(Mesopotamia, Emar, Nuzi)," in *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity* (ed. John Bodel and Saul M. Olyan; Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 20–36, 26–27; Saul M. Olyan, "Family Religion in Israel and the Wider Levant of the First Millennium BCE," in *Household and Family Religion*, 113–126, 119; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JSOTSup 123; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), esp. 109–132.

30. Baruch Halpern, *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 81–82. James C. VanderKam also considers David complicit in the assassination of Eshbaal. While he concludes that there is no firm historical evidence for this, he uses redaction analysis to argue that David admits responsibility for the deaths of Abner and Eshbaal in his response to Shimi's accusations that David is guilty in the deaths of members of Saul's house. VanderKam, "Davidic Complicity in the Deaths of Abner and Eshbaal: A Historical and Redactional Study," *JBL* 99 (1980): 521–539, 521, 529, 534, 539.
31. Mabee, "David's Judicial Exoneration," 107.
32. Abbink, "Preface," xii–xiii; Riches, "Phenomenon of Violence," 8, 11; Eisei Kurimoto and Simon Simonse, *Conflict, Age, and Power in North East Africa: Age Systems in Transition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1998), 10; Anton Blok, "The Meaning of 'Senseless' Violence," in *Honour and Violence* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 103–114, 111.
33. McCarter, *II Samuel*, 129; VanderKam, "Davidic Complicity," 527; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 81–82; Steven L. McKenzie, *King David: A Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 45, 125–126.
34. VanderKam, "Davidic Complicity," 527.
35. 1 Samuel 31:9–13 and 2 Samuel 21:12–14 do not mention recovery of Saul's head. First Chronicles 10:9–12 states that the Philistines fastened Saul's head in the temple of Dagon, but does not explicitly state that the Jabesh-Gileadites recover his head along with the body.
36. Toward one avenue of comparison in the realm of civil law, I note that Hammurapi's code includes four circumstances in which hands should be cut off: if a son strikes a father (195); if a surgeon makes various mistakes (218); if a barber makes various mistakes (226); and theft (253); there are no circumstances suggesting severing feet, thumbs, toes, or heads.
37. 2 Samuel 21:12 specifies that David took the bones of Saul and Jonathan, but does not mention the bones of Saul's other sons, whom the Jabesh-Gileadites also recovered from the wall, according to 1 Samuel 31:12. First Samuel 31:10 only describes the Philistines fastening (using *tāqa'*) Saul's body to the wall, though 1 Samuel 31:12 clearly assumes the sons' bodies were exposed as well.

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2

Dispossessing Nations

POPULATION GROWTH, SCARCITY, AND GENOCIDE IN ANCIENT ISRAEL AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY RWANDA

T. M. Lemos

1. Introduction

"From the cities of these peoples which Yhwh your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not let anything that breathes remain alive. You shall surely annihilate them (*haḥărēm taḥărîmēm*) . . . just as Yhwh your God has commanded you so that they may not teach you to do any of the abominations that they do for their gods, and you thus sin against Yhwh your God."[1] Thus reads Deuteronomy 20:16–17[2] —startling verses from a passage whose regulations on war are in many ways exemplified by the conquest narrative found in Joshua 1–12. Robert Coote has referred to these events as "an orgy of terror, violence, and mayhem."[3] Certainly, most contemporary readers recoil upon reading the account of the annihilation of Canaanite cities,[4] and many scholars who have written on them have referred to the events described with the term "genocide."[5] Despite this, very few scholars have examined sociological and other theories of genocide in order to attempt to understand these passages better.[6] This being so, the present chapter will attempt to do the following: first, it will briefly examine both definitions of and theories of genocide in order to determine whether or not ideas from the field of genocide studies should be utilized in the examination of Israelite conquest narratives. The chapter will then discuss what I consider to be a very useful case study, that of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, in order to highlight certain phenomena that in my view shed light on the genocidal character of not only many Israelite conquest narratives but also the similar practices described in the Mesha Inscription. More specifically, I will suggest that population increases and land scarcities, when combined with particular cultural factors, led tensions between groups in the Levantine region to reach genocidal proportions. The chapter will close by reflecting on the relationship between material realities and ritualized forms of violence, such as *ḥērem*.

2. Genocide Studies and the Hebrew Bible

Biblical scholars quite often, and seemingly with increasing frequency, use the term *genocide* to describe the events of the book of Joshua especially. Yet, very few scholars have engaged with the ideas of the interdisciplinary field of genocide studies in order to determine whether or not scholars in that field would classify the events of Joshua as "genocide," and if so, whether or not theories of why genocide happens when it does might have some role to play in biblical scholars' understanding of these passages. While many of the biblical passages that speak of or call for extreme violence are not strictly historical,[7] this fact need not lead one to the conclusion that theories of genocide have no place in explaining these narratives. This is so particularly because Deuteronomy 20 and other passages in fact call on the Israelites to perform certain violent behaviors and envision certain behaviors as having actually occurred. In Joshua, especially, one finds a very elaborate fantasy of violence—a stunningly violent imaginary[8]—that presents mass killing as not merely laudable but as divinely commanded. Finally, and perhaps most important, the Mesha Inscription, which utilizes the very same term *ḥērem* that Joshua uses repeatedly, and various other pieces of evidence, seem to suggest that extreme, potentially genocidal, violence did occur between Levantine groups, raising the possibility that the mass killing described by biblical texts has some basis in reality. All of this together leads one in the direction of concluding that if what these texts *describe* qualifies as genocide, then it may well be fruitful to take theories of genocide into consideration in trying to unravel these texts. However, the chapter will also consider the question of whether or not the passages of the Hebrew Bible describing mass violence, as well as what is discussed in the Mesha Inscription, had some basis in actual violence between ethnic groups in the Levantine region.

Before one applies theories of genocide to studying biblical texts, it is fruitful and perhaps even necessary to examine definitions of genocide to determine whether what is described in texts such as Joshua would be considered genocide by scholars who specialize in the study of that phenomenon. While a fairly large number of definitions have been put forward since the 1940s,

most share certain features, though some are narrower or broader than others. Definitions can be narrowly or expansively construed in terms of what kinds of groups a scholar sees as falling under the category of genocide and what kinds of behaviors fall under this category. A very narrow definition of genocide would see it as the destruction through mass killing of a nation or ethnic group. This is, I would say, the conception of genocide held by most lay people. However, most scholarly definitions are more expansive. Raphael Lemkin, the man who first coined the term, defined *genocide* as "the destruction of a nation or an ethnic group," but even he felt that the destruction could occur through various means, not all of them necessarily involving direct physical violence.[9] In fact, even the United Nations definition of genocide is more expansive:

> In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:
>
> (a) Killing members of the group;
> (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
> (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
> (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
> (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.[10]

Notably, according to the UN, mass killing is not necessary for actions to be classified as genocidal if these actions attempt to eliminate a group by other means, for example, by not allowing members of the group to reproduce. Most major scholars of genocide in fact favor definitions that are broad—they favor inclusion of political and other collective entities and sexual minorities, as well as inclusion of behaviors that do not necessarily involve killing.[11] Exemplifying the very broad definitions of genocide is that of Henry Huttenbach, who states that "genocide is any act that puts the very existence of a group in jeopardy."[12] It is worth noting that while many people seem to be under the impression that genocides must involve killing every member or nearly every member of a group, no scholar of genocide thinks this, and for obvious reasons. If this were a criterion, then not even the Holocaust would be considered a genocide.[13] To the contrary, what is necessary for actions to be considered genocidal in the eyes of most scholars of genocide is a desire to eliminate the group from existence—if not in total, in some very fundamental way. Worth noting, too, is that few scholars of genocide seem to favor the more recent term "ethnic cleansing," for they see it as lacking any legal force and as being euphemistic.[14] This being so, this chapter will not make use of this term.

At this point, it should be clear that what the book of Joshua describes and what Deuteronomy 20 calls for—the complete annihilation of particular ethnic groups in a particular territory—is classifiable as genocide according to even very narrow definitions of the term. Of course, scholars who write extensively on genocide only begin with definitions. The more important question that has consumed them is, why does genocide happen when it does? After all, while there have been several major cases of genocides in the past century alone, there have been many, many more multiethnic environments in the world in which genocide has not occurred. Not surprisingly, answering the question of why has proven incredibly difficult. One popular explanation has revolved around the development of the modern nation-state and ties genocide to features that many scholars have seen as steeped in modernity—modernist pseudo-scientific ideas of race and racism, for instance, as well as complex and depersonalizing modern bureaucracies that facilitate the diffusion and even elimination of blame and responsibility for crimes.[15] While this idea has become rather widespread, there are dissenters from this viewpoint, and these dissenting voices have succeeded in undermining the consensus that this modernist theory of genocide had managed to achieve, or at least come close to achieving, in the academy. Leo Kuper, one of the pioneers of genocide studies, wrote of genocide as early as 1981, "The word is new, the concept is ancient."[16] Another scholar, Adam Jones, has written more recently, "I see genocide as inseparable from the broad thrust of history, both ancient and modern—indeed, it is among history's defining features."[17] Jones cites the following declaration, spoken by Agamemnon in the *Iliad*: "We are not going to leave a single one of them alive, down to the babies in their mothers' wombs—not even they must live. The whole people must be wiped out of existence, and none be left to think of them and shed a tear."[18] While Jones recognizes that the *Iliad* is not a history book and that Agamemnon does not make good on this threat, the quotation nonetheless demonstrates that genocidal thoughts and intentions were not any more foreign to the ancients than they have been to modern peoples. In fact, Jones briefly discusses what he sees as genocidal passages in the Hebrew Bible.[19] He is not alone among scholars of genocide in doing this, and some other scholars are more detailed in their treatments, even if their grasp of biblical and other ancient sources is not always that of a specialist.[20]

In light of the facility with which one can demonstrate that ancient empires, such as those of Rome and Assyria, were quite capable of carrying out large-scale destruction of human life, genocidal and otherwise,[21] and

that specifically *modern* bureaucracies and conceptions are thus not requisite for genocide to occur, scholars have looked for other ways of accounting for genocide. Another explanation that has emerged is the position that scarcity and deprivation are instead what form the basis for genocidal intentions and actions.[22] Scarcity, like the term *genocide* itself, has been understood both narrowly and broadly. Some scholars have focused more on material scarcities, such as resource and food shortages, while others have seen both material and psychological deprivation as possible wellsprings of genocide.[23] The suggestion that scarcity might underlie genocide is not surprising considering that theories of scarcity have been rather popular in explaining violence of various sorts.[24] Despite this, there is no one theory of genocide that has risen to the level of consensus among scholars. Instead, there has been a recognition that genocide, like violence itself, is such a complex phenomenon that it cannot be reduced to any one cause.[25] As Leonard S. Newman writes, "A monocausal framework for understanding genocide cannot do justice to the dynamic interplay between persons and situations that is characteristic of human behavior."[26] There has been a consequent move away from monocausal explanations and from what one could see as reductionism toward very contextualized but also much more historically aware explanations that exhibit a greater sense of premodern as well as modern historical realities. Most recent works on genocide are both comparative in scope and more wary of grand narratives as scholars have conceded that the realities of genocide resist simple explanations. The rest of this chapter will follow the lead of recent work on genocide by taking a comparative approach that focuses on the phenomenon of material scarcities while not pretending that scarcity by itself explains every case of genocide, nor any case of genocide for that matter. With genocide, there seemingly is always a confluence of material, social, cultural, and even psychological realities that must come together in order for genocide to occur. As space is limited, this study will focus on certain material realities that I see as being closely related to the genocidal narratives of the Hebrew Bible, while also touching on relevant social and cultural issues.

3. The 1994 Genocide in Rwanda: A Case Study for Examining the Connections Between Land Scarcities and Ethnic Violence

In performing comparative research, it is my view that looking to cross-cultural models is insufficient. Because all good social-scientific models are based upon a plethora of case studies, the examination of case studies, along with the use of models, is requisite for performing sociologically and anthropologically informed work on ancient Israel that is methodologically sound. I have chosen the 1994 genocide in Rwanda as the case study for this chapter for various reasons. The primary one is that Rwanda's mode of production is more readily comparable to that of ancient Israel than are the modes of production of certain other nations in which genocide has occurred in recent decades: the great majority of Rwanda's population gains their livelihood through agriculture (and to a lesser extent, pastoralism), and the agricultural techniques generally utilized in that country are by and large premodern ones. There are other reasons for choosing Rwanda as a case study, and these will become apparent in my treatment below.

It would be impossible to provide here a developed portrait of Rwanda's social and political history; such a task would require a book-length study. By necessity, this treatment must limit itself to those features of Rwanda's history most salient to the overarching theme of this chapter—the connection between material scarcities and genocide. Immediately following the annihilation of roughly one million Tutsis and purported Tutsi-supporters by the Hutu population of Rwanda in 1994,[27] various observers began to connect the violence with such issues as overpopulation and extreme poverty.[28] While Thomas F. Homer-Dixon has argued that material scarcities "played at most a peripheral role" in the genocide,[29] many if not most researchers see environmental factors as having been an important catalyst in leading Rwandans to genocidal behavior.[30] In fact, the evidence upon which Homer-Dixon based his assessment of Rwanda was clearly incomplete.[31] As even the cursory treatment here will demonstrate, land scarcity and physical deprivation, when joined together with long-standing competition between rival ethnic groups and the machinations of a corrupt authoritarian regime intent on maintaining its own position of power, produced an explosion of ethnic violence noteworthy both for its sadism and for its grim efficacy.

It is fruitful to begin with basic demographic information. Rwanda is a nation very small in size, occupying only 26,000 square kilometers. The population of Rwanda is currently around twelve million.[32] In 1992, on the eve of genocide, the population of Rwanda was 7.5 million, with a 3.3 percent growth rate. The population density was "roughly 290 inhabitants per square kilometer, among the highest in Africa."[33] In fact, Rwanda's population density had skyrocketed from 106 people per square kilometer in 1960 to 280 people per square kilometer by 1992.[34] Exacerbating this problem was the fact that much of Rwanda's surface area "is covered with lakes, swamps, or mountains that are too steep to farm."[35] The anthropologist Charles C. Taylor has written that the "[p]opulation density in Rwanda compares to some of

Japan's most populous islands, yet its average per capita GDP is one of the smallest in the world."[36] While all Rwandans share the same native language of Kinyarwanda, the population was divided between three groups: the Hutus, who comprised between 80 and 85 percent of the population, the Tutsi, comprising between 15 and 20 percent, and the Twa, comprising about 1 percent.[37] There has been a great deal of discussion over whether or not these groups are properly seen as ethnic groups and whether they were ethnic groups or rather social groups before the social engineering of German and Belgian imperialists in the twentieth century, but these issues are unfortunately beyond the purview of this chapter.[38] The origins of Rwandan ethnic conceptions aside, certainly by the mid-twentieth century and continuing to the present, Rwandans saw these groups as distinct ethnic groups with distinct origins. In the past, Tutsi were largely pastoralists with a superior social position, and Hutus, largely agriculturalists, and these distinctions continued in some ways into the mid- to late twentieth century, but by and large the great majority of Rwandans gained their livelihoods through what one might call traditional means. Rwanda was not a heavily industrialized nation and it was predominantly rural in character, with 95 percent of the population living outside cities.[39] Virtually all arable land was in use in Rwanda; much of the pastureland had been converted to farmland, a fact "which left the soil impoverished of organic fertilization" and further degraded agricultural productivity.[40] Peter Uvin writes, "According to the National Agricultural Commission, the minimum farm size required to feed an average family of five persons is 0.7 hectare. Using that criterion, a UN seminar on poverty concluded that 43 percent of the farm households lacked the minimum land for survival and lived in a situation of chronic undernutrition."[41] In fact, the average land holdings per family had drastically shrunken in size in just a few decades, with the number of landless on the rise and land becoming more concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer individuals.[42] According to one study, half of Rwandan children have stunted growth from malnutrition, corresponding with the fact that 50 percent of Rwandans are "extremely poor, up to 40 percent poor, 9 percent nonpoor, and perhaps 1 percent positively rich."[43] To make matters worse, Rwanda experienced both agricultural and economic crises in the 1980s, with a drought occurring in 1984, excess rain in 1987, plant disease in 1988, and a marked decrease in coffee prices, one of the country's major exports.[44] Peter Uvin summarizes the situation well: "long before the 1990s, life in Rwanda had become devoid of hope and dreams for the large majority of people . . . Peasant life was perceived as a prison without escape in which poverty, infantilization, social inferiority, and powerlessness combined to create a sense of personal failure."[45]

Although Rwanda is one of the poorest countries in Africa, there are many places in the world where people live in abject poverty. Many of these are rife with violence of various sorts, but genocide is rare. It has been estimated that "serious ethnic violence" has occurred in fewer than 1 percent of multiethnic contexts in Africa.[46] As stated above, the question of why genocide occurs when it does is a very difficult one to answer, but with Rwanda, the dichotomous nature of ethnic identity in the society—with Hutu and Tutsi identities framed against one another in an oppositional fashion for a century or longer—played an extremely important role. Michael Mann has written of the danger of bi-ethnic contexts,[47] and while in fact three different groups inhabit Rwanda, it was the Hutu and Tutsi who comprised 99 percent of the population and who competed with each other for political and social power and for material resources. The strength of the animosity between these two groups allowed Hutu elites desperate to stay in power to deflect the attentions of the 90 percent of Hutu who were poor and desperate to survive by creating a Tutsi scapegoat.[48] Psychologists have examined "how devaluation of others and scapegoating are strategies for coping with the stress of persistent life problems, frustration, and lack of self-esteem."[49] This process clearly took place in Rwanda, with elites and the state manipulating the desperation of the people. As Uvin writes, "The state-supplied racism provided poor Hutu with a sense of value, as well as an 'explanation' for the maldevelopment they faced daily."[50] It bears remembering that the Hutu and Tutsi are in fact very similar groups, speaking the same language and largely sharing the same culture. As Ben Kiernan states in his landmark work on genocide *Blood and Soil*, "Perhaps continuing to compensate for the lack of ethnocultural distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi, the propaganda of Hutu power focused on past injustices and, especially, fear of future contamination."[51] Thus, the rhetoric of ethnic and social differentiation needed to be drawn all the more sharply and violently for Tutsi scapegoating to occur.

What made this scapegoating of Tutsis particularly convincing and particularly poisonous is that the Tutsi were not just a scapegoat. The Tutsi had in fact held a privileged social position in the very recent past, the Tutsi and Hutu had engaged in severe violence toward each other previously,[52] and the Tutsi and Hutu did compete over land—the scarcest resource of all in Rwanda and one which very few Rwandans could survive without. After Rwanda claimed independence in 1959, and a Hutu-led government came to power, approximately two hundred thousand Tutsi fled the country; more left in 1972. [53] Hutus quickly occupied their land.[54] As the war between the Hutu-led government of Rwanda and the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front army, based in Uganda, began in the early 1990s, Hutu were told, and many

feared, that those Tutsi who had fled would come back and reclaim their land.[55] And so, the Tutsi, while easily made into a bogeyman, were not just a bogeyman—the competition for survival in Rwanda was very real. The Hutu government played off of these fears, even using language of "overpopulation,"[56] and they used traditional structures of corvée labor[57] to organize death-dealing militias[58] comprised largely of jobless young men lured by promises of money, alcohol, and Tutsi land.[59] As Gérard Prunier writes, "All these people who were about to be killed had land and at times cows. And somebody had to get this land and those cows after their owners were dead. In a poor and increasingly overpopulated country this was not a negligible incentive."[60]

Incentives of a psychological variety also seem to have driven Rwandans to extreme violence. Included above was a quotation speaking of the sense of "infantilization" and "social inferiority" of Rwandans. According to Adam Jones, "humiliation is one of the greatest psychological spurs to violence, including mass violence and genocide."[61] This seems to be reflected in the fact that incidences of rape during the genocide reached astonishing proportions. Men who had previously felt powerless and emasculated asserted their manhood in the most primal and sadistic of ways upon the Tutsi women who had so long been seen as "Rwanda's sexual elite"—unattainable to poor Hutu men such as themselves.[62] Their violence against Tutsis took on gendered and ritualized aspects: along with cutting open the bodies of pregnant women, breast ablation and the castration of men and even prepubescent Tutsi boys were not uncommon.[63] Some women were even "impaled with spears from vagina to mouth."[64] Like the Nazis, Hutu racist propaganda utilized agricultural metaphors for their genocidal killing and portrayed the Tutsi as both malevolent and dehumanized, referring to them over and over again as *inyenzi*, "cockroaches," just as Jews were called "vermin" and "lice."[65] Perhaps it was this animalization and the psychological drive for status and power that explains the intimacy of the killings, which were carried out almost entirely by small arms such as machetes. As Mahmood Mamdani writes, "Unlike the Nazi Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide was not carried out from a distance, in remote concentration camps beyond national borders . . . It required not one but many hacks of a machete to kill even one person. With a machete, killing was hard work, that is why there were often several killers for every single victim. Whereas Nazis made every attempt to separate victims from perpetrators, the Rwandan genocide was very much an intimate affair."[66] While Mamdani certainly exaggerates the distancing of the Nazis—shooting Jews into pits required a grotesque enough proximity[67]—there is no question that the genocidal massacres in Rwanda were shockingly and gruesomely intimate, resembling more the proximate and often ritualized slaughtering of ancient armies than the comparatively distant killing of modern ones.

A final aspect of the Rwanda genocide that bears addressing is the emphasis placed in Rwandan culture upon obedience. A culture of obedience has been linked to the Nazi Holocaust, and some have seen it, too, as underlying the killings in Rwanda.[68] These killings, while brutal, were carried out in a bizarrely organized fashion, with militia members seemingly pausing for lunch and working only the usual hours of the work day.[69] Many Rwandans were coerced into killing, but the number who participated in the genocide is nonetheless startling and arguably reflects the noteworthy level to which Rwandans submit to social norms and official dicta.[70]

My treatment of the genocide in Rwanda has attempted to demonstrate that this genocide, like all cases of genocidal violence, was the result of a *confluence of factors*—ecological, sociological, cultural, and psychological. While resource scarcities were not by themselves sufficient to cause genocide, it is highly unlikely that the Rwandan genocide would have occurred without them. The extreme poverty of Rwandans made them desperate, and the polarized nature of Hutu-Tutsi identity formation allowed that desperation to be shaped into a genocidal scapegoating involving not only killing, but mass rape, looting, and land seizures. Land was both motivating reality and metaphor. "Killings were *umuganda*, collective work," writes Prunier, "chopping up men was 'bush clearing' and slaughtering women and children was 'pulling out the roots of the bad weeds.' The vocabulary of 'peasant-centred agricultural development' came into play, with a horrible double meaning."[71] Land was central to the livelihood of Rwandans, it was central to Hutu extremist propaganda, and so it was central to the genocide itself.

4. *Population Growth and Land Scarcity in Ancient Israel*

There are many points of contact between the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the genocidal texts of the Hebrew Bible as well as the ethnic conflict in the Levant that is attested by these and other sources. While various factors will be discussed, the emphasis here will be upon one major similarity—the issue of population growth and its correlate, scarcities of land. The archeological evidence for population growth in Palestine, combined with archeological and textual evidence for rising socioeconomic inequalities, suggests a point of convergence between the ethnic conflict in Palestine and that in Rwanda. While this chapter in no way claims that genocidal violence results whenever there are population pressures in a region, the presence of material scarcities in

the ancient Levant raises the possibility that these scarcities were part of what underlay violent struggles between the Israelites and their neighbors in the Iron II period.

It is worthwhile to begin with the archeological evidence.[72] Archeologists have put forth a few population estimates of ancient Palestine, and these seem to make fairly certain that the population of this region greatly increased over the course of just a few centuries. While Avraham Faust is surely correct in pointing to the difficulty of counting ancient populations, as he himself states these estimates can be useful for tracking population trends, i.e., noteworthy increases and decreases.[73] A 1992 estimate of the population of Palestine in Iron Age II[74] by Magen Broshi and Israel Finkelstein set the number of inhabitants of the northern and southern kingdoms at roughly 460,000 in the eighth century BCE.[75] According to Finkelstein, "By the late eighth century the northern kingdom—the highlands of Samaria and the northern valleys alike—was the most densely settled region in the entire Levant."[76] This population estimate is based on the number of settled dunams and the well accepted population density coefficient of 25 persons per dunam (250 per hectare).[77] Finkelstein and Broshi's estimates show the population as being more than twice that of the Early Bronze or Middle Bronze Ages and much higher than what it was *c.*1000 BCE, when the population of western Palestine was approximately 150,000,[78] or at the beginning of Iron I, when the population was only in the range of 60,000 to 70,000.[79] Other archeologists agree that there was an increase in population during this period, with settlement hitting its peak in the eighth century.[80] Broshi puts these estimates in perspective: "Such an increase in 250 years would mean an annual growth rate of c. 0.4 per cent. To us, living in a world with an annual growth rate of 2 per cent, such a figure might seem insignificant. However, had this growth rate continued uninterrupted to our own times, the population of the Central Hill Country would have reached the astronomical figure of 8.6 billion."[81]

The demographic trends of the late eighth and seventh centuries are also worth discussing, particularly since many scholars believe much of Deuteronomy was written during this time.[82] In the second half of the eighth century, as is well known, the Assyrians ravaged different areas of Palestine on at least three occasions, bringing the northern kingdom of Israel to an end, exiling part of the Israelite population, settling the new Assyrian province of Samaria with outside groups, and embarking on a campaign against Judah in 701, among other military activities in the Levant. The demographic results of all of this are conflicting. On the one hand, there was clear loss of life. On the other, new populations brought into the province of Samaria likely compensated somewhat for exiled and slain Israelites.[83] Also, it has been argued that refugees from the northern kingdom entered Judah, raising its population and particularly the population of Jerusalem.[84] And it was not only Jerusalem whose population grew—the agricultural regions surrounding Jerusalem, as well as the Shephelah and even the Beersheba Valley all appear to have experienced an increase in the number and size of settlements.[85] Thus, there may well have been a transfer of population from the conquered northern kingdom to the southern kingdom of Judah. While it is difficult to know how many Judeans were slain or deported by Sennacherib, it is perhaps useful to look to Oded Lipschits's estimates for the population of Judah at the end of Iron Age II. The method for estimating population size used by Lipschits is similar to that of Broshi and Finkelstein, and the number at which he arrives is 108,000, including the Shephelah region.[86] This is similar to the estimate for late eighth-century Judah.[87] One could interpret this to mean that, while the Assyrian campaign caused some devastation, the population managed to recover in the next hundred years, remaining at a much higher level than it had been earlier in the Iron Age and much higher than it would be in the Persian era.[88]

Because this chapter will include some discussion of the Mesha Inscription and other texts referring to the Transjordan below, it is useful also to examine archeological evidence for population growth in this region, as well. Of course, much less archeological work has been done in Transjordan than in the Cisjordanian region. Nonetheless, the evidence appears to demonstrate that Transjordan, too, experienced growth in Iron II. J. Andrew Dearman writes that "Moab was more heavily settled during some periods than others. Early Bronze III–IV, Iron Age II, and the Roman-Byzantine era supported a relatively high population density."[89] Most, if not all, regions of Moab show a marked increase in the number of sites in Iron II over Iron I and the Late Bronze period, and Routledge states further, "Despite our fragmentary evidence, we can suggest that a number of regional centers grew considerably in size during the late ninth or (more likely) the eighth century BCE."[90] In Edom, as well, there is evidence for an increase in settlement in the late eighth century BCE.[91] Øystein S. LaBianca and Randall W. Younker speak of a "peak in sedentarization (including urbanization) and intensive agriculture" in Iron II Transjordan as a whole.[92]

Evidence for notable increases in population is not sufficient to demonstrate that there were land scarcities in the Levant, however. In order to attempt to gauge what impact these increases in population had upon land distribution, one can look to three sources: archeological evidence for density of settlement, literary evidence referring to issues surrounding land, and both archeological and literary evidence attesting to increasing social stratification.

Archeological surveys demonstrate that, even in less hospitable zones, land was densely occupied in Iron II. Adam Zertal writes of the Manasseh region: "[The period from 1000 to 721 BCE] is indeed the first time that the 500 sq. km of the desert fringes and Jordan valley are almost entirely settled, mainly by family farms."[93] Moving to the biblical evidence, there are many sources that speak of the concentration of land and wealth in the hands of elites, a fact that would minimize the amount of land available for typical farmholders. The most famous text, perhaps, is the story of Naboth's vineyard in 1 Kings 21, but there are other noteworthy texts; for example, Isaiah 5:7–8 reads: "[Yhwh of hosts] looked for justice, but there was bloodshed, righteousness, but there was crying out! Oh, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no space and you live alone in the midst of the land." Micah 2:1–2 makes a similar comment: "Oh, those people who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! In the light of morning, they do it, because it is in their power. They desire fields, and seize them, houses, and take them! They extort a man and his house, a fellow and his inheritance." The prophetic books are in fact rife with evidence of wealth-based social stratification,[94] and the textual evidence implying an increase in such stratification in the Iron II era corresponds with an abundance of archeological evidence clearly demonstrating that such an increase occurred. One finds this in a marked rise in the number of luxury items found at sites in Iron II, in clear differences between the burials of those of different social classes, and in differences in the size and quality of residences at many different ancient Israelite sites.[95]

We have, then, archeological evidence for marked population increases that in all likelihood decreased the amount of land available for most households, textual evidence for land seizure by elites as resources became more scarce—what social scientists would call "resource capture"[96]—and both archeological and textual evidence for markedly increasing social stratification. All of this was occurring in Iron II just as the rise of the Assyrians placed increasing pressures on the small polities of the Levant. It would not be surprising for increasing population and decreasing resources to lead to tensions of various kinds and to competition between groups, and again, biblical texts and other evidence seem amply to attest to this, a fact that will be examined below.

5. *Genocidal Passages in the Hebrew Bible*

It is clear even to lay readers of the Hebrew Bible that one of the most central themes of this collection of texts is land. In the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua alone, one finds the words *ʾereṣ* and *gĕbûl*, "land" and "territory," used over two hundred times and the root *y-r-š*, "to possess or dispossess," used several dozen times, as well as the frequent use of other land-centered terms such as *ḥēleq* and *naḥălâ*. These are also the books in the Hebrew Bible that contain the clearest genocidal language, books in which the Israelites are commanded to annihilate entire groups of people "root-and-branch," letting "nothing that breathes remain alive" (Deut 20:16).[97] But is there a connection between the clear emphasis on the possession of territory and the equally clear emphasis on killing the autochthonous groups of Canaan? And what is the connection between these two texts, set as they are in the Mosaic past, and other books that speak of ethnic conflict in later eras of Israelite history?

Before attempting to answer these questions, it is instructive to examine the text of the Mesha Inscription. While the number of inscriptions from the Transjordan are few, it is noteworthy that one of them speaks of what is arguably genocidal violence, using a term, *ḥērem*, that Deuteronomy and Joshua use well over a dozen times to refer to the killing of collectivities of people.[98] The inscription relates that Omri king of Israel had oppressed Moab for a long period and that his son, Ahab, had done the same, occupying the "land of Madaba." Lines 10–11 state: "Now, the men of Gad had dwelt in the land of 'Ataroth from of old, and the king of Israel had built 'Ataroth for himself, but I fought against the town and took it, and I slew all the people of the town in satiation (*ryt*) to Kemosh and to Moab." [99] The carnage continues in lines 14 and following: "And Kemosh said to me: 'Go, take Nebo from Israel!' So I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, and I took it and slew it all, seven thousand men and infant boys (*[g]rn*), women and infant girls (*[gr]t*), and pregnant females, for I performed *ḥērem* against it for Ashtar-Kemosh." Some of the terms for the groups of slain are unclear in meaning. While the term *gr* is taken by some to be the equivalent of Hebrew *gēr*, I concur with Stern that it more befits the context to see *gr* as cognate with *gūr*, "whelp."[100] The term *rḥmt* is rendered by Lipínski as "pregnant female,"[101] closely relating as it does to the word "womb," though in biblical Hebrew the term seems to have a connotation of vulgarity when used of women.[102] Some render the term with "handmaiden," though Stern seems correct to see that translation as less than convincing.[103] Regardless of how these terms are rendered, it seems clear that Mesha seeks to convey that a wide range of Israelites were killed. The killing is connected with struggles over territory between Israelites and Moabites and appears to have a sacrificial character. The historical figures mentioned make the dating of the text clear—the second half of the ninth century, *c.*835 BCE. In fact, this text is not the only Moabite inscription attesting to ethnic conflict between the Moabites and surrounding groups, despite the paucity of inscriptions from that region: in a text likely dating a few decades later, a Moabite king tells of how he had used Ammonite prisoners for building projects.[104]

The dating of the Mesha Inscription is not disputed and is far more assured than the dating of the biblical passages that speak of performing *ḥērem* against enemy populations. The text is useful for various reasons. One is that it provides a ninth-century *terminus ante quem* for the development of a genocidal practice referred to as *ḥērem* and for the development of extreme, even genocidal, violence of a more general variety between Israelites and other groups. It might even strengthen the monarchic-era dating of biblical texts that attest to the same usage of the term *ḥērem*. Another important facet of this text is that it demonstrates that genocidal violence occurred in the context of land disputes. Although more than one biblicist has attempted to minimize the severity of the genocidal passages of the Bible by stating that such violence did not really occur,[105] the Mesha Inscription instead points one toward the conclusion that such violence did in fact sometimes happen.[106]

The genocidal violence in Deuteronomy and Joshua, like that in the Mesha Inscription, occurs in the context of the takeover of land in which the group that holds the land is slaughtered by those who then claim the land for themselves. Texts in these two books connecting the killing of collectivities of people with land possession and dispossession include Deuteronomy 2:31–35; 3:1–7; 7:1–2; 20:16–18; Joshua 6; 8; 10; and 11. Deuteronomy 2:31–34, which relates how the Israelites defeated King Sihon of Heshbon in the Transjordan, is exemplary: "Yhwh said to me, 'See, I have begun to give to you Sihon and his land. Begin now to take possession of his land.' And when Sihon came forth against us, he and all his people for battle at Jahaz, Yhwh our God gave him over to us; and we struck him and his children and his whole people down. We captured all his cities at that time, and on each city we performed *ḥērem* against men, women, and children. We left no survivor." The bloodshed continues in Joshua. Joshua 10:40–42 reads: "So Joshua smote the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings; he left no survivor, but performed *ḥērem* upon all that breathed, just as Yhwh God of Israel had commanded . . . Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because Yhwh God of Israel fought for Israel."

How have biblical scholars explained this connection between genocidal violence and the possession of land in these biblical passages? There have been various interpretive solutions proposed for understanding the violence in Deuteronomy and Joshua, but none has emphasized a connection between land (scarcities) and genocide, perhaps because the number of biblical scholars who have engaged with genocide studies scholarship has been quite small. Philip Stern, in his very extensive treatment of biblical *ḥērem*, argues that this practice was based in "the struggle of a people to overcome the forces of chaos and to establish a world order (*Weltordnung*) in which the group could survive and flourish."[107] While he states that "biblical polemics . . . do not reveal the level of naked competition for land and its associated resources in the Transjordan which the [Mesha Inscription] highlights in regard to Gad," he does not develop this point and instead returns again and again in his book to a cosmological interpretation of *ḥērem*.[108] He also states that the "effect of the laws" in Deuteronomy 7 and 20, because they deal with groups that no longer existed in the Iron II period, "was to prohibit or discourage" the practice of *ḥērem*.[109] This is a rather curious conclusion in light of the fact that Ezra 9 understands the list of nations in Deuteronomy 7 to apply to the author's own context, one postdating Iron II by centuries, though Ezra's use of the list is very different. C. L. Crouch interprets the list of nations in Deuteronomy 7 in a different—and in my view, more convincing—fashion: "The articulation of the instructions with reference to the Canaanites and other pre-Israelite populations is not an attempt to limit the practice to them alone, but an attempt to remain in keeping with the ostensible Mosaic setting of *Deuteronomy*."[110] Crouch does have an eye toward the social realities of ancient Israel, stating that in the mid- to late seventh century, there was an increase in the "commercial and political interactions among the small regional states of the Levant (including Judah)" and this heightened the Judeans' sense of being threatened.[111] Yet, the focus of her analysis, as was the case with Stern, is on a cosmological understanding of *ḥērem* that is in keeping with her larger approach to understanding ancient Near Eastern warfare. *Ḥērem*, she writes, is "an extreme expression of the struggle of order against chaos."[112]

Lauren A. S. Monroe presents a different explanation of *ḥērem* traditions. Monroe does discuss the connection between *ḥērem* and land, stating that "*ḥērem* served as an affirmation of the exclusive relationship between a people on its land, and the patron deity from whom that land was granted."[113] She also sees *ḥērem* as being tied to processes of early state formation in Israel and Moab, with *ḥērem* narratives working to "legitimate territorial claims of the emergent Israelite state," and the account of the *ḥērem* against Ai in Joshua 8 as reflecting an "interest in narrativizing emergent Israelite collective cultural identity."[114] These are interesting points to make, but Monroe does not develop them sufficiently. The connection she draws between *ḥērem* and state formation seems to accord with the theory of genocide—though it has been recently called into question—that ties that type of violence to the formation of specifically modern nation-states, but Monroe does not draw upon this research, perhaps because she does not examine the *ḥērem* against the Canaanites qua a narrative of genocide. Notably, Monroe sees Israelite *ḥērem* traditions as being very early, "integral to Israelite self-definition from the outset."[115]

Part of why Monroe sees *ḥērem* as belonging to the early stages of state formation is because she sees nations in such a stage as being without the infrastructure to control subject populations.[116] A similar claim had been made decades earlier by I. J. Gelb and is worth examining further.[117] Gelb argued that "[in] the primitive, subsistence economy of tribal and semitribal societies, POWs are normally killed. They are killed because on this low economic level there is no way to utilize them effectively."[118] Both ancient Near Eastern and more recent cross-cultural evidence demonstrate these claims to be unsupportable. Scholars see ninth-century Moab as being in the early stages of state formation,[119] and yet the Mesha Inscription[120] and the slightly later Moabite inscription cited earlier both describe the use of foreign prisoners of war in building projects. Many Native American and African groups with both non-state and rudimentary state varieties of social organization made use of slave labor.[121] The Israelites never had a very large state organization as compared with those of some other ancient Near Eastern groups, and yet they seem to have succeeded in making vassals of their neighbors, as the Mesha Inscription clearly states. Similarly damaging to this hypothesis is that some very complex modern societies fully capable of administering and making use of subject populations chose instead to engage in genocidal behaviors, and so it seems that the existence of the practice of "war-*ḥērem* creating land without people"[122] requires another explanation apart from one centering on a group's type of social organization.

While genocidal practices seem closely tied to the possession of land in texts throughout Deuteronomy and Joshua, this has not led scholars to see genocide in biblical and other texts as being related to materialist concerns over resources and survival. Yet, if one looks beyond Deuteronomy and Joshua to other biblical texts discussing ethnic conflict, the point is made even more obtrusively. In his oracles against the nations, Amos states, "Thus says Yhwh: for three transgressions of the Ammonites, and for four, I will not revoke [the punishment], because they have ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead *in order to enlarge their territory*" (1:13).[123] Strikingly, this passage mentions an act of violence committed, too, during the Rwanda genocide, and places it explicitly in a context of dispossession of land. First Chronicles 4:24–43, though a much later passage, makes a similar statement. The text relates the genealogy of Simeon, as well as some of the activities of this group, stating in verse 41: "These, registered by name, came in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, and struck down their tents and the Me'unim who were found there, and performed *ḥērem* against them to this day, and settled in their place, *because there was pasture for their flocks there*." Again, a biblical text explicitly connects genocidal behavior with the desire for territory.

While archeological evidence for population increases seems to accord well with biblical texts clearly tying genocidal practices to land concerns, it is important to remember that deprivation is generally not enough to lead to genocide. If it were, genocides would only be more frequent than they already are. There must be a confluence of material, historical, social, cultural, and psychological features to lead to mass killing, for as Wilhelmus Petrus Du Preez so aptly said of genocide, "It requires a great vision to justify a great wrong."[124] This great vision is in fact what Deuteronomy and Joshua seek to provide. The portrait of Joshua is that of an authoritarian ruler who demands, and receives, absolute obedience from the Israelites.[125] The essentially monarchic figure of Joshua and his program of expansion and destruction of threats both external and internal provides an ancient model for a Judean expansionist agenda, a model couched in theological rhetoric so powerful that the Puritans would draw upon it two millennia later in their massacres of Native Americans.[126] While the Deuteronomists could have explicitly aimed their genocidal rhetoric at neighboring Levantine groups, such as the Ammonites and Moabites,[127] they instead chose to do something more forceful—they presented narratives of a great genocide, divinely commanded and divinely aided, that took place in an idealized Mosaic past. Narratives framed in such a theologically compelling manner would surely bolster violent actions against *any* foreign "other." Various scholars have convincingly pointed to the similarities between the figures of Joshua and Josiah—two figures, who, after all, share almost the same name.[128] Yet, the Moabite Inscription demonstrates that the ideology and practice of *ḥērem* predate the time of Josiah by more than a century. The Deuteronomists seemingly drew upon a fairly long-standing tradition of genocidal thinking in framing their prescriptions for interethnic violence, a fact which would have likely reinforced their social agenda.

Related to this is the fact that Joshua is a narrative concerned with identity formation, as Lauren Monroe and Lori L. Rowlett both discuss.[129] The authoritarian and centralizing agenda of Joshua rests upon starkly drawn boundaries between Israelite and outsider. It is doubtful that the Deuteronomists were the first Israelites to feel such a strong concern for distinguishing clearly between groups—such a concern for ethnic boundary-marking is found in many biblical texts. No, it is more likely that the Deuteronomists drew upon and shaped a wider cultural preoccupation with demarcating the boundaries between Israelite and other. As was the case with the race-baiting propaganda in Rwanda, biblical texts labor to draw sharply the lines between the Israelites and their Levantine neighbors who spoke very similar languages and had very similar material cultures. Perhaps, as was the case with the Tutsi and Hutu, there is an overcompensation here, a frenzied nature to the

ethnic boundary-marking that occurred as groups that seem not to have been too different from each other struggled to maintain the decreasing amount of resources available to them or even to take possession of the resources of other groups.[130]

Sacrificial ideologies, too, played a role in the construction and actualization of genocidal violence in the ancient Levant for both the Moabites and Israelites. Sacrificial language is clear in the Mesha inscription, and it is clear as well in some, mostly late, biblical passages discussing *ḥērem* (e.g., Lev 27:21, 28–29; Num 21:2–3; Ezek 44:29).[131] The fact that livestock are destroyed along with people in such genocidal passages of the Hebrew Bible as Deuteronomy 20 and Joshua 6 might seem to militate against a scarcity-based approach to understanding these passages, but this need not be the case for several reasons. One is that in various texts that detail mass killing of humans, livestock are in fact kept as spoil; see, for example, Deuteronomy 2:34–35; 3:6–7 and Joshua 8:27; 11:11–21. Also, because a confluence of factors and ideologies are always involved in genocide, it is not surprising that genocidal killing would be couched in sacrificial terms in the ancient Levant, considering the centrality of sacrifice to all of the cultures of the ancient Near East. The use of sacrificial terminology and thinking would have strengthened genocidal rhetoric commanding the taking of human life on a massive scale by couching that rhetoric in a well known cultural framework.[132] In addition, while the evidence that the Rwandan genocide was closely tied to resource scarcities is very strong, even there the genocidal killing often "took on a mind of its own," if you will, with Hutu sometimes engaging in violent behaviors for cultural and psychological, rather than pragmatic material reasons. As stated above, amidst the violence in 1994, land and cattle were often stolen. Yet, sometimes cattle were hamstrung—just as the Tutsi themselves often were, young and old—and "left to die slowly in the field."[133] Taylor argues that this practice is deeply rooted in Rwandan culture and its symbolism of the human body. Thus, in the melding of material and cultural rationales for killing, sometimes genocide defeats the very pragmatic logic that may have initially given rise to it. In both Rwanda and Israel, this phenomenon is unevenly attested as livestock was sometimes taken and sometimes slaughtered for religio-cultural reasons.

Melding cultural and materialist concerns, the biblical texts providing evidence for ethnic conflict between various Levantine groups are almost too many to name. Deuteronomy and Joshua, in particular, provide a justification for Israelite claims through narratives set in a distant, idealized past. Appeals to past wrongs, references to an idealized history that create a model for future interactions, sacrificial imagery, and associated theological justifications vilifying foreigners form core aspects of the violent imaginary of Deuteronomy and Joshua. As Ingo W. Schröder and Bettina E. Schmidt write, "Violence needs to be imagined in order to be carried out. Groups do not strike out at random at the next accidental bystander but follow cultural models of appropriate action."[134] Deuteronomy and Joshua provide such a model, creating an ideology of violence that not only justifies but commands genocidal violence.[135] Cultural forms of violence unite with the physical and psychological deprivation caused by ecological scarcities to give birth to genocidal fantasies and behaviors. We cannot know for certain whether or not the Israelites or Moabites in fact attempted to commit genocide against neighboring groups, but we do know that they—Israelite writers in particular—seemingly longed to do so and even boasted of having done so in both the recent and the very distant past.

Of course, the Israelites, and perhaps the Moabites and Ammonites as well, had as much to fear from their own elites as they did from each other. Yet, biblical writers were themselves so often elites, and particularly in Deuteronomy and Joshua these writers use xenophobic rhetoric to build a sense of pan-Israelite identity.[136] Perhaps this rhetoric served to deflect tensions and attentions away from internal conflicts over resources toward external scapegoats. Deflection or not, the material concerns were real ones, centering on the life-and-death issue of subsistence, and so the scapegoating takes on not just overtones of violence but a genocidal form. Foreign competitors become so dangerous that they must be completely eliminated; they must be dispossessed in the most extreme fashion possible from the land that was the inheritance of the Israelites and the Israelites alone.

6. *Implications for the Study of Ritual Violence and Final Conclusions*

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that what underlay the genocidal impulses of various texts of the Hebrew Bible were those very concerns that biblical writers explicitly emphasize—concerns over possession of territory. Material scarcities and the conflicts to which they gave rise served as one important catalyst for genocidal violence and genocidal imagining in both Rwanda and the ancient Levant. I have attempted, then, to utilize a materialist approach in understanding biblical genocide while not simplistically positing that material conditions *alone* resulted in genocidal violence in either Rwanda or ancient Israel. In keeping with recent trends in genocide studies, this work proposed a multicausal explanation for ethnic violence in the

ancient Levant in which material conditions figure prominently but do not stand alone.

The implications of these arguments for understanding *ritual* violence have so far been implicitly rather than explicitly addressed here. In both Rwanda and in ancient Israelite and Moabite sources, genocidal violence involved ritualized aspects. In Levantine sources, these aspects are salient indeed, with the language used of *ḥērem* often being sacrificial in character. Even if one contests the thesis that *ḥērem* is a form of sacrifice, it is difficult to argue against its being ritualized violence. Definitions and assessments of ritual have emphasized one or more of the following characteristics of ritual: that it is symbolic; connected to ideas of the sacred or divinity; repeated and/or formalized; and socially efficacious, influencing power relations.[137] Clearly, *ḥērem* is all these things.

Yet, rituals have also been discussed in recent decades in the context of discussions of embodiment, an emphasis that inherently involves a concern for the material. As the anthropologists Michael Lambek and Andrew Strathern have written, "A focus on 'the body' perhaps also fits with a new materialism, disconnected from the more dogmatic side of Marxism but concerned with the domain of lived experience and the effects of the social realm on the human body."[138] This chapter has been concerned implicitly with the body as a locus of physical needs and as a site of efficacious violence—violence that draws ethnic boundaries, violence that eliminates competitors for resources, and violence that pleases deities who are generous in awarding land occupied by foreign others, so long as those others are slain. Israelite and Moabite identities, as the sources examined above show us, were certainly embodied ones, for the violence these identities required was extensive and, like that in Rwanda, intimate—focused on immediately neighboring groups and involving such intensely proximate activities as cutting open the bellies of pregnant women and massacring children. Thus, a materialist approach to biblical rituals of violence might involve bodily interests of various sorts, focusing on identity, on gender, on subsistence needs, or on still other facets of lived experience. An approach informed by recent discussions of ritual, embodiment, and—as was the focus here—connections between material scarcities and violence, sheds light not only on questions of why violence happens when it does but also of how violence functions, and it does this without reverting to the simplistic functionalism of decades past. For example, this approach illustrates well how violence is utilized to shape identities in both "positive" and "negative" senses. By eliminating Tutsis, Hutus reinforced and recreated a *Hutu* identity centered on exclusive possession of territory. By killing other

Levantine groups, or even by imagining the killing of Canaanites in an idealized past, Israelites reinforced and recreated an Israelite identity centered on exclusive possession of territory. Thus, contrary to the view of Freud and others, aggression and sociality are not inherently opposite.[139] Violence can in fact strengthen the bonds between those who perform it *together*, between those who are called upon to perform violence together against groups constructed as dangerous and worthy only of the intimacy of slaughter. Aggression and sociality can be brought together for different reasons, but in the case studies examined here, their intersection was due in part to a certain highly dichotomized process of identity formation and in part to exceedingly strained material conditions.

In trying to understand not only rituals of violence, but rituals in general, biblical scholars have sometimes shied away from materialist approaches—this despite the well known fact that most people in the ancient world lived on the edge of subsistence, struggling to survive, and that even today material scarcities are often the driving force behind or closely related to ethnic and other conflicts. The archeological evidence for the ancient Levant demonstrates that the population of this region steadily rose over the course of four hundred years until it had more than tripled in size. During the same period, wealth-based social stratification, too, rose dramatically, and the power vacuum left by the collapse of Late Bronze Age empires was at long last filled by the Neo-Assyrians, who demanded high levels of tribute from an already strained region. These realities led to ethnic tensions, and in an area where too-similar groups struggled to create discrete identities for themselves, the tensions between them mushroomed into a more extreme desire for violence. Texts relating acts of urbicide[140] and the mutilation of women—all for the sake of territorial expansion—strongly imply that genocidal longings sometimes morphed into brutal realities of mass killing. Israelite authors constructed elaborate and persuasive justifications for violence that at once created an insider identity *and* called for the destruction of outsiders described as wholly other and as wholly dangerous, so much so that even the things associated with them must be eliminated. "You will certainly perform *ḥērem* against them. Do not make a covenant with them and show them no mercy" (Deut 7:2). "By the edge of the sword, they performed *ḥērem* upon everyone in the city, both men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys" (Josh 6:21). Genocide is the most extreme form of violence and, as such, it is unsurprising that it should have complex origins, both material and cultural. Scholars of ancient Israel and other social historians must examine genocide with a wide scope in order to understand not only its origins but the social and cultural functions served by its gruesome implementation.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Sharon Abramowitz for making a comment a few years ago about the genocide in Rwanda that sparked my idea for this chapter, and Matthew Neujahr, Bob Coote, Ehud Ben Zvi, Brad Kelle, Aren Maier, and Andrea Stevenson Allen for reading and commenting on different versions of the manuscript. Shorter versions of this work were presented at the International SBL meeting in Amsterdam in July 2012 and at Brown University in Providence, RI, in May 2013. I thank the members of the audience in Amsterdam and Providence who made constructive comments about my presentation.
2. All biblical translations are my own.
3. Robert B. Coote, "The Book of Joshua," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 2 (ed. Leander E. Keck; Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 555. Pages 617–618 of the same work discuss the book of Joshua as a genocide.
4. Some ancient readers, too, were troubled by these texts, e.g., Marcion. See Richard D. Nelson, "*Ḥerem* and the Deuteronomic Social Conscience," in *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Literature: Festschrift C.H.W. Brekelmans* (ed. M. Vervenne and J. Lust; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), 39.
5. A few examples of this usage may be found in: C. S. Cowles, Eugene H. Merrill, Daniel L. Gard, and Tremper Longman III, eds., *Show Them No Mercy: Four Views on God and Canaanite Genocide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003); Mark G. Brett, "Genocide in Deuteronomy: Postcolonial Variations on Mimetic Desire," in *Seeing Signals, Reading Signs: The Art of Exegesis* (ed. Mark A. O'Brien and Howard N. Wallace; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 75–89; Hector Avalos, *Fighting Words: The Origins of Religious Violence* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005), 115, 316; and Pekka Pitkänen, "Memory, Witnesses and Genocide in the Book of Joshua," in *Reading the Law: Studies in Honour of Gordon J. Wenham* (ed. J. G. McConville and Karl Möller; Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies; London: T&T Clark, 2007), 267–282, and *Joshua* (Apollos 6; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), passim. Interestingly, Nelson rejects the use of the term genocide in "*Ḥerem* and the Deuteronomic," 39–54, esp. 40, but describes the violence in Joshua as "genocide" in *Joshua* (OTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 2. John J. Collins uses the term "ethnic cleansing" rather than genocide in *Does the Bible Justify Violence?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004), 9.
6. Exceptions may be found in Pitkänen, *Joshua*; and William Morrow, "Deuteronomy 7 in Postcolonial Perspective: Cultural Fragmentation and Renewal," in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (ed. Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 278–279, though the number of works from genocide studies that each examines is not large, nor does either author address the major issue that I focus on here—the connection between scarcities of material resources and genocide. Avalos, *Fighting Words*, examines

theories of violence at length. While his argument centers on scarcity, it is not scarcities of material resources that he is concerned with. Avalos's conception of and usage of the term "scarcity" is so broad that it almost comes to lack real meaning. If almost anything—from inscripturation to birth order to equality—can be framed as a scarce resource, the argument that violence stems from scarcity comes to lack both precision and explanatory value.

7. To be more specific, it has for at least two decades now been the consensus of biblical scholars and archeologists that the conquest described in Joshua did not in actuality occur—the Israelites did not come from outside of Palestine to conquer the Canaanites at the end of the Late Bronze Age but were in actuality largely the descendants of Canaanites themselves. These issues have been discussed at great length in many works and need not be reviewed again here. (Two recent treatments summarizing the evidence, or lack thereof, for a conquest of Canaan by the Israelites are Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Ancient Texts* [New York: Free Press, 2001], 72–96, 329–339, and Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011], 77–144). However, I will discuss in the chapter whether or not the narratives in Joshua reflect the anxieties and animosities of a later period, Iron II.

8. On violent imaginaries, see Bettina E. Schröder and Ingo W. Schmidt, "Introduction: Violent Imaginaries and Violent Practices," in *Anthropology of Violence and Conflict* (ed. Bettina E. Schmidt and Ingo W. Schröder; London: Routledge, 2001), 1–24, esp. 9–13.

9. See Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 10–11.

10. Quoted in Jones, *Genocide*, 12–13.

11. On how to define genocide, see Jones, *Genocide*, 12–23, who lists the definitions of over a dozen scholars; Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 9–21; Israel W. Charny, "The Definition of Genocide," in *The Genocide Studies Reader* (ed. Samuel Totten and Paul R. Bartrop; New York: Routledge, 2009), 36–40; Helen Fein, "Defining Genocide as a Sociological Concept," in Totten and Bartrop, *Genocide Studies Reader*, 44–56; and James Hughes, "Genocide," in the *Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict* (ed. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff; New York: Routledge, 2011), 122–139; among many others.

12. Jones, *Genocide*, 17.

13. While Steven Katz has argued that the Holocaust is the only true genocide, few other scholars agree with him on this issue. See Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Context*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); as well as Jones, *Genocide*, 162–163.

14. See Benjamin Lieberman, "'Ethnic Cleansing' Versus Genocide," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* (ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 42–60; Totten and Bartrop, "Related Terms," in *Genocide Studies Reader*, 57–59; Mihran Dabag, "Modern Societies and Collective Violence: The Framework of Interdisciplinary Genocide Studies," in *Genocide: Approaches, Case Studies, and Responses* (ed. Graham C. Kinloch and Raj P. Mohan; New York: Algora, 2005), 42–43; and Martin Shaw, *What Is Genocide?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007), 48–62.

15. Zygmunt Bauman writes, "Modern civilization was not the Holocaust's *sufficient* condition; it was, however, most certainly its *necessary* condition. Without it, the Holocaust would be unthinkable." He points to four central features of modernity: nationalism, "scientific" racism; technological complexity; and bureaucratic rationalization. See Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000; originally published 1989), 13, 53–55; as well as Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Michel Foucault, who makes noteworthy comments on this matter in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1 (trans. Robert Hurley; New York: Vintage, 1978; original French ed., 1976), 136–137; Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Cunning of History: Mass Death and the American Future* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975); Jack Nusan Porter, "Introduction: What Is Genocide? Notes Toward a Definition," in *Genocide and Human Rights: A Global Anthology* (ed. Jack Nusan Porter; Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982), 15; and Shaw, *What is Genocide?*, 133–137, 140–145, who summarizes and critiques the theory.

16. Quoted in Jones, *Genocide*, 3.

17. Jones, *Genocide*, xxi.

18. Jones, *Genocide*, 4.

19. Jones, *Genocide*, 4–6.

20. See, for example, Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 58–93; Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 1–6; and Mann, *Dark Side of Democracy*, 34–36.

21. While notoriously brutal, neither of these empires engaged regularly in genocidal military practices, as this would have run counter to their imperialistic agenda of revenue expansion through tribute payments and other means. Still, there is no question that both the Assyrian and Roman bureaucratic structures were sufficiently complex for these powers to have carried out the genocide of conquered peoples had they so chosen. Certainly, they often did choose to carry out large-scale massacres of a not strictly genocidal variety on a regular basis and occasionally did move in the direction of genocide. For example, some scholars see Rome's destruction of Carthage as having been genocidal. See, e.g., Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 49–58, and the entry, "Carthage, Genocide in," in Samuel Totten

and Paul R. Bartrop, with contributions by Steven Leonard Jacobs, *Dictionary of Genocide: A-L* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2008), 61–62.

22. See Rubenstein, *The Cunning of History*, and *The Age of Triage: Fear and Hope in an Over-Crowded World* (Boston: Beacon, 1983), whose theories of genocide combine a focus on modernization and modernity with one on scarcity; Roger W. Smith, "Scarcity and Genocide," in *The Coming Age of Scarcity: Preventing Mass Death and Genocide in the Twenty-first Century* (ed. Michael N. Dobkowski and Isidor Wallimann; foreword, John K. Roth; Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 199–219, and "Scarcity and Genocide," in *On the Edge of Scarcity: Environment, Resources, Population, Sustainability, and Conflict* (ed. Michael N. Dobkowski and Isidor Wallimann; forew. John K. Roth; Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 138–148, a somewhat different version of the previous article; David Norman Smith, "Scarcity, Ethnicity, and Mass Death in Rwanda," in Dobkowski and Wallimann, *Coming Age of Scarcity*, 220–244; Leon Rappoport, "Scarcity, Genocide, and the Postmodern Individual," in *Coming Age of Scarcity*, 269–282; Mark Levene, "From Past to Future: Prospects for Genocide and Its Avoidance in the Twenty-first Century," in *Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, 638–660; and Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, "Introduction: Making Sense of Violence," in *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology* (ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 1–32, but primarily 13–14. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, who also use the modernity explanation when discussing the Holocaust, write of other genocides: "Conflict between competing groups over material resources—land, and water—can sometimes also escalate into mass slaughters when combined with social sentiments that question or denigrate the basic humanity of the opposing group" (14). The connection between overpopulation, scarcity, and genocide was perhaps first made by Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1958), 154–159, 457–459, though she does not use the term "scarcity" specifically. Many scholars who have written on the genocide in Rwanda have explored the connection between scarcity, overpopulation, and genocide in that case.

23. Scholars who have written on Rwanda have generally emphasized *material* scarcities, while Roger Smith conceives of scarcity more broadly; see Smith, "Scarcity and Genocide."

24. See Avalos, *Fighting Words*, 93–102, for a brief history of scholarship on this issue and a summary of major ideas, including those of Thomas Malthus, which were seminal in developing a connection between population growth and violence, though they were critiqued as early as the nineteenth century by Marx and Engels. See also Roy A. Rappaport, *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968); Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981) and *The Political Economy of Hunger* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995); Melvin Ember and Carol R. Ember, "Cross-Cultural Studies of War and Peace: Recent Achievement and Future Possibilities," in *Studying War: Anthropological Perspectives* (ed. S. P. Reyna and R. E. Downs; Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1996), 185–208; David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 41–75; Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); the various essays in *The Coming Age of Scarcity*; and Jonathan Haas, "The Origins of War and Ethnic Violence," in *Ancient Warfare: Archaeological Perspectives* (ed. John Carman and Anthony Harding; Gloucestershire, England: Sutton, 1999), 11–24. Also useful is Quentin Gausset and Michael A. Whyte, introduction to *Beyond Territory and Scarcity: Exploring Conflicts over Natural Resource Management* (ed. Gausset, Whyte, and Torben Birch-Thomsen; Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2005), 7–26, which discusses Malthusian and neo-Malthusian approaches to scarcity and violence. They write, "Malthus's approach is to look at territory and scarcity as the limit for population growth. As population is assumed to grow at rates which outstrip any growth of resources, the scarcity that results must inevitably be disastrous for the many, causing famines, misery and wars, and leading to population decline" (8). Neo-Malthusian approaches, on the other hand, focus "on the environmental consequences of population growth" and less on human costs (7, 10).

25. See, e.g., Ervin Staub, "The Origins of Genocide and Mass Killing: Core Concepts," in *Genocide Studies Reader*, 97–108, and Barbara Harff, "The Etiology of Genocides," in *Genocide Studies Reader*, 108–120, in whose treatments a multicausal approach is implicit and presumed. More explicit on this score are Leonard S. Newman, "What Is a 'Social-Psychological' Account of Perpetrator Behavior?: The Person versus the Situation in Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*," in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust* (ed. Leonard S. Newman and Ralph Erber; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 43–67; Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian, 1998), 3, who states of the genocide in Rwanda, "Simplistic, monocausal explanations are useless here, as anywhere"; and Philip Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide in Rwanda under Habyarimana," in *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda: New Perspectives* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2006), 3. It should be noted that even modernist theories of genocide emphasize several traits purportedly related to modernity that lead to genocide, not just one aspect of modernity.

26. Newman, "What Is a 'Social-Psychological' Account?," 63.

27. Mahmood Mamdani states in *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), "The estimates of those killed vary: between ten and fifty thousand Hutu, and between 500,000 and a million Tutsi" (5). Christopher C. Taylor writes, "Some sources estimate that thousands of Twa also died during the 1994 genocide in

Rwanda" (*Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* [Oxford: Berg, 1999]), 95. However, the Tutsi were clearly the main targets of the genocide and died in much larger numbers than any other group.

28. See, e.g., Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 198.
29. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, 16–17; and Val Percival and Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of Rwanda," *Journal of Environment and Development* 5 (1996): 270–291.
30. See, e.g., Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), esp. 353; Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 180–201; Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide"; Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong, and Cecile Mukarubuga, "Land Scarcity, Distribution, and Conflict in Rwanda," in *Scarcity and Surfeit: The Ecology of Africa's Conflicts* (ed. Jeremy Lind and Kathryn Sturman; Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2002), 51–84; Herman Musahara and Chris Huggins, "Land Reform, Land Scarcity and Post-conflict Reconstruction: A Case Study of Rwanda," in *From the Ground Up: Land Rights, Conflict and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa* (ed. Chris Huggins and Jenny Clover; Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), 269–346; and Tarique Niazi, "Global Inaction, Ethnic Animosity, or Resource Maldistribution? An Ecological Explanation of Genocide in Rwanda," in *Genocide: Approaches*, 163–193. See also the bibliography cited in Laurel L. Rose, "Land and Genocide: Exploring the Connections with Rwanda's Prisoners and Prison Officials," *Journal of Genocide Research* 9 (2007): 49–69. The majority of works on the genocide in Rwanda address issues of scarcity in some way.
31. For example, Percival and Homer-Dixon claim that "land was evenly distributed throughout the population" and that "there is no conclusive evidence that large numbers of Rwandans—especially those experiencing the most severe effects of environmental scarcity—participated in the killings" ("Environmental Scarcity," 277, 282). These statements are patently contradicted by the evidence provided by other scholars. See, e.g., Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, who states that the genocide "was carried out by hundreds of thousands, perhaps even more, and witnessed by millions" (6); Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 112–115, who discusses the trend of increasing land inequality that had begun in the 1980s; and Niazi, "Global Inaction, Ethnic Animosity," 164, who explicitly calls into question Homer-Dixon's evidence and conclusions.
32. By comparison, Belgium is roughly 30,000 sq. km., with a population of eleven million. (These statistics are taken from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ [accessed 9/21/13].) While many have spoken of Rwanda as being "overpopulated," the "carrying capacity" of a region obviously depends on many factors, including mode of production. Because Belgium is an industrialized nation (and one that benefited financially until only a few decades ago from its imperial holdings), it can support a larger population than can Rwanda.

33. Percival and Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcity," 276.
34. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 185.
35. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 35.
36. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 35.
37. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 39.
38. See, for example, Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, 9–40; Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 35–97; and Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 41–102.
39. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 35.
40. Niazi, "Global Inaction, Ethnic Animosity," 167; see also Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide," 8, and Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 190–191.
41. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 113.
42. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 113, 198. The average land holding per family had gone from 2 hectares in 1956 to 0.7 hectares in 1990.
43. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 112, 117.
44. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 57.
45. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 117.
46. Michael Mann, "Explaining Ethnic Cleansing," in *Genocide Studies Reader*, 70.
47. Mann, "Explaining Ethnic Cleansing," 67.
48. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 217.
49. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 217–218. He is referring to the work of Ervin Staub. See Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), particularly chap. 3, and "Moral Exclusion, Personal Goal Theory and Extreme Destructiveness," *Journal of Social Issues* 46 (1990): 47–64.
50. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 217.
51. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 559.
52. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 45. In 1972, up to 300,000 Hutu were killed by Tutsis in response to the killing of 2,000 to 3,000 Tutsi by Hutus. See René Lemarchand, "Rwanda and Burundi, Genocide in," in *The Encyclopedia of Genocide* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1999), 2:509.
53. Lemarchand, "Rwanda and Burundi," 509; Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 187.
54. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 187, 197.
55. Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 198.
56. Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide," 17.
57. This was called *Umuganda*. Rwandans were forced to contribute unpaid labor to the state once a week. See Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide"; and Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 146–147.
58. Verwimp, "Peasant Ideology and Genocide." The militias were called *interahamwe*, "those who attack together" (Percival and Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcity," 274).
59. Jones, *Genocide*, 243; and Orth, "Rwanda's Hutu Extremist Insurgency: An Eyewitness Perspective," in *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda*, 221–222.

60. Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, 142.
61. Jones, *Genocide*, 103.
62. Jones, *Genocide*, 243.
63. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 105, 176; and "The Cultural Face of Terror in the Rwanda Genocide of 1994," in *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide* (ed. Alexander Laban Hinton; Berkeley: University of California, 2002), 172.
64. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 176.
65. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 439, 558–559; Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, 142.
66. Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 5–6.
67. In addition, recent research has demonstrated that there were an astonishing number of work, concentration, and death camps in Germany, and thus that no German was very far removed from genocidal violence. See http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/03/sunday-review/the-holocaust-just-got-more-shocking.html?pagewanted=all (accessed 9/21/13).
68. Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 198–202; Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, 141–142.
69. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, 15–16, 25; Jones, *Genocide*, 243; Samuel Totten and Rafiki Ubaldo, eds., *We Cannot Forget: Interviews with the Survivors of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 118.
70. Richard Orth relates a surprising example of this in "Rwanda's Hutu Extremist Insurgency," 229. Of course, Rwandans are human beings and not robots, and so one can also find numerous examples of Rwandans disobeying authority. See Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 67, where various examples are provided.
71. Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, 142.
72. My treatment of the archeological evidence, due to constraints on space, will be focused upon population increases rather than the related issues of the "carrying capacity" of Palestine or archeological evidence for interethnic violence, both of which are not uncomplicated topics to assess. Regarding the "carrying capacity" of the land, while it is no doubt true that Palestine's population was higher in the Roman era, it is also true that interethnic violence—in the form of revolts against the Romans in particular—flared up not infrequently and led to great loss of life in that period. (For social-scientific treatments of "carrying capacity," see Fekri A. Hassan, *Demographic Archaeology* [New York: Academic, 1981] and Dwight W. Read and Steven A. LeBlanc, "Population Growth, Carrying Capacity, and Conflict," *Current Anthropology* 44 [2003]: 59–85 [including responses], noteworthy in particular for its discussion of competition between groups for resources.) No matter how dense the population of Palestine in the Roman era, genocidal violence could not have readily been carried out by Judeans or other small Levantine groups because this type of violence generally requires an autonomous state or political body. The issue of archeological evidence for Levantine interethnic violence is also a complex one due to various factors. One of these is that archeologists tend to attribute evidence for destruction layers to major powers such as the Egyptians or Assyrians. Finkelstein, however, has taken a more nuanced approach in "Destructions: Megiddo as a Case Study," in *Exploring the* Longue Durée: *Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager* (ed. J. David Schloen; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 113–126, where he suggests that destruction at Megiddo and other sites was carried out by the Aramean king Hazael in the ninth century. Aren Maeir also discusses archeological evidence for destruction by Hazael in his essay in the same volume, in this case an assault against the city of Gath (cf. 2 Kings 18–19). If Finkelstein and Maeir are correct, these cases would attest to interethnic violence among Levantine groups in the Iron II period. There is, unfortunately, not sufficient room to discuss these issues fully here. In any case, the textual evidence from the Hebrew Bible and Moabite inscriptions is in my view sufficient to demonstrate that interethnic violence of some kind occurred in the Levant. See the lengthy discussion later in this chapter.

73. Faust, "Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations in Judah from the Late Iron Age to the Hellenistic Period and the Archaeology of Persian-Period *Yehud*," in *A Time of Change: Judah and Its Neighbors in the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods* (ed. Yigal Levin; London: T&T Clark, 2007), 23–51, especially 33.
74. I use Iron Age II to refer to the period spanning from 1000–586 BCE, rather than using the Iron II–III periodization.
75. Broshi and Finkelstein, "The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II," *BASOR* 287 (1992): 47–60, particularly 54. Finkelstein in fact raises this estimate slightly in a later work: "The Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King* (ed. Michael D. Coogan, J. Cheryl Exum, and Lawrence E. Stager; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 169–187. Ziony Zevit sees Broshi and Finkelstein's estimates as significantly undercounting the population, in light of the much higher numbers from various written sources, both biblical and Assyrian, though I find him rather too credulous of these literary materials. See Zevit, "Implicit Population Figures and Historical Sense: What Happened to 200,150 Judahites in 701 BCE?" in *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* (ed. Seymour Gitin, J. Edward Wright, and J. P. Dessel; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 357–366. Oded Lipschits also feels that Broshi and Finkelstein's estimates are a bit low, arguing that they undercount the number of settled dunams at the end of Iron II (*The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah Under Babylonian Rule* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005], 248). Lipschits lists and briefly reviews various population estimates of Palestine for different eras (ibid., 259–261). Adam Zertal critiques Finkelstein and Zvi Lederman for not distinguishing between what he calls Iron Age II and Iron III, or what other archeologists call Iron IIB and Iron IIC, in their survey of Southern Samaria. See "The Province of Samaria (Assyrian *Samerina*) in the Late Iron Age (Iron Age III)," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*

(ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 377–412, especially 400; and Finkelstein and Lederman, eds., *Highlands of Many Cultures: The Southern Samaria Survey, Vols. 1 and 2* (Monograph Series 14; Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1997). Finkelstein and Broshi's population estimate is based in part on the latter survey. The two discuss their choice not to distinguish between subphases of Iron II in "Population of Palestine," 47–48. See below for population estimates of late Iron Age II (=Iron Age III).

76. Finkelstein and Silberman, *Bible Unearthed*, 208.
77. Broshi and Finkelstein, "Population of Palestine."
78. Broshi and Finkelstein, "Population of Palestine," 55.
79. Broshi and Finkelstein, "Population of Palestine," 57; Broshi and Ram Gophna, "The Settlements and Population of Palestine During the Early Bronze Age II-III," *BASOR* 253 (1984): 41–53, and "Middle Bronze Age II Palestine: Its Settlements and Population," *BASOR* 261 (1986): 73–90; Broshi, "The Population of Iron Age Palestine," in *Biblical Archaeology Today, 1990: Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), 14–18.
80. Amihai Mazar estimates the population of the Israelite territories (including Judah and Transjordan) to have been between fifty and seventy thousand people in the tenth century. Yet, he also points to a trend of increasing population: "A comparison of the settlement pattern in the Iron I to that of the eighth century B.C.E. points to a gradual increase in settlement" ("The Search for David and Solomon: An Archaeological Perspective," in *The Quest for the Historical Israel: Debating Archaeology and the History of Early Israel* [ed. Brian B. Schmidt; Archaeology and Biblical Studies 17; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007], 134). Avi Ofer also sees the eighth century as the height of settlement in the Judean Hills; see "'All the Hill Country of Judah': From a Settlement Fringe to a Prosperous Monarchy," in *From Nomadism to Monarchy: Archaeological and Other Aspects of Early Israel* (ed. Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na'aman; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 92–121, particularly 105.
81. Broshi, *Bread, Wine, Walls and Scrolls* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 36; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 81. By way of comparison, the census records from Roman Egypt demonstrate an annual growth rate of only 0.2%. See Bruce W. Frier, "Demography," in the *Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. XI: The High Empire, A.D. 70-192* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 787–816, esp. 805.
82. For a recent discussion of approaches to the dating of pentateuchal texts, including Deuteronomy, see Lemos, *Marriage Gifts and Social Change in Ancient Palestine: 1200 BCE to 200 CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 20–37.
83. Interestingly, Sargon II claimed to have "repopulated Samerina more than before." See Zevit, "Implicit Population Figures," 362, but cf. Gary N. Knoppers, "Revisiting the Samarian Question in the Persian Period," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 265–290, primarily 268–269. See also Zertal, "Province of Samaria," for a demographic assessment of Samaria in Iron IIC; he states, "The Assyrian conquerors seemed to destroy only some of the larger cities, whereas most of the towns and villages were left intact" (405).

84. Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman write that "suddenly, at the end of the eighth century BCE, Jerusalem underwent an unprecedented population explosion . . . In demographic terms, the city's population may have increased as much as fifteen times, from about one thousand to fifteen thousand inhabitants" (*Bible Unearthed*, 243). They present a similar argument in *David and Solomon: In Search of the Bible's Sacred Kings and the Roots of Western Tradition* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 129–138. This assessment has been challenged recently by Nadav Na'aman, "When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City? The Rise of Jerusalem as Judah's Premier City in the Eighth-Seventh Centuries B.C.E.," *BASOR* 347 (2007): 21–56, and Philippe Guillaume, "Jerusalem 720-705 BCE: No Flood of Israelite Refugees," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 22 (2008): 195–211. Finkelstein strongly counters Na'aman in "The Settlement History of Jerusalem in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries BC," *RB* 115 (2008): 499–515, but see Na'aman, "Dismissing the Myth of a Flood of Israelite Refugees in the Late Eighth Century BCE," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 1–14, which presents a brief history of the scholarship on this matter. It should be noted that each of these scholars sees outsiders as entering Judah and/or Jerusalem—the point of contention is their place of origin and how quickly the population rose. Finkelstein argues that there was a population spike in these areas in the late eighth century as refugees from the Northern Kingdom fled to Judah and Jerusalem, while Na'aman argues that the population increase was gradual and that the newcomers to Jerusalem were migrants from other parts of Judah. Guillaume also questions whether there was a flood of refugees from the Northern Kingdom and suggests that it is more likely that the population increase in Judah was due to the arrival of exiles from other regions, including but not necessarily limited to the Northern Kingdom, brought in by the Assyrian empire itself. While Finkelstein's proposal is perhaps the most convincing, each of these works' arguments is speculative or not fully substantiated in some way. One can only conclude that the matter of Jerusalem's population growth in the eighth–seventh centuries is not yet settled.
85. Finkelstein and Silberman, *Bible Unearthed*, 245.
86. See Lipschits, *Fall and Rise*, esp. 267, 270.
87. Finkelstein and Silberman, *Bible Unearthed*, 245. See also Finkelstein, "Settlement History," for a discussion of Judah's population in the seventh century BCE.
88. For an estimate of the Persian-era population, see Lipschits, *Fall and Rise*, 270.

89. Dearman, "Roads and Settlements in Moab," *Biblical Archaeologist* 60, no. 4 (1997): 205–213, at 205. See also Paul-Eugène Dion and P. M. Michèle Daviau, "The Moabites," in *The Books of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (eds. André Lemaire and Baruch Halpern; VTSup 129; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 205–224, esp. 217.
90. See Bruce Routledge, *Moab in the Iron Age: Hegemony, Polity, Archaeology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 79, 191. Routledge cites all of the relevant archeological surveys of the various regions of Moab.
91. Piotr Bienkowski, "'Tribalism' and 'Segmentary Society' in Iron Age Transjordan," in *Studies on Iron Age Moab and Neighbouring Areas in Honour of Michèle Daviau* (ed. Piotr Bienkowski; Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 29; Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 12.
92. LaBianca and Younker, "The kingdoms of Ammon, Moab and Edom: The Archaeology of Society in Late Bronze/Iron Age Transjordan (ca. 1400-500 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (ed. Thomas E. Levy; London: Leicester University Press, 1995), 409. See also Bienkowski, "The Iron Age and Persian Periods in Jordan," *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 7 (2001): 265–274, esp. 267.
93. Zertal, "The Heart of the Monarchy: Pattern of Settlement and Historical Considerations of the Israelite Kingdom of Samaria," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan* (ed. Amihai Mazar, with Ginny Mathias; JSOTSup 331; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 42.
94. See Isaiah 3:14–15; 10:1–2; Amos 2:6–7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4–6; Micah 3:9–11; among many other examples.
95. I review the evidence for increasing social stratification at length in Lemos, *Marriage Gifts*, 159–190.
96. See Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, esp. 177.
97. On "root-and-branch" genocide, see Jones, *Genocide*, 4, 326–329.
98. As Norbert Lohfink writes in the *TDOT*, "The words deriving from the root *ḥrm* I appear primarily in the context of war and extermination" (5:183). On *ḥērem*, see, e.g., C. H. W. Brekelmans, *De ḥērem in het Oude Testament* (Nijmegen: Centrale Drukkerij, 1959); Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (trans. and ed. Marva J. Dawn and John Howard Yoder; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991; original German pub. 1958); Abraham Malamat, "The Ban in Mari and in the Bible," in *Biblical Essays: Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting of Die Ou-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid Africa* (Potchefstroom: University of Stellenbosch, 1966), 40–49; Philip D. Stern, *The Biblical* Ḥerem: *A Window on Israel's Religious Experience* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); Susan Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Nelson, "*Ḥerem* and the Deuteronomic Social Conscience"; K. Lawson Younger, "Some Recent Discussion on the *Ḥerem*," in *Far From Minimal: Celebrating the Work and Influence of Philip R. Davies* (ed. Duncan Burns and J. W. Rogerson; London: T&T Clark, 2012), 505–522; and various works cited in Charles Trimm, "Recent Research on Warfare in the Old Testament," *Currents in Biblical Research* 10 (2012): 171–216, as well as those cited in note 5 and below. The strongest treatment of *ḥērem* remains that of Niditch, though my approach differs from hers in certain significant respects.

99. The meaning of the term *ryt* is unclear. See Stern, *Biblical* Ḥerem, 31–32; and Kent P. Jackson, "Language of the Mesha' Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab* (ed. J. Andrew Dearman; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 111–112. André Lemaire, most recently in "New Photographs and *ryt* or *hyt* in the Mesha Inscription, Line 12," *IEJ* 57 (2007): 204–207, has argued that the text reads *hyt* rather than *ryt*. However, Aaron Schade, "New Photographs Supporting the Reading *ryt* in Line 12 of the Mesha Inscription," *IEJ* 55 (2005): 205–208, and Ziony Zevit, "Mesha's *Ryt* in the Context of Moabite and Israelite Bloodletting," in *Puzzling Out the Past: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literature in Honor of Bruce Zuckerman* (ed. Marilyn J. Lundberg, Steven Fine, and Wayne T. Pitard; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 238, have argued in support of the older reading. A consensus has not yet been reached on this issue and the *ryt* reading remains commonly accepted. The translations found here of the Mesha Inscription, with a few changes, are from Edward Lipínski, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age: Historical and Topographical Researches* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 153; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 336.
100. Stern, *Biblical* Ḥerem, 33.
101. Lipínski, *Skirts of Canaan*, 336.
102. See Judges 5:30. Metonymic uses of words for genitalia are crude in the languages with which I am familiar.
103. Stern, *Biblical* Ḥerem, 33.
104. See Shmuel Ahituv, "A New Moabite Inscription," *Israel Museum Studies in Archaeology* 2 (2003): 3–10; J. Andrew Dearman, "Moab and Ammon: Some Observations on Their Relationship in Light of a New Moabite Inscription," in *Studies on Iron Age Moab*, 97–116, esp. 98–99; and Lipínski, *Skirts of Canaan*, 303, 342, 344.
105. See, for example, Joel S. Kaminsky, "Did Election Imply the Mistreatment of Non-Israelites?," in *Harvard Theological Review* 96 (2003): 397–425, esp. 408; and Lori L. Rowlett, *Joshua and the Rhetoric of Violence: A New Historicist Analysis* (JSOTSup 226; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), esp. 12–13, 183.
106. Avalos makes a similar comment (*Fighting Words*, 163).
107. Stern, *Biblical* Ḥerem, 2.
108. Stern, *Biblical* Ḥerem, 29. Stern makes a similar point, again without elaboration, on p. 48. A similar case is found in Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *The Biology of Peace and War: Men, Animals, and Aggression* (trans. Eric Mosbacher; New York: Viking, 1979; orig. German ed. 1975), 185–186, who recognizes the connection between land needs and violence in Deuteronomy and Joshua,

but whose brief treatment is rather "simplistic," as Niditch notes (*War in the Hebrew Bible*, 23), and in some ways inaccurate.

109. Stern, *The Biblical* Ḥerem, 93. Yair Hoffman makes a similar argument in "The Deuteronomistic Concept of the Herem," *ZAW* 111 (1999): 196–210.
110. Crouch, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History* (BZAW 407; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 187. In my view, Deuteronomy 8's extolling of the goodness and abundance of the land must also be understood in this way; it would not have worked theologically for the Deuteronomists to state that Yhwh was bringing the Israelites into a smallish and in some places quite arid land!
111. Crouch, *War and Ethics*, 179–180.
112. Crouch, *War and Ethics*, 179.
113. Monroe, "Israelite, Moabite and Sabaean War-*ḥērem* Traditions and the Forging of National Identity: Reconsidering the Sabaean Text RES 3945 in Light of Biblical and Moabite Evidence," *VT* 57 (2007): 318–341, at 323. While the connections between the Sabaean text discussed in Monroe's article and biblical and Moabite texts is interesting, that text does not contain clear references to genocidal behavior, and so it is not directly relevant to the treatment here. The use of the term *ḥērem* in *KTU* 1.13 is similar. While *ḥērem* is clearly connected there with extensive killing, the text is mythological and does not evince as clearly as one would like a practice of totalistic killing of human enemies akin to that described in the Mesha Inscription or various biblical texts. On *KTU* 1.13, see Mark Smith, "Anat's Warfare Cannibalism and the West Semitic Ban," in *"The Pitcher is Broken": Memorial Essays for Gösta Ahlström* (ed. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy; JSOTSup 190; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 379–386.
114. Monroe, "Israelite War-*ḥērem* Traditions," 336, 340–341; as well as Monroe, *Josiah's Reform and the Dynamics of Defilement: Israelite Rites of Violence and the Making of a Biblical Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 48–56. In the latter work, Monroe states, "The picture depicted in biblical and extrabiblical sources is of an unstable political atmosphere in which the fate of particular nations on their land was regularly threatened by potential expansion by rival states" (49). However, she does not expand upon this point, nor connect these states' desire for expansion with resource scarcities.
115. Monroe, "Israelite War-*ḥērem* Traditions," 321, and *Josiah's Reform*, 55, where she states, "The idea that the war-*ḥērem* . . . belongs to the early phases of state formation is supported by the Bible by the frequency with which the root חרם occurs in the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua. These references relate primarily to the treatment of local non-Israelite populations and their cults before the rise of the Israelite monarchy. Once the monarchy was established, references to the *ḥērem* virtually disappear from deuteronomistic texts." The reasoning here seems to me strained. First, though fewer, there are in fact references to *ḥērem* in the books of Samuel and Kings (1 Sam 15; 1 Kgs 9:21; 20:42). It seems that the abundance of *ḥērem* texts in Deuteronomy and Joshua relates more to the narrative requirements of those books than to a premonarchic setting for *ḥērem* traditions, particularly since there are many other ways in which Deuteronomy and Joshua do *not* reflect the historical and social realities of premonarchic Israel. Since we have no Iron I evidence for *ḥērem*—Iron I textual evidence being quite lacking—it seems difficult or impossible to conclude that *ḥērem* traditions were "integral to Israelite self-definition from the outset."

116. Monroe, *Josiah's Reform*, 55.
117. Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," *JNES* 32 (1973): 70–98.
118. Gelb, "Prisoners of War," 71.
119. See, particularly, Routledge, *Moab in the Iron Age*, and Randall W. Younker, "Moabite Social Structure," *BA* 60 (1997): 237–248.
120. See lines 25–26 of the Moabite inscription.
121. For example, among some native groups in the Pacific Northwest, slaves comprised roughly 25% of the population, though these groups were generally "foraging societies" and not agriculturalists. See Daniel L. Boxberger, "Amerindian Slavery, Pacific Northwest," in *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (general ed. Junius P. Rodriguez; Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1997), 36; as well as Catherine M. Cannon, "How People Moved in Ancient Societies: Broadening the View," *American Anthropologist* 115 (2013): 218–231, esp. 222.
122. Monroe, *Josiah's Reform*, 55.
123. 2 Kings 15:16 relates a similar act of gendered violence performed by an Israelite against a possibly non-Israelite city: "So Menahem struck down Tiphsah and everyone in it and all its territory from Tirzah [on]; because they did not open [its gates], he struck it. All of its pregnant women he cut open."
124. Du Preez, *Genocide: The Psychology of Mass Murder* (London: Boyars/Bowerdean, 1994), 35.
125. See Rowlett, *Joshua and the Rhetoric*, who discusses authority and obedience in Joshua at some length. Also relevant is Coote, "Book of Joshua," 575, who in fact understands the "Canaanites" in that book to be opponents of Josiah in both Judah and the Northern Kingdom. This interpretation is interesting, but the understanding of Canaanites as referring to nearby ethnic others seems more plausible to me.
126. See Collins, *Does the Bible*, 19–20.
127. One might ask why Deuteronomy did not aim its genocidal rhetoric at the objectively much more substantial threats of Assyria or Babylonia. Ezekiel, too, spends far less time than one would expect attacking the Babylonians and far more berating the smaller polities of the Levant in his Oracles against the Nations. Again, one finds a parallel in Rwanda, for the people there aimed their genocidal fervor not at the Belgians or Europeans in general, but at their fellow Rwandans, the Tutsi.

128. See Richard D. Nelson, "Josiah in the Book of Joshua," *JBL* 100 (1981): 531–540; Rowlett, *Joshua and the Rhetoric*; Finkelstein and Silberman, *Bible Unearthed*, 95–96, and elsewhere; Coote, "Book of Joshua," 574–579; Monroe, *Josiah's Reform*, 56–64; among other works.
129. See Monroe, *Josiah's Reform*, 10, 55, 58; Rowlett, *Joshua and the Rhetoric*; as well as John Mansford Prior, "'Power' and 'the Other' in Joshua: The Brutal Birthing of a Group Identity," *Mission Studies* 2 (2006): 27–43.
130. There are various pieces of evidence that ethnic conflict was centered particularly on the land resources of the Moabites. This is demonstrated by the Mesha Inscription, as well as by various other sources. For example, while Heshbon is normally associated with Moab, Jeremiah 49:3 includes it as part of Ammon, possibly indicating encroachment on Moabite territory by the Ammonites. Some archeologists see evidence for this encroachment in the material culture of the region very late in Iron II. (See Routledge, *Moab in the Iron Age*, 46–47, and Dearman, "Moab and Ammon," 103–104.) Some biblical texts, however, include Heshbon among the inheritance of either Reuben or Gad. (See Numbers 32:37 and Joshua 13:17, attributing the city to Reuben; and Joshua 13:26, assigning it to Gad; as well as Dearman, "Moab and Ammon," 104.) In addition, biblical texts again and again tell the story of the defeat of King Sihon the Amorite, seemingly with the intention of "justifying an Israelite claim to this territory," as Bruce Routledge writes (*Moab in the Iron Age*, 45). Biblical passages that relate or refer to this story are, e.g., Numbers 21; Deuteronomy 2; Joshua 2:10; 9:10; 12:2; 13:9–10; Judges 11:19–21; Psalms 135:11–12; 136:19–22; Nehemiah 9:22. It is likely that scarcities of land in Israel and Ammon led those groups to try to claim and seize territory in Moab, and if the oracles of Amos are any indication, the Ammonites also sought to encroach upon the territory of Gilead (1:13), and the Moabites possibly did the same with Edom (2:1). The Eglon narrative in Judges 3 tells of the Moabites, in an alliance with the Ammonites and Amalekites, encroaching on Israelite territory, but it is difficult to know how much stock one should put in this story.
131. See Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible*, 28–55, for more on this issue.
132. Niditch's psychological understanding of *ḥērem* is very much relevant here; see *War in the Hebrew Bible*, esp. 49–50.
133. Taylor, "Cultural Face of Terror," 164.
134. Schröder and Schmidt, "Introduction," 9. Prior also speaks of the violent imaginary in Joshua; see "'Power' and 'the Other' in Joshua," 32.
135. Prior makes a similar point in "'Power' and 'the Other,'" 32.
136. See Rowlett, *Joshua and the Rhetoric*, particularly 163.
137. I will list just a few definitions here. Victor Turner writes: "[Ritual is] prescribed formal behavior for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or power" (*Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967], 19). David I. Kertzer: ritual is "action wrapped in a web of symbolism" (*Ritual, Politics, and Power* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988], 9). Stanley J. Tambiah: Ritual is "a culturally constructed system of symbolic communication. It is constituted of patterned and ordered sequences of words and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement are characterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereotype (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition)" ("A Performative Approach to Ritual," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 [1979]: 119). Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), esp. 171–223, discusses approaches to ritual that emphasize power relations.

138. Strathern and Lambek, "Introduction: Embodying Sociality: Africanist-Melanesianist Comparisons," in *Bodies and Persons: Comparative Perspectives from Africa and Melanesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5.
139. Sigmund Freud once wrote: "The fateful question for the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction." Quoted in Brij Mohan, "The Ultimate Oppression: The Urge to Genocide," in *Genocide: Approaches*, 64.
140. On "urbicide," see Jones, *Genocide*, 192–193.