 to 1999 as a case of counterinsurgency leading to genocide. Jacques Semelin looks at events in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and develops the concept of “mass crime” to include killings, destruction, deportation, and other large-scale persecutions. In his comparative chapter, Kiernan draws attention to some common ideological themes behind these diverse twentieth-century tragedies, stressing land-related issues – territorial expansionism and a preoccupation with cultivation – along with widely studied factors such as racism and religious prejudice.

Recent research into the history of mass murder and genocide has also been fueled by evidence from the archives of the former Soviet Union after its demise. For a long time, many Europeanists had been blind to the gravity of the human rights abuses committed over generations in the Soviet Union since the Russian Revolution. Plenty of news circulated from the 1930s about the fates of the kulaks (“rich peasants”) and Ukrainians. Thanks to perestroika and the new openness in the 1980s, and certainly after 1991 when the USSR dissolved before our eyes, research by historians in newly (if still only partly) opened Soviet archives brought out more stories that could not be denied or brushed aside. We are finally learning the full scope of what happened in the Soviet Union, not only in the 1930s, but during

15 Robert Cribb (ed.), *The Indonesian Killings, 1965–1966: Studies from Java and Bali* (Clayton, Australia, 1990); Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–79* (New Haven, 1996).

the war itself, and even well into the postwar era. We would point to the milestone studies recently published by historians in France like Nicolas Werth, who provides us here with an up-to-date account of the mass murders committed in the Soviet Union under Stalin.¹⁶ Several other Western scholars have also made important contributions to the history of these events.¹⁷ Together they show beyond a shadow of a doubt that even though some officially sponsored murder campaigns in the USSR did not always lead to genocide – as defined by the United Nations Convention – in a number of cases there was systematic mass murder of many millions. Certain peoples in the multinational Soviet Union were “ethnically cleansed,” others persecuted to the point where their cases could (now) be prosecuted under the convention. The implications of these recent studies must be considered by anyone trying to account for mass murder in the twentieth century.

Thus only in recent years has the new field of genocide studies come into being. This development has led in turn to the investigation of hitherto little-known or long-denied cases of mass murder and genocide. One such case, what happened in Guatemala, is detailed in this volume by Greg Grandin. The full story of the U.S. aid to killer regimes in Chile and El Salvador, on the other hand, has yet to be written.

As historians, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and others get involved in a new field like this, one that is remarkably complex, it is not surprising that they adopt multifaceted approaches and different “models” of explanation. In this volume we offer a multiplicity of theoretical approaches. It is worth briefly sketching out some of the main ones. We point to the diversity and mention several disputes, even among contributors in this volume, but we do not try to resolve them here.

THEORETICAL POSITIONS

The basic question in all studies of mass murder and genocide is, Why is an “enemy” – however defined – “exterminated”?¹⁸ Scholars from various fields have taken many different routes in trying to answer that question, but two main approaches stand out. One suggests that genocide, like war, massacre, mass rape, and other such atrocities, is anything but new and hardly

16 See Stéphane Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, trans. J. Murphy and M. Kramer (Cambridge, Mass., 1999).

17 See, e.g., Terry Martin, “The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing,” *Journal of Modern History* 70 (December 1998): 813–61.

18 Courtois et al., *The Black Book*, 747.

an invention of the twentieth century. These scholars insist that such horrors have occurred throughout history in all parts of the world.¹⁹ Mass killings are as old as time. We certainly can find many examples in history, during war, imperial conquest, religious unrest, social upheaval, or revolution, when widespread death and destruction were deliberately inflicted upon a foe, including innocent civilian noncombatants. As we detail here, even “extermination” was a familiar concept before 1900.

Nevertheless, if this first group of scholars tends to underline continuities in the human condition as explaining the recurrence of mass murder, another group emphasizes change over continuity. In this book, Omer Bartov, Marie Fleming, and Eric Weitz focus on the specific modernity of genocide. In their essays here they insist that there is something very new about many (if not all) of the twentieth-century mass murders, such as those inflicted on the Armenians or the Jews. Many of us would agree with the point made by Isabel Hull in her essay in this volume. On the basis of what happened to the Herero tribe in German South West Africa before the First World War, she argues that the vastness and totality of recent genocides or “final solutions” aimed at what she terms “problem populations” is such that they can be pursued only by an institution like the modern state. For her the question is, Under what conditions do governments and their agents decide on the utterly utopian goal of totally destroying a “problem population”? In German South West Africa, the representatives of the state on the spot began to move well beyond a “war of pacification.”²⁰ Long after the Herero were any real threat, the local German military commander issued an extermination order. Hull suggests that there were links between the kind of behavior that emerged in early twentieth-century German Africa and the Nazi “final solution to the Jewish question,” but her thesis is not of a simple continuity from Africa to Auschwitz.

The link between European imperialism and mass murder can be found in older literature.²¹ Yet there is a need for basic research on many other parts of Africa and Asia. Developments there need to be integrated into our studies of more modern cases of mass murder. Just how we can do this remains for another book. In this volume, Elazar Barkan offers an account of the genocides of indigenous peoples, which has become a controversial topic.

19 See, e.g., Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*.

20 For this phraseology, see Trutz Von Trotha, “‘The Fellows Can Just Starve.’ On Wars of ‘Pacification’ in the African Colonies of Imperial Germany and the Concept of ‘Total War,’” in Manfred F. Boemeke et al. (eds.), *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences, 1871–1914* (Cambridge, 1999), 415–35.

21 See, e.g., J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism, a Study* (1902; Ann Arbor, 1965); Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951; New York, 1973).

It is not always important to get bogged down on the question of whether or not these premodern or early modern mass murders can or cannot be defined as genocide. Although we again suggest the UN legal definition as a starting point, we need to move beyond definitions to study all such events in order to uncover their underlying dynamics. Mass murders in past centuries, however, should be seen as much more than mere antecedents to what happened in the twentieth century. It is not particularly useful to suggest that human nature – whatever that is – “explains” these horrors. We can study long-term trends, precursors, and antecedents but also look at differences. Why do some conquests and conflicts turn to mass murder, and others not? We also need to ask, as Glenda Gilmore has pointed out, both why there was no genocide aimed at the blacks in the United States, and why African Americans were nevertheless more concerned than most whites at the Nazi persecution of the Jews.²²

The issues about continuities and changes in the history of mass murder and genocide are not going to be resolved any time soon, and there is no good reason why they should be. There is plenty of room for discussion and for varying approaches and different methods.

A common goal of all researchers is to piece together who ordered the killings to commence in any given case. If in the twentieth century these mass murders were usually state-sponsored or at least officially sanctioned, who made the decisions? What were their motives? These questions are particularly relevant if we want to hold leaders responsible for genocide or other grave human rights abuses before international courts. The problem for historians and jurists is that leaders and their agents try, usually with considerable success, to cover up their crimes and to destroy the evidence. Moreover, some states continue to deny crimes, including cases of mass murder and even genocide, committed by their predecessors. They also limit access to their archives and even persecute or threaten researchers. When scholars are finally granted access to archives, they often find that evidence has been “laundered” or destroyed. So reconstructing the decision-making process is often no easy task.

Those scholars who focus mainly on the leaders of the mass murders adopt a “top down” or “intentionalist” approach. There are a number of intentionalist essays in this volume. They posit that leaders, and particularly

22 Glenda Gilmore, “‘An Ethiop among the Aryans’: African Americans and Fascism, 1930–1939,” paper to an international colloquium on Comparative Genocide, Barcelona, December 7–10, 2000. The colloquium was held by the Genocide Studies Program (Yale University) and the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Clark University) and sponsored by the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation.

dictators who intend to carry out mass murder, are more or less capable of bringing about their wishes, both using force and mobilizing sufficient support by winning converts to their cause. The argument is that without key decisions or orders from the top, without the role of a Hitler or a Pol Pot, to name two examples, the genocides now identified with their regimes would not have happened. It is therefore critical to study the emerging pre-occupations and ideologies of such unusual figures and their small close-knit circles, in order to be able to identify, predict, and prevent future outbreaks of extreme violence.

Another group of scholars represented in this volume, while not disagreeing with the importance of leaders, is interested in the implementation or enforcement process. They adopt a “bottom-up,” sometimes called “functionalist” or, more accurately, an “interactive” approach. They investigate how the intentions or orders of leaders – often located in distant capital cities – were translated into reality. These scholars argue that it is insufficient to point to the will or orders of the dictator to account for how the orders get followed. Jay Winter argues in his essay on World War I here that the consent of the broad masses of the people was somehow crucial and that this consent was not created or manufactured by a proverbial Big Brother “from above.” As he puts it, “The truth is more frightening: the Great War provided much evidence of the propensity for populations to generate internally a commitment to carry on a war of unprecedented carnage.” According to Gellately, the same point holds with regard to the Nazi regime in the Second World War. He suggests that the persecution of social outsiders between 1933 and 1939 won more support for Hitler’s regime than it lost, and that the early successes in the Second World War turned Hitler into Germany’s most popular leader of all time. That support encouraged Hitler to launch his campaigns of mass murder.

Scholars often disagree in their assessments of the motives of the face-to-face killers in the field. A number of essays in this volume adopt an interactive approach and focus both on what happened at the local level and, at the same time, look at the interactions between those “above” (the leaders) and “below” (those who either do the killing or collaborate in some way with the killers). These approaches, as well as a number of recent publications devoted to mass murders, strongly suggest that it is important to investigate, along with the thinking and policies of the leaders, the social and historical background of all kinds of mass crimes.²³

23 See Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York, 1992), and Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York, 1996).

Several accounts of recent mass murders in Africa indicate that one factor that leads to escalation, is a breakdown of previous relationships between emerging perpetrators and victims. In Rwanda, for example, close-knit bonds, even reaching into families over many decades, suddenly were torn asunder. When we turn to such cases, the question that arises is, Why did the killers start? Why did Hutus turn against their erstwhile Tutsi neighbors, even family members? Was it merely the case that both Hutus and Tutsis took over the discourse of their former colonial masters?²⁴ Was this another postcolonial legacy? Had they lived in greater harmony before Belgians strengthened ethnic distinctions in the latter part of the nineteenth century? Were the killers so easily manipulated and misled by such messages? Kissi, in his discussion of Ethiopia, maintains that tribal or racial animosities may have deep roots, but he also shows how a modern revolutionary regime can choose different approaches.

The “models” we once used to explain the behavior of the killers may now need rethinking. It turns out that even in the Holocaust, certainly the most widely investigated genocide of the twentieth century, our understanding of just who did the killing and why has changed dramatically in the past decade. Although the Nazi SS were key perpetrators, and the most important killing sites were specifically designed death camps, perhaps as many or more people were killed outside the camps. Mass killing certainly took place in “modernized” death camps but also in hands-on, face-to-face encounters.²⁵ These new studies suggest how “ordinary” people became caught up in the killing. Jan Gross shows, in his book on Jedwabne, what even the citizens of this little Polish town did. They murdered every one of their Jewish fellow citizens, apparently mostly for personal gain. They did so in unimaginably cruel ways, with neither restraint nor much involvement by the German occupation forces. That victims (under the Third Reich, these included the Poles) could also be perpetrators, was demonstrated beyond doubt in Jedwabne.²⁶

Recent research has pointed to the importance of focusing more on the victims in our accounts of mass murder. But by definition most victims are dead and unable to testify, and this makes it easier for the perpetrators not only to try to cover up their crimes, but also to erase the history, culture, and even the language of the victims. Whole communities, many of them going

24 See, e.g., Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed with Our Families* (New York, 1998), 54–55.

25 See Browning, *Ordinary Men*, and Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.

26 Jan Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Jedwabne* (Princeton, 2000).

back for centuries, are wiped off the face of the earth as if they had never existed. We must research these lost people, even though it is difficult to reconstruct what happened in the vortex of the killing process. When we are lucky, we can talk to survivors, hear their testimony, but all too often little or nothing remains. Dori Laub has reminded us in thoughtful essays how important it is to study the surviving victims, and even their children. The experience of coming close to death, being confined or threatened or forced to witness horrific crimes, constitutes for many a trauma requiring years to heal and exerts a powerful influence on their actions and on future generations.²⁷

A number of scholars have written about gender issues in genocides, but it is clear that this work is only beginning.²⁸ The great majority of the perpetrators of mass murder (even serial killers) are male. That finding has led some feminist writers and others to suggest that genocide has been a specifically male proclivity, and some of them have gone on to develop gender-specific theories of evil. From the few studies we have, however, it would seem that under certain circumstances some women are as capable as men of perpetrating horrific crimes and human rights abuses.²⁹

The gender of the victims, it has to be said, often did not count for much, especially if the perpetrator's intention was total annihilation. Notably in the Holocaust, there was (supposedly) a strict taboo on sexual relations between Germans and the Jews, and in Cambodia, between peasants and former city dwellers. More recently, though, mass rape formed part of ethnic cleansing operations in the former Yugoslavia. The appalling accounts of the treatment of Muslim women at the hands of Serb forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina seem to indicate that state-sponsored mass rape really was something new and that it carried a genocidal intent. Catharine MacKinnon goes so far as to assert that mass rape of this kind was "a form of genocide directed specifically at women."³⁰ In Bosnia-Herzegovina and several other areas (like Bali) covered in this volume, mass rape was employed consciously or systematically with the intent of destroying a group.

27 Dori Laub, *Psychoanalysis and Genocide: Two Essays*, Genocide Studies Program (New Haven, 2002); Ilany Kogan, *The Cry of Mute Children: A Psychoanalytic Perspective of the Second Generation of the Holocaust* (London, 1995).

28 See, e.g., Adam Jones, "Gendercide and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 2, 2 (June 2000): 185–211; "Gendercide," special issue, *Journal of Genocide Research* 4, 1 (March 2002); and the Gendercide Watch website <<http://www.gendercide.org>>.

29 For a brief introduction, see Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face to Face Killing in Twentieth Century Warfare* (London, 1999), 294–333. For specific cases, see Gudrun Schwarz, *Eine Frau an seine Seite: Ehefrauen in der SS-Sippengemeinschaft* (Hamburg, 1997), 99–227.

30 Catharine A. MacKinnon, "Crimes of War. Crimes of Peace," in Steven Lukes et al., *On Human Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1993* (New York, 1993), 83–109, at 88.

Mass rape is not unknown in history, even in recent times, and to mention a prominent example, was so pronounced in eastern Germany under the invading Soviet armies at the end of the Second World War, that whole villages of women, from young girls to grandmothers committed suicide by throwing themselves in rivers in order to avoid the marauding soldiers.³¹ That chapter in the history of mass rape did not end in mass murder of the surviving women, but it was accompanied by many other human rights abuses, including banishment to Siberia.³²

In more recent conflicts in the Balkans as well as in Asia, however, rape has been used not just as revenge, “reward” for the soldiers, or as random acts of sexual violence. Rape in some instances is no longer an “eternal” accompaniment of war but has come to be used as a systematized weapon of domination. Such strategic uses of organized mass rape seem new, and we can see how it functioned in several countries, particularly in Europe in 1945 and 1946, when it was used to terrorize certain ethnic groups into leaving their homes in search of safety.³³ Attacking women and even young girls was not only another way of shaming the men who may have fled, but it also dehumanized victims and made it easier to kill them. Even when these actions did not result in mass murder, the intention was at times genocidal in the sense that the aim was either to destroy the “problem population” as a living social or ethnic entity or to undermine its biological future.

As the Dwyer and Santikarma essay on Bali in this volume shows, it is often difficult to study these atrocities, because the survivors do not want to talk about what happened. Rape is enveloped by social taboos in all cultures, and many victims of mass rape do not want to discuss it for fear of being victimized yet again, perhaps even by their own families.

LEGAL AND ANALYTICAL CONCEPTS

The Intent of the Perpetrator

Legally, genocide is the most serious crime. It is considered an “aggravated” crime against humanity, for an important reason. The 1948 UN Genocide Convention requires the proven intent of the perpetrator to destroy a human

31 See Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–49* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 69–140.

32 See Freya Klier, *Verschleppt ans Ende der Welt: Schicksale deutscher Frauen in sowjetischen Arbeitslagern* (Munich, 2000).

33 See Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, 108–38, for an examination of how rape was used by Poland and Czechoslovakia to terrorize native Germans into leaving these countries at the end of the Second World War.

community – “the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such.” Other crimes against humanity and war crimes do not require proof of such intent, merely of the criminal action itself, such as mass murder.

What is “intent” to destroy a group? There are two different views on this. The everyday meaning tends to confuse intent with “motive.” If a colonial power, motivated by conquest of a territory, or a revolutionary regime with the aim of imposing a new social order, in the process destroys all or part of a human group, does that constitute genocide? Not according to most popular definitions of intent. But in criminal law, including international criminal law, the specific motive is irrelevant. Prosecutors need only prove that the criminal act was intentional, not accidental. A conquest or a revolution that causes total or partial destruction of a group, legally qualifies as intentional and therefore as genocide whatever the goal or motive, so long as the acts of destruction were pursued intentionally. In this legal definition, genocidal intent also applies to acts of destruction that are not the specific goal but are predictable outcomes or by-products of a policy, which could have been avoided by a change in that policy. Deliberate pursuit of any policy in the knowledge that it would lead to destruction of a human group thus constitutes genocidal intent. In international law, then, “genocide” describes *both* deliberate mass extermination campaigns specifically motivated by fear or hatred of a victim group, as in the Nazi Holocaust, *and* destruction of human groups pursued for more indirect or political purposes, such as the Indonesian military conquest of East Timor or the Khmer Rouge utopian communist revolution. Of course, there remain important social and political distinctions between these cases, but the legal category of genocide includes them all.

The term “as such” in the UN definition, added to the convention text as a late political compromise, presents thorny legal problems. How are we to interpret this term as it appears in the phrase “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such”? Does “as such” refer to the preceding word “group,” meaning the destruction of people as a communal group, but not necessarily destruction of individual members? The convention is positive on this. “Killing members of the group” is only the first of the convention’s list of five acts, any of which constitute genocide when committed with intent to destroy a group. The fifth, “forcibly transferring children of the group to another group,” for instance, may destroy a communal group by dispersal without killing any of its individual members. For this reason the Australian Aborigines were recently held to have suffered genocide up to 1970, as a result of the policy of forcibly

removing children from their parents to “breed out the colour.”³⁴ Perhaps 50,000 Aboriginal children were placed with white Australian families explicitly “for the absorption of these people into the general population.” Australia’s Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s 1997 report, *Bringing Them Home*, concluded that “between one in three and one in ten indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families” between 1910 and 1970. The commission described this forcible removal as a breach of Article II (e) of the 1948 Genocide Convention.³⁵

This finding was legally correct, though controversial. Popular perceptions of “genocide” often do not encompass nonlethal destruction of a group, even when intentional. Nor would a colloquial definition encompass acts of destruction motivated by proclaimed positive or humanitarian purposes, such as removing children purportedly to provide better care for them. Legally, both do constitute genocide. The destruction of the group “as such” is in each case pursued with intent. Applying a more colloquial definition of genocide here would deny victims a remedy to which they are legally entitled.

Or does “as such” mean destruction of individual members *because of* their membership of the group? This would entail some form of discriminatory practice. What if all groups are treated similarly, as in Cambodia where everybody was occasionally served small pieces of pork in the compulsory communal mess halls? That might not seem discriminatory. But is it not discrimination against Muslims to force *them* to eat the pork, on pain of death? Or does the law require proof of a test case of a non-Muslim who refused to eat pork and was *not* executed? That Muslims be killed “as Muslims” – rather than as recalcitrants who refused to eat what they were served?³⁶ Here again, the legal definition of “intent” comes into play. A policy of total national conformity, even if enforced without discrimination, will predictably lead to destruction of minority ethnic or religious groups, “as such.” Relentless pursuit of such a policy constitutes, in law, genocidal intent.

The same may be said of a policy of conquest such as the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. Does intent to destroy a group “as such” require

34 Quoted in Robert Manne, “In Denial: The Stolen Generations and the Right,” *Australian Quarterly Review* 1 (2001): 38–40. See also Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, “The Massacre of Australian History,” *Overland* (Melbourne), no. 163 (winter 2001): 21–39.

35 Ronald Wilson, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (Sydney, 1997), 275.

36 See the exchange between Ben Kiernan and Michael Vickery in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, 4 (October–December 1988): 2–33; 22, 1 (January–March 1990): 31–33; and 22, 2 (April–June 1990): 35–40.

the destruction to be motivated by targeting of an ethnic or religious group? Again, intentional mass murder of a political resistance movement, whose nationwide support ensures that its destruction means partial destruction of an ethnic or national group – this too, in law, constitutes genocide.

The Targeted Victim Groups

The intent of the perpetrator is only one end of the genocidal process. Differing definitions of genocide used by scholars and lawyers also cover different victim groups. Much depends on whether genocide victims are targeted in groups of the kind that allow individual members to escape persecution and death by concealing or abandoning one group identity, and taking up another as a member of a nontargeted group. The UN convention, as we have seen, requires victims to be members of a “national, ethnical, racial or religious group.” It is most difficult for members of racial or ethnic groups to abandon such markers of their identity or declare their membership of alternative groups. Most Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, for instance, found it impossible to alter or hide their identity as targets of Hitler’s “final solution.” It is sometimes easier for individuals to change their citizenship or creed than their racial or ethnic background. During the Armenian genocide, a small number of Armenian Christians adopted Islam and were spared by the Young Turk regime.³⁷ But generally both national and religious groups are also quite stable, commanding such loyalty from their members that it is an extreme injustice to require people to abandon such groups (even) to save their own lives. For these reasons, genocide is the ultimate crime against humanity because it is legally defined as the targeting of people for destruction on the basis of what are presumed to be more or less inherited, perhaps genetic, shared group characteristics that the victims cannot divest nor be reasonably expected to divest, irrespective of their intentions or actions.

On the other hand, membership of social classes, such as “the bourgeoisie,” is more easily divested and less unjustly prohibited. The forced abandonment of one’s membership of such groups is not necessarily so demanding a condition for survival as forced abandonment of one’s religious or ethnic identity. It certainly has none of the impossibility of transforming one’s racial background. The Soviet persecution of kulaks in the 1930s took millions of lives. Debate continues whether Stalin’s intent was to physically exterminate all kulaks as individuals or rather to confiscate their property

37 Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, 25.

forcibly and thus destroy them “as a class.”³⁸ The latter policy, which in principle would allow some kulaks to survive by adopting a different class identity, would not constitute genocide in international law. The Chinese Communist Party also exterminated landlords and persecuted their children. Some scholars believe social groups should be protected by the UN convention on the grounds that social group membership, and even property or wealth, is largely inherited and that it is unjust to expect members to transform their socioeconomic lives radically simply in order to be spared extermination. Many scholars believe that for this reason the UN definition of genocide is conceptually deficient. Some, like Helen Fein, have advanced academic definitions that include destruction of social groups.³⁹ And, of course, in practice the massacre of social groups often proceeds dogmatically, with little real opportunity for targeted group members to win clemency by declaring their adherence to a more acceptable social group.

Political groups are more ephemeral again. Adherence to a political association is usually a voluntary act of adulthood, a democratic right. But extinguishing political freedom by force is not the same as genocide. The extermination of an entire political group – for instance, leftists in Indonesia or Guatemala, or rightists in Ethiopia – does not constitute genocide under the UN convention. A major reason for the convention’s failure to protect social and political groups is the Soviet Union’s opposition to their inclusion during the negotiations of the late 1940s, to prevent Stalin’s mass murders being held to be genocidal. The United States, which has also directed mass exterminations of political groups – for instance, in Vietnam, Chile, and El Salvador – has similarly benefited from the convention’s failure to protect them.⁴⁰ These victims are protected by the international law on crimes against humanity, although some scholars prefer a definition of

38 For different views on this, see Robert Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York, 1986); R. W. Davies, Mark Harrison, and S. G. Wheatcroft, *The Economic Transformation of the Soviet Union, 1913–1945* (Cambridge, 1994), 64–77; V. Danilov et al. (eds.), *The Tragedy of the Soviet Village: Collectivization and Dekulakization: Documents and Materials, 1927–1939*, vol. 3: *The End of 1930–1933* (Moscow, 2001), 842–87; R. W. Davies, M. Tauger, and S. G. Wheatcroft, “Stalin, Grain Stocks and the Famine of 1932–1933,” *Slavic Review* (Fall 1995): 642–57; James Mace and Leonid Heretz (eds.), *Oral History Project of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine* (Washington, D.C., 1990); and works listed in *Holodomor v Ukraini 1932–1933 rr.: Bibliografichnyi pokazhchik* (Odesa-Kyiv, 2001), 656.

39 Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*.

40 Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr estimate that 475,000 Vietnamese civilians in National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF) areas “died as a direct consequence” of actions by the U.S. and Saigon regime in 1965–72 alone. “Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides,” *International Studies Quarterly* 1988 (32): 364. See also Christopher Hitchens, *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (London, 2001).

genocide that also includes destruction of political groups.⁴¹ Valid objections to the political manipulation of the negotiations leading up to the adoption of the Genocide Convention do not undermine the conceptual case that the ultimate crime against humanity is that of exterminating groups whose members had no choice in that membership. This does not apply to political or even social units in the way it does to religious and especially racial groups.

Finally, scholars have argued that even the targeting of imaginary groups, such as alleged “wreckers” (nameless industrial saboteurs) in Stalin’s purges, should be included in the definition of genocide.⁴² Here, with the most ephemeral of all target groups, the spectrum bends into a horseshoe. To sow arbitrary terror among an entire population, perpetrators may kill rather indiscriminately but still identify “targets” by a common if meaningless label. These victims are not members of any existing or objective group but are forced into an imaginary association. They are “political” groups only in the mind or the propaganda of the perpetrator but are therefore most difficult of all for their members to abandon. Again, the intent of the perpetrator is the key factor, but in this case it does not target “a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such,” so the result is not categorized legally as genocide. Perhaps it should be. Nevertheless, the UN legal definition is finally being enforced and developed in several international courts. It remains the best starting point for discussion of genocide, if only to make conceptual distinctions between different cases irrespective of labels we choose to apply to them.

Ethnic Conflict and Ethnic Cleansing

The main differences between ethnic conflict and genocide lie in two areas.⁴³ The distinctions, again, focus on the definition of the targeted victim group and on the perpetrators and their intent. First, in principle at least, ethnic conflict may at times be no more than a clash of ethnic armed forces; it may not necessarily be genocidal or even target civilians, though of course it often does, as in the case of Kosovo in 1999. Second, ethnic conflict implies a mass popular movement, with at least widespread acquiescence or even

41 Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*.

42 Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, 25 (“if people define a situation as real it is real in its consequences”), 30. See also Chalk, “Redefining Genocide,” in Andreopoulos, *Genocide*, 47–63, and Helen Fein, “Genocide, Terror, Life Integrity, and War Crimes: The Case for Discrimination,” in Andreopoulos, *Genocide*, 99.

43 See, e.g., Daniel Chiro and Martin Seligman (eds.), *Ethnopolitical Warfare: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions* (Washington, D.C., 2001).

participation. Genocide does not necessarily require that, though of course it sometimes takes a mass participatory form, as in Rwanda in 1994.

In some cases, then, genocide can be decided, planned, and ordered (even sometimes carried out, in secret) by very few perpetrators. But almost by definition, it claims very many victims. This key imbalance is not central to ethnic conflict, which, again in principle, may even be unbalanced the other way. One may imagine mass participation in ethnically recruited armies fighting wars but without targeting enemy civilians, inflicting military casualties but not producing massive numbers of victims. Even unarmed mass participation sometimes restrains violence on both sides, as in Hindu-Muslim communal divisions in South Asia. So, resolution of the definitional dilemmas of genocide must distinguish it from ethnic conflict. Perhaps genocide could be considered a subcategory of ethnic conflict, if all we need to define is a specific form that targets civilians for destruction. But not if we define ethnic conflict as a broad social phenomenon. Genocide, with its essential feature of perpetrator intent, need only be a political operation.

Likewise, again in principle, “ethnic cleansing” involves the “purification” of a territory, not necessarily of a population. This means the deportation, usually threatening but not necessarily violent, of an ethnic group from the territory. As Fein points out, “Ethnic cleansing requires either a protected reservation within a state or a free exit for the victims to escape; genocide precludes both protection and exit.”⁴⁴ In practice, but not always, ethnic cleansing precedes and/or accompanies genocide, as in the case of the Khmer Rouge annihilation of the Vietnamese minority in Cambodia in 1975–79. Or, like the earlier Lon Nol regime’s massacres that drove 300,000 Vietnamese from Cambodia in 1970, ethnic “cleansing” may be merely a precedent, or a phase in a burgeoning genocidal process. But it is a separate event.

The chapters of this book examine murderous processes that range across these various but conceptually distinct categories. They consider different definitions and interpretations that bring the international history of genocide in the twentieth century into comparative perspective. In part, this is a necessarily sociological undertaking. But chronological perspective is equally illuminating.

44 Helen Fein, “Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide: Definitional Evasion, Fog, Morass or Opportunity,” paper presented at the Association of Genocide Scholars Conference, Minneapolis, June 10–12, 2001, 1–16, at 13.

EXTERMINATION BEFORE THE CENTURY OF GENOCIDE

The twentieth century introduced new features to the process of mass murder. The concept of total war that burst onto the historical scene, most notably in World War I, brought civilians into warfare in all-encompassing new ways, from mass participation in industrial mobilization at the rear, to the targeting of whole populations by opposing armies. As Niall Ferguson has put it, “at root, the First World War was democratic.”⁴⁵ With or without elections, the age of nationalism brought entire peoples into new political life as both agents and victims. Technological developments such as mass production of arms, the proliferation of heavy weaponry, the development of poison gas and other vectors of large-scale destruction, lightning communication by radio and telegraph, and rapid mass transportation by rail and road all brought unspeakable violence into civilian life. And new forms of organization such as militarized bureaucracies, totalitarian party-states, and continental military strategies transformed entire peoples and nations into pawns in war games on political chessboards. Peasants became cannon fodder, workers cogs in machines, mothers bearers of child soldiers, children porters of the future, teachers skirmishers for national or international ideologies. All therefore became targets of opposing regimes, similarly composed as armies, with the same new capacity to deliver on their ambitions and threats.

But the twentieth century did not invent mass extermination of peoples. In the early modern world, the technologies used were inferior and the organization of the killing was not as state-controlled or as systematic. Modern totalitarian ideologies were also absent. However, the population losses were equally catastrophic. In Mexico, conquered by Spanish conquistadors in 1519, the estimated pre-Columbian population of 12 million or more fell to just over 1 million by 1600. Tzvetan Todorov has shown that as early as 1600 the Spanish had set in motion three overlapping processes that led to the deaths of millions of Indians. These included deliberate mass murder, death as a result of forced labor and maltreatment, and “microbe shock” by which the majority population was infected and died off. He suggests that the British and French acted similarly wherever they went. They did not wipe out as many as the Spanish did simply because their expansion at that crucial time was not as extensive.⁴⁶

45 Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York, 1999), 435.

46 Tzvetan Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique. La question de l'autre* (Paris, 1982), 170–71; English translation: *The Conquest of America*, trans. R. Howard (New York, 1985), 133.

Todorov writes of sixteenth-century Mexico: "If the word genocide has ever been applied accurately to a case, this is it." He distinguishes the Spanish massacres from the Aztecs' own human sacrificial murders. European massacres, he writes, were

inextricably linked to colonial wars, waged far from the metropolis. The more distant and alien the massacre victims, the better: they were exterminated without remorse, more or less as beasts. The individual identity of the massacre victim is by definition irrelevant (or this would be murder); there is neither the time nor the curiosity to know whom one is killing at any moment. In contrast to the sacrifices, the massacres were generally not proclaimed; their very occurrence was kept secret and denied. If the religious murder is a sacrifice, the massacre is an atheistic murder. . . . Far from central power, from royal law, all restraints disappear, and the social bonds, already loosened, snap, revealing not a primitive nature, the animal sleeping in all of us, but a modern being, full of the future itself, which retains no morality and which kills because and when it pleases. The "barbarity" of the Spanish is in no way atavistic, or animalistic. It is very human and announces the arrival of modern times.⁴⁷

It is difficult to read Todorov's account and not identify deliberate policies of mass murder and genocide, although diseases escaping the control of the colonists caused most of the deaths.

North of the Rio Grande, the indigenous population in 1492 has been estimated at over 5 million.⁴⁸ By 1892 the survivors numbered only 500,000.⁴⁹ The colonies that became the United States saw massive brutality and even deliberate exterminations. In seventeenth-century Connecticut, hundreds of Pequots were slaughtered in more than one incident,⁵⁰ and a thousand Narragansetts were massacred in Rhode Island.⁵¹

A century later, during the Ottawa chief Pontiac's rebellion, British forces turned deliberately to biological warfare. Commander in chief General

47 Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique*, 170, 184–85. For the toll, see also Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Conquest of Paradise* (New York, 1990), 159–61; Mark Cocker, *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold: Europe's Conquest of Indigenous Peoples* (New York, 1998), 111; and David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York, 1992), 267.

48 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 266–68; Sale, *Conquest*, 316; James Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep: A History of Native America* (New York, 1998), 20, notes extreme estimates of 2 million and 18 million.

49 Sale, *Conquest*, 349. Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 146, gives a figure of 250,000 for 1900.

50 English forces massacred 400 Indians in one village in 1634; at another, 500 Pequots were killed in one hour in 1637. See, e.g., Chandler Whipple, *The Indian and the White Man in Connecticut* (Stockbridge, Mass., 1972), 74; Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 115, quoting Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building* (Minneapolis, 1980), 46–47; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York, 1976), ch. 13; and Alfred A. Cave, *The Pequot War* (Hanover, 1996), 148–53.

51 Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep*, 95–97; Jennings, *Invasion*, 312; James D. Drake, *King Philip's War: Civil War in New England, 1675–1676* (Hanover, 1999); Russell Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion: Racial Politics in New England, 1675–76* (New York, 1990).

Jeffrey Amherst urged a field officer in Philadelphia on July 7, 1763: "Could it not be contrived to Send the Small Pox among those Dissaffected Tribes of Indians?" His officer, en route to relieve Fort Pitt in western Pennsylvania, replied: "I will try to Inoculate the Indians by means of blankets." On July 16, Amherst reiterated: "You will Do well to try to Inoculate the Indians by means of Blanketts, as well as to try Every other method that can serve to extirpate this Execrable Race." Fort Pitt had already anticipated these orders. Reporting on parleys with Delaware chiefs on June 24, a trader wrote: "[W]e gave them two Blankets and an Handkerchief out of the Small Pox Hospital. I hope it will have the desired effect." The military hospital records confirm that two blankets and handkerchiefs were "taken from people in the Hospital to Convey the Smallpox to the Indians." The Fort commander paid for these items, which he certified "were had for the uses above mentioned." Elizabeth Fenn documents "the eruption of epidemic smallpox" among Delaware and Shawnee Indians nearby, about the time the blankets were distributed.⁵²

After independence from Britain, massacres of Indians accelerated in parts of the United States, especially the West.⁵³ In 1851 the governor of California, Peter Burnett, urged "a war of extermination . . . until the Indian becomes extinct." His successor also threatened "extermination to many of the tribes." From 1852 to 1860, California's indigenous population fell from 85,000 to 35,000.⁵⁴ Massacres proliferated and official bounties were paid for Indian scalps.⁵⁵ The *San Francisco Bulletin* commented: "Even the record of Spanish butcheries in Mexico and Peru has nothing so diabolical."⁵⁶

A Minnesota newspaper announced in 1863: "The State reward for dead Indians has been increased to \$200 for every red-skin sent to Purgatory. This

52 Elizabeth A. Fenn, "Biological Warfare in Eighteenth Century North America," *Journal of American History* 86, 4 (March 2000): 1552–80, at 1554–58.

53 See Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999); Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars* (New York, 2001); Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York, 1993); and Gloria Jahoda, *The Trail of Tears: The Story of the American Indian Removals, 1813–1855* (New York, 1975).

54 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 144–46.

55 U.S. troops perpetrated a massacre of Pomo Indians in the Clear Lake area in 1849; 2,000–3,000 Yama were almost annihilated between 1850 and 1872. In a genocide, the 12,000 Yuki were reduced to fewer than 200; several times a week, white killing parties would murder 50 or 60 Indians on a trip. Militiamen attacked the annual ritual gatherings of the Tolowa people, killing several hundred people in 1853, piling up "seven layers of bodies in the dance house when they burned it" the next year, and killing 70 Indians in "a battle at the mouth of the Smith River" in 1855. In 1859–61, bounties "in payment of Indian scalps" were advertised in local newspapers; after one massacre, "enormous claims were presented to the Legislature." In 1860, Major G. J. Raines reported that "Volunteers" had raided "the home of a band of friendly Indians" known as Indian Island, "murdering all the women and children" on the island. Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep*, 228–33.

56 *Ibid.*, 233.

sum is more than the dead bodies of all the Indians east of the Red River are worth.”⁵⁷ Colorado’s *Rocky Mountain News* proclaimed in the same year that the Indians “ought to be wiped from the face of the earth.” When two soldiers were killed in a clash, the local military commander predicted that “now is but the commencement of war with this tribe, which must result in exterminating them.” The *Rocky Mountain News* urged troops to “go for them, their lodges, squaws and all,” and called again for “extermination of the red devils.” Colonel John Chivington campaigned to “kill and scalp all, little and big.” He stated his view that “Nits make lice,” prefiguring a Nazi racist metaphor. At Sand Creek on November 29, 1864, Chivington’s troops slaughtered 100 to 500 unarmed women and children and scalped nearly all of them.⁵⁸

When Cheyenne, Sioux, and Arapaho warriors attacked army posts, ranches, and wagon trains, the U.S. Army sent orders to “kill every male Indian over twelve years of age.” General Sherman in 1866 urged “vindictive earnestness against the Sioux, even to their extermination, men, women and children.”⁵⁹ In 1891 South Dakota’s L. Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz*, called for “the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians.” After Wounded Knee, when the U.S. Seventh Cavalry massacred 200 women and children, Baum recommended that “we had better, in order to protect our civilization, follow it up . . . and wipe these untamed and untamable creatures from the face of the earth.”⁶⁰ Theodore Roosevelt stated flatly: “I don’t go so far as to think that the only good Indians are dead Indians, but I believe nine out of ten are, and I shouldn’t like to inquire too closely into the case of the tenth.” The extermination of Native Americans and seizure of their lands “was as ultimately beneficial as it was inevitable.”⁶¹

In Australia, the Aboriginal population at the time of British settlement in 1788 is now estimated at around 750,000. About 20,000 Aborigines died fighting, the birthrate fell, and 600,000 perished from introduced diseases.⁶² In 1867 a Queensland newspaper urged “a war of extermination” against

57 *Winona Daily Republican*, September 24, 1863. Chris Mato Nunpa provided a copy.

58 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 129–34; Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman, Okla., 1961).

59 Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep*, 277–78.

60 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 126–27, quoting Baum, *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer*, December 20, 1891.

61 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 245.

62 The 750,000 figure is that of anthropologist Dr. Peter White and prehistorian Professor D. J. Mulvaney, quoted in *Sydney Morning Herald*, February 25, 1987. See also Noel Butlin, *Our Original Aggression: Aboriginal Populations of Southeastern Australia, 1788–1850* (Sydney, 1983). Henry Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier* (Melbourne, 1982), 122, plausibly estimates the number of blacks who died violently at 20,000.

Aborigines as “the only policy to pursue.”⁶³ In 1911 the survivors numbered 31,000.⁶⁴

Thus, despite the absence of totalitarian ideologies and state control, the language of extermination was already common by the nineteenth century. It did not always signal purposeful genocide. In another British colony, the Irish Famine of 1846–51 killed a million people in peacetime, and another million emigrated. Britain provided minimal assistance, and none after October 1847. In 1849 British prime minister Russell refused Ireland the 100,000 pounds minimum considered necessary to prevent further possible starvation.⁶⁵ The earl of Clarendon, Britain’s lord lieutenant of Ireland, decried what he called Westminster’s “policy of extermination” of the Irish.⁶⁶

Several decades later, the high tide of imperialism in Africa swamped the Congo. The rapid decimation of the African population by introduced diseases, while European overseers often worked the survivors to death, resembled the early impact of Spanish rule on Hispaniola and Mexico. Adam Hochschild writes that smallpox left “village after village full of dead bodies.” Sleeping sickness killed half a million people in 1901 alone. “When a village or a district failed to supply its quota of rubber or fought back . . . soldiers or rubber company ‘sentries’ often killed everyone they could find.” Belgian district commissioner Jules Jacques called for “absolute submission . . . or complete extermination.” The Congo’s population fell by half, according to estimates – 10 million died from 1885 to 1920.⁶⁷

Not far away to the south, in 1904, General Lothar von Trotha was appointed commander of the German colonial forces confronting the rebellious Herero nation in South West Africa. Von Trotha proclaimed: “I shall annihilate the revolting tribes with rivers of blood and rivers of gold.” He deployed 5,000 soldiers to surround the hills where the surviving 60,000 Herero people and their herds had gathered. The German forces

63 Henry Reynolds, *Why Weren't We Told?* (Melbourne, 1999), 119, quoting the editor of the *Peak Downs Telegram* in Clermont, Queensland.

64 Colin Tatz, *Genocide in Australia*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Research Discussion Paper No. 8 (Canberra, 1999), 9. The 1921 census produced a figure of 62,000 Aborigines. C. D. Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society* (Ringwood, Victoria, 1972), 382.

65 Cormac O’Grada, *Black ’47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine* (Princeton, 1999), 77, 83.

66 George Villiers, Earl of Clarendon and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in a letter to British Prime Minister Lord John Russell on April 26, 1849, denounced Britain’s refusal of aid: “I don’t think there is another legislature in Europe that would disregard such sufferings as now exist in the west of Ireland or coldly persist in a policy of extermination.” The bishop of Derry, in a public letter dated April 9, 1847, had referred to the famine as “wholesale systems of extermination.”

67 Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold’s Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston, 1998), 226–33.

seized the waterholes, and sprung their trap. The Herero had little choice but to head into the Omaheke desert. Pursuing German troops massacred almost everyone they found, including women and children (on von Trotha's orders), and poisoned the waterholes in the desert. On October 1, von Trotha issued an "extermination order" (*Vernichtungs Befehl*), which proclaimed: "Any Herero found within the German borders with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I shall no longer receive any women or children; I will drive them back to their people or I will shoot them. This is my decision for the Herero people."⁶⁸ Only 1,000 survivors crossed the desert to reach British Bechuanaland alive.

The twentieth century had begun.

68 Cocker, *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold*, 333.

PART I

Genocide and Modernity

Twentieth-Century Genocides

Underlying Ideological Themes from Armenia to East Timor

BEN KIERNAN

The perpetrators of the 1915 Armenian genocide, the Holocaust during World War II, and the Cambodian genocide of 1975–79 were, respectively, militarists, Nazis, and communists. All three events were unique in important ways. Yet racism – Turkish, German, and Khmer – was a key component of the ideology of each regime. Racism was also conflated with religion. Although all three regimes were atheistic, each particularly targeted religious minorities (Christians, Jews, and Muslims). All three regimes also attempted to expand their territories into a contiguous heartland (“Turkestan,” “Lebensraum,” and “Kampuchea Krom”), mobilizing primordial racial rights and connections to the land. Consistent with this, all three regimes idealized their ethnic peasantry as the true “national” class, the ethnic soil from which the new state grew.

These ideological elements – race, religion, expansion, and cultivation – make an explosive mixture. Most also appear, in different colors and compounds, in the chemistry of other cases of genocide, including the Indonesian massacres of Communists in 1965–66 and in East Timor from 1975 to 1999, and also in the Bosnian and Rwandan genocides of the early 1990s.

RELIGION AND RACE

In colonial genocides, racial divisions are usually clear-cut, overriding even religious fraternity. The first genocide of the twentieth century pitted the German military machine against the Herero and Nama peoples of South West Africa, whose leaders were mostly Christian-educated.¹ Two days after

1 Mark Cocker, *Rivers of Gold, Rivers of Blood: Europe's Conquest of Indigenous Peoples* (New York, 1998), 304, 314–15, 335.