Genocide and the Holocaust

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" – a statement which, brief as it was, marked a dramatic advance in both the history of ethics and international law. That statement came in direct response to the events of World War II and principally to the Holocaust, which remains a distinctive instance of what the UN Convention defined as genocide. Indeed, the term "genocide" itself was coined only a short time before (in 1944) by a Polish–Jewish jurist and émigré to the United States, Raphael Lemkin (the sole survivor of a large family murdered in the Holocaust). Even before the outbreak of World War II, Lemkin had been concerned with what he saw as a lack in both national and international law – their common failure to protect the rights of groups as groups (and so also of their members). Genocide, in his view (by the term, he combined the Greek root *genos* (group) with the Latin root *cide* (murder), represented a distinctive crime in which individual persons were attacked not because of anything they possessed or an act they had committed but solely because of their identification as members of the particular group. The groups subject to genocide, as cited in the UN Convention, were "national, ethnical, racial or religious" groups, and although there was disagreement before and since the Convention's adoption on other groups that should be listed together with these, the essential features of genocide come clear in these examples: the systematic attempt to make a group and its members "disappear," irrespective of their individual features (age, gender, actions, character) – thus only on the basis of their group identity. The difference between genocide and other forms of killing, even of mass murder, which may at times claim more victims, points to genocide as a distinctive crime unspecified in previous international agreements about the conduct of war.

Although there is widespread agreement that genocide was a central feature of the Holocaust, there has been considerable disagreement on certain historical and conceptual issues bearing on the relation between

the two; the most important of these are addressed in Part VI's essays by Helen Fein, Mark Levene, and Dirk Moses. The principal *historical* issue revolves around the question of the historical status of the Holocaust in relation to other apparent instances of genocide. The claim has often been made or implied, as Levene and Moses emphasize (and dispute), that the Holocaust is "unique," suggesting either that the Holocaust was something more than genocide, or that it alone, among other similar events, truly qualifies as genocide. Levene argues that both bad and good reasons have stood behind such reasoning. One serious liability that he finds in this characterization is, first, its virtual removal of the Holocaust from historical causality – the mystification of using "unique" as a historical category – and, second, the effect it has of diminishing or denying other instances of genocide. To be sure, the question of whether there were genocides before or after the Holocaust is a legitimate historical one – which some scholars have answered negatively. All three authors in Part VI (and majority opinion more generally) agree, however, that, recent as the history of the *term* "genocide" is, instances of its *occurrence* both preceded the Holocaust and have appeared subsequently as well. (Raphael Lemkin himself found classical and even biblical examples of genocide.)

But the view of genocide as having a history apart from the Holocaust does not deny that there are differences among the occurrences of genocide or that the Holocaust may not be distinctive among them. Levene refers, for example, to Zygmunt Bauman's claim of the historical relation between "modernity" and genocide: the latter's manifestation in the modern context of rising nationalism, capitalism, and industrialization. The latter thesis, however, would imply a sharp, perhaps qualitative difference between "modern" genocide and its earlier occurrences – and would still leave untouched the claim, on which Fein elaborates, that there are significant differences among even modern instances of genocide (as, for example, between the Nazis' "Final Solution" and the Turkish attacks on Turkey's Armenian populace in 1915–17). Both Levene and Moses emphasize the danger (and offensiveness) of what has come to be called "competitive victimization": disputes about the comparative degrees of suffering inflicted by different occurrences of genocide. But to recognize this danger is not to deny that there are, may be, and indeed have been, significant differences among such occurrences – not necessarily in the numbers of victims claimed or the proportion of a populace murdered or in the technological means employed, but in the systemic intention and mechanism that initiated and sustained the occurrence.[1] In *this* regard, the objections by Levene and Moses to "privileging" the Holocaust as somehow outside or beyond historical explanation can be readily granted without denying a view of the Holocaust as an extreme – in Levene's term, up to this time, "ultimate" – exemplification of genocide.

The conceptual issues related to the identification or classification of genocide are, if anything, more complex and difficult than the historical issues; these are Fein's principal concerns in her essay – noted also if less centrally by Levene and Moses – and, as she points out, originating in the UN Convention on Genocide, perhaps in the concept of genocide itself. The problem of defining what counts as a relevant *group* for the act of genocide has already been mentioned as an issue. The four group-types referred to in the Convention are themselves open to dispute (for example, the category of "race"), and the claims for including others – political or economic groups, for example – have to be taken seriously. Furthermore, as Fein points out, the question of what types of actions count as genocidal remains even after the UN Convention's specification. Physical murder is the most obvious means of genocide, but even this charge (as in instances of mass starvation initiated by coercive social or economic change) may not be readily determined. The Convention also calls genocidal the prevention of births within a group (as in forced abortion or sterilization), and, with still larger potential complications, the forcible transfer of children "to another group" – that is, the forcible assimilation of one group into another, which, in the cases of ethnic or religious groups, opens the way to charges of genocide even where the transmission of cultural traditions or language is prevented.

Such problems of classification or definition, however, are common features of most moral and legal discourse. One thing that stands out in the discussion of genocide, however – in the attempts to identify, to prevent, and, in the event, to punish its occurrence – is the history of that discussion itself. The concept of genocide itself, and the ensuing attempts at definition and legislation in relation to it, originated with the events of the Holocaust; the irony of moral recognition as following from moral enormity in this relation was not unique, and it has opened the way, as in the essays which follow here, for a new perspective on older as well as on current historical occurrences.

NOTE

1 Fein argues for replacing the criterion of intention with that of 'purposeful action' – but it seems not altogether clear that the difficulties she finds in the former are more fully resolved in the latter. The discussion above in part IV suggests alternate ways in which the concept of intention itself can be construed.

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23

United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, December 9, 1948

The Contracting Parties,

Having considered the declaration made by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 96 (I) dated 11 December 1946 that genocide is a crime under international law, contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and condemned by the civilized world,

Recognizing that at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and

Being convinced that, in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international co-operation is required,

Hereby agree as hereinafter provided:

Article 1

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

Article 2

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:

United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 9 December 1948.

(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.

Article 3

The following acts shall be punishable:

(a) Genocide;
(b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
(c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
(d) Attempt to commit genocide;
(e) Complicity in genocide.

Article 4

Persons committing genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties undertake to enact, in accordance with their respective Constitutions, the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention, and, in particular, to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

Article 6

Persons charged with genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

Article 7

Genocide and the other acts enumerated in article III shall not be considered as political crimes for the purpose of extradition.

The Contracting Parties pledge themselves in such cases to grant extradition in accordance with their laws and treaties in force.

Article 8

Any Contracting Party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

Article 9

Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfilment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or for any of the other acts enumerated in article III, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute.

Article 10

The present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall bear the date of 9 December 1948.

Article 11

The present Convention shall be open until 31 December 1949 for signature on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State to which an invitation to sign has been addressed by the General Assembly.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

After 1 January 1950, the present Convention may be acceded to on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State

which has received an invitation as aforesaid. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 12

Any Contracting Party may at any time, by notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, extend the application of the present Convention to all or any of the territories for the conduct of whose foreign relations that Contracting Party is responsible.

Article 13

On the day when the first twenty instruments of ratification or accession have been deposited, the Secretary-General shall draw up a proces-verbal and transmit a copy thereof to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article 11.

The present Convention shall come into force on the ninetieth day following the date of deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

Any ratification or accession effected, subsequent to the latter date shall become effective on the ninetieth day following the deposit of the instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 14

The present Convention shall remain in effect for a period of ten years as from the date of its coming into force.

It shall thereafter remain in force for successive periods of five years for such Contracting Parties as have not denounced it at least six months before the expiration of the current period.

Denunciation shall be effected by a written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 15

If, as a result of denunciations, the number of Parties to the present Convention should become less than sixteen, the Convention shall cease to be in force as from the date on which the last of these denunciations shall become effective.

Article 16

A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any Contracting Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such request.

Article 17

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall notify all Members of the United Nations and the non-member States contemplated in article XI of the following:

(a) Signatures, ratifications and accessions received in accordance with article 11;
(b) Notifications received in accordance with article 12;
(c) The date upon which the present Convention comes into force in accordance with article 13;
(d) Denunciations received in accordance with article 14;
(e) The abrogation of the Convention in accordance with article 15;
(f) Notifications received in accordance with article 16.

Article 18

The original of the present Convention shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

A certified copy of the Convention shall be transmitted to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article XI.

Article 19

The present Convention shall be registered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the date of its coming into force.

24

Defining Genocide as a Sociological Concept

HELEN FEIN

For the last decade, social scientists considering genocide have devised varying definitions and typologies, often reflecting consensus on evaluation of specific cases but dissensus on the borderlines of genocide. Controversy continues not only because genocide is hard to differentiate categorically but because most definers have normative or prescriptive agendas; we are activated by what we feel genocide should encompass – often not wishing to exclude any victims.

Debates recur about the identity of the target group, the scope of acts deemed genocidal, the identity of the perpetrator, the distinction among types of genocide, and whether or how to distinguish intent. This problem has been complicated lately by the convergence of interests linking researchers of genocide and state terror; the latter concentrate more on explanations of state behavior than of the choice of the victim group. Although this may prove to be a much-needed intellectual opening, it can also confound explanations when diverse objectives and behaviors are aggregated.

Because genocide itself occurs in the context of diverse social relations, it is useful to clarify how the term evolved in order to return to the underlying assumptions behind the concept; then I shall suggest a more generic concept, appropriate for sociological usage, paralleling the terms of the UNGC.

Lemkin's Conception and the UNGC Definition

Lemkin's conception (1944, 79) emerged from an attempt to explain and indict German population policy. Later study has shown that Lemkin

Helen Fein, "Defining Genocide as a Sociological Concept," from *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*, London: Sage Publications, 1990, pp. 8–31.

overidentified commonalities and implied a coherent and common objective in different countries. In fact, Hitler's objectives varied and were not always premeditated (Rich 1973/4). However, Lemkin recognized that Hitler had different population policies and aims in the occupied east and the west: 'Germanization' or coerced denationalization and assimilation was not the same as 'genocide.' According to Lemkin (1944),

> genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. (79)....
>
> Hitler's conception of genocide is based not upon cultural but only biological patterns.... Some groups – such as the Jews – are to be destroyed completely. A distinction is made between peoples considered to be related by blood to the German people (such as Dutchmen, Norwegians, Flemings, Luxembourgers), and peoples not thus related by blood (such as the Poles, Slovenes, Serbs). The populations of the first group are deemed worthy of being Germanized. With respect to the Poles particularly, Hitler expressed the view that it is their soil alone which *can and should be profitably Germanized* (81–2)....
>
> In the occupied countries of 'people of non-related blood,' a policy of depopulation is pursued. Foremost among the methods employed for the purpose is the adoption of measures calculated to decrease the birthrate of the national groups of non-related blood, while at the same time steps are taken to encourage the birthrate of the *Volksdeutsche* living in these countries (86). The physical debilitation and even annihilation of national groups in occupied countries is carried out mainly in the following ways:
>
> 1 *Racial discrimination in Feeding*...
> 2 *Endangering of Health*...
> 3 *Mass Killings*... (87–8)

First, we note, the object of genocide was always the defeated national group except for the Jews, conceived by the Nazis as a race or anti-race – non-human, superhuman and menacing. Political groups and classes within the nation who were killed and incarcerated by the German occupiers were conceived as members of a national group. Second, Lemkin conceived of genocide as a set of coordinated tactics or means. *Cultural genocide* was not a term used by Lemkin: cultural discrimination may be a tactic to assimilate or to destroy a group. The objective of genocide was both the social disintegration and the biological destruction of the group. Third, Lemkin recognized grades of genocide: some groups were to be immediately and wholly annihilated (the Jews); others (especially the Poles) were to be slowly destroyed by other means to decimate their numbers and decapitate their leadership. The victims might be observed

by contemporaries as destroyed in whole or in part. Members of other occupied nations would be allowed to survive as individuals but their national institutions, culture and group organization would be destroyed and they would become Germanized. Such coerced assimilation without killing or the interruption of procreation and parenting was not cited by Lemkin as genocide. The deliberate destruction of the culture of a distinct group without physical annihilation of its members is most often termed *ethnocide* now.

The United Nations committees that framed the UNGC both further specified the protected groups and delimited the connotations of genocide to 1) biological destruction and serious injury (see Art. II, a, b, and c) and 2) indirect sociobiological destruction by restricting the biological reproduction of group members and breaking the linkage between reproduction and socialization (d and e).

> Article II: '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.'

Three problems are repeatedly noted by critics of the Convention: 1) the gaps in groups covered; 2) the ambiguity of *intent to destroy a group 'as such'* and 3) the inability of non-state parties to invoke the Convention and the failure to set up an independent enforcement body. Since the first two problems bear on the definition (an essential for research), I will concentrate on this criticism. Furthermore, I will argue that the second problem – the question of intent – can be resolved by discriminating intent from motive; intent is purposeful action.

The Convention has been repeatedly criticized for omission of political groups and social classes as target groups; a recent report commissioned by the UN Human Rights Commission recommended its extension to political and sexual groups (Whitaker 1985, 16–19). Drost, an early critic, made these incisive objections:

> Man lives not alone but in groups. He belongs to a group either by birth or from choice.... By leaving political and other groups beyond the purported protection the authors of the Convention also left a wide and dangerous loophole for any government to escape the human duties under the Convention by putting genocide into practice under the cover of executive measures against political or other groups for reasons of security, public order or any

> other reason of state.... A convention on genocide cannot effectively contribute to the protection of certain, described minorities when it is limited to particular defined groups.... It serves no purpose to restrict international legal protection to some groups firstly because the protected members always belong at the same time to other, unprotected groups.... (1951, vol. 2, 122–3).

Le Blanc, on the other hand, believes the exclusion of political groups was wise because of the 'difficulty inherent in selecting criteria for determining what constitutes a political group,' their instability over time, the right of the state to protect itself, and the potential misuses of genocide – labelling of antagonists in war and political conflict (1988, 292–4). He refers to a proposal by Jordan Paust for a new draft convention criminalizing the 'Crime of Politicide.'

The first draft of the UNGC in the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide extended protection to political groups, groups which were never considered by Lemkin as subjects of genocide. Such inclusion was opposed not only by Soviet bloc states but by other states, an often-overlooked point (Le Blanc 1988, 273–6). That draft also criminalized 'cultural genocide' (intentional acts destroying language, religion and culture) – a proviso opposed by western states – although Lemkin had never distinguished cultural genocide.

This instigated vigorous debate on the roots and rationale of genocides. Some states expressed fears that the inclusion of political groups would impede the ratification of the Convention because states might anticipate that suppression of subversive elements and disorders could instigate external intervention – states might be called to account. Finally, committee members arrived at an accommodation, deleting both cultural genocide and political groups (Kuper 1981, 24–9). The US accepted the deletion of political groups in exchange for a clause allowing the establishment of an international criminal tribunal (LeBlanc 1988, 277–8). The exclusion of political groups was one of the charges against the UNGC which critics used to prevent its ratification by the US Senate for forty years.

The unpublished work of Lemkin shows that he was fully cognizant that the nature of groups which might be targets changed as forms of social organization and historical situations changed. His examples of genocide or genocidal situations include: Albigensians, American Indians, Assyrians in Iraq, Belgian Congo, Christians in Japan, French in Sicily (c. 1282), Hereros, Huguenots, Incas, Mongols, the Soviet Union/Ukraine, Tasmania. Apparently, Lemkin did not consider political groups as targets. In a description of an abstract for a book he intended to write, 'Introduction to the Study of Genocide,' he observed: 'The philosophy of the Genocide Convention is based on the formula of the human cosmos. This

cosmos consists of four basic groups: national, racial, religious and ethnic. The groups are protected not only by reasons of human compassion but also to prevent draining the spiritual resources of mankind.'

Some Sociological Definitions and Issues

Many social scientists have accepted the UNGC definition of genocide explicitly or implicitly (Fein 1979; Kuper 1981; Porter 1982, 12; Harff and Gurr 1987) or a broadened version thereof, including political and social groups (Horowitz 1976, 18, 42; Chalk and Jonassohn 1990; Tal 1979). Charny proposes 'what he calls a *humanistic* definition...: the *wanton* murder of human beings on the basis of any identity whatsoever that they share' (1988, 4). Legters, who says he generally favors a strict construction of genocide excluding political groups, argues for the inclusion of social classes as class is the unit of social organization in socialist societies (1984, 65).

Those who accept the UNGC definition usually acknowledge that mass killings of political groups show similarities in their causes, organization and motives: some authors refer to these as 'genocidal massacres' (Kuper 1981), 'ideological massacres' (Fein 1984) or 'politicides' (Harff and Gurr 1987).

Virtually everyone acknowledges that genocide is primarily a crime of state. Chalk and Jonassohn refer to the 'state or other authority' as perpetrators, encompassing settlers acting in the name of the nation-state (1990, 23). Although there is little disagreement over this, heuristically it seems preferable to me to omit variable terms as criteria in a definition: marginal situations in which genocide or genocidal massacres not authorized by the state occur include colonization, civil wars, and the transfer of powers during decolonization. Actors who may have committed genocide without state authorization include soldiers, settlers, and missionaries.

Dadrian (1975), attempting to offer a general explanation encompassing the Armenian genocide, was the first sociologist known to propose a definition – actually an explanation sketch – of genocide. He states:

> Genocide is the successful attempt by a dominant group, vested with formal authority and with preponderant access to the overall resources of power, to reduce by coercion or lethal violence the number of a minority group whose ultimate extermination is held desirable and useful and whose respective vulnerability is a major factor contributing to the decision for genocide (1974, 123).

Here explanation has usurped definition; furthermore, it is not clear what is to be observed and classed as genocide except that the perpetrator is a representative of the dominant group and the victims are a minority group. This elementary distinction was later outmoded by the Khmer Rouge genocide in Kampuchea (discussed in Part 4). I shall later return to Dadrian's contributions.

Chalk and Jonassohn, beginning to teach a course on the history and sociology of genocide in the 1980s – some may have seen earlier editions of their (1990) book – advanced a singular and straight-forward definition which is essentially similar to one they have employed since 1984:

> *Genocide* is a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrators (1990, 23).

There are several problems with this definition:

1) The limitation of the perpetrator to 'a state or other authority.' Chalk argues that if settler murders go unpunished, it is because states do not try to stop them or prosecute them; hence the state is responsible for condoning them (1988, 7). It seems to me this confuses the question of who is the perpetrator (in definition) with who – what organization or persons – is responsible for prevention and prosecution.

2) The specification of 'one-sided mass killing' implies a numeric threshold or ratio of victims which may obscure recognition of the earlier stages of genocide. Their emphasis on mass killing also omits other forms of intentional biological destruction (see earlier discussion of Lemkin). 'One-sided' killing is also problematic; it is unclear whether or when this includes mass killings of groups which may have an armed party or sub-group either defending themselves or attacking a party or elite of the dominant group.

3) The definition of the group is open-ended, implying that an endless number of groups can be constructed, including groups constructed from the paranoid imagination of despots – 'wreckers' in Stalin's time. This is in accord with the assumptions of labelling theory (although the authors do not explicitly draw on this) which posits that the construction (and de-struction) of enemies depends on their labelling by the powerful. Chalk and Jonassohn explain that their definition follows 'W. I. Thomas' famous dictum that if people define a situation as real it is real in its consequences' (1990, 25). But, like all dicta, this has to be examined to determine how, when, and why it applies.

The definition of Chalk and Jonassohn has served their goal of casting a wide net, exploring a range of situations in which people are victimized by definition or at random – 'witches' (the witch-hunt is considered a

precursor of genocide), the Knights Templar, the victims of Shaka's and Stalin's terror. It points the way toward an emerging theory of terror – murder, torture and intimidation – and genocide. But to get there, we need to distinguish both processes. Indeed, Chalk and Jonassohn reflected in an earlier paper on the different functions served by torture and genocide: torture is a means to control people whom state agents expect to remain as members of the state; genocide is a means to eliminate a group or people from the state (1983, 13–14). The study of terror should include the explanation of victims created by definition – conspiracies of witches and wreckers. When and why do states manufacture victims by labelling them with fictive identities and accusing them of nonexistent crimes? The labelling perspective is most suggestive for studies of manufactured deviance for social control.

However, the victims of genocide are generally members of real groups, whether conceived of as collectivities, races or classes, who acknowledge their existence, although there may be administrative designation of their membership as German authorities designated Jews for 'the Final Solution,' including some people of Jewish lineage who no longer considered themselves Jews (and did not register voluntarily with the Jewish community) or were members of other religious communities (converts and their children). Had there not been an actual Jewish community with its own institutions, German authorities could not have defined and enumerated Jews, for there was no objective indicator of their alleged criteria of Jewishness – race – which divided 'Jews' and 'Aryans' categorically.

Harff and Gurr (1987) distinguish genocides (using an abbreviated version of the UNGC) from 'politicides' – massacres of political groups in opposition, including groups in rebellion. Thus, Harff and Gurr's universe of politicide includes many cases Chalk and Jonassohn label as genocide; however, other cases included in the Harff and Gurr universe of politicides are excluded from Chalk and Jonassohn's universe of genocide because they include bilateral killing.

Intent and Extent – Recalling Some Frontiers

A major issue in the study of genocide is that of *intent*. This is most often problematic when killings occur during war and colonization.

At times, the charge of genocide has been raised by scholars studying the decimation of indigenous populations whose numbers have gravely declined during colonial occupations through direct and indirect causes related to the occupier's political economy: disease, usurpation of land rights and destruction of the indigenes' economy, starvation, warfare, mas-

sacre, and malign neglect. Nietschmann (1987), studying contemporary cases, asserts the prevalence of genocide in contemporary wars and occupations by which the 'Third World' states subjugate the unrepresented 'Fourth World' nations. Barta (1987, 239–40) argues that genocide was a systemic function of the settlement of Australia (and by implication of other white settler-societies). Chalk and Jonassohn observe that ethnocide, the failure to protect indigenous peoples in the Americas from famine, and genocide were usually not unforeseeable or unintended (1990, 195–203).

Wallimann and Dobkowski challenge the adequacy of restricting the concept of genocide to intentional or planned mass destruction, given the pervasiveness of structural violence and the bureaucratization and anonymity of modern political and economic organization (1987, xvi–xviii). Yet they do not propose an alternate definition or propose to exonerate individual perpetrators, indicating some ambivalence about the implications of their position.

To avoid the whole question of inference of intent, both Barta (1987), Huttenbach (1988) and Thompson and Quets (1987, 1990) propose that we simply eliminate intent as a criterion. Churchill proposes a new legal definition of genocide, similar to that of homicide, discriminating grades of intent: genocide in the first degree, second degree (intent unclear), third degree ('intent is probably lacking'), fourth degree (corresponding to manslaughter) (1986, 416–17). Since this is avowedly a legal resolution – and one not likely to be taken up although it is a creative one – I will focus on the social-scientific definitions that purport to have more general uses.

Huttenbach proposes the criteria be whether the action threatens the continued existence of the group but does not distinguish between premeditated and accidental deaths (e.g. Bhopal 1984, Chernobyl 1986) or deaths resulting from poor industrial or national planning. Thus, genocide becomes a rubric for all bad things that can endanger peoples, a concept lacking all but rhetorical use for scholars or social activists: it does not indicate either common causes or similar solutions.

Barta argues for 'a conception of genocide which embraces *relations* of destruction and removes from the word the emphasis on policy and intention which brought it into being' (1987, 238) but seems to overlook the authorization and effects of the most rationalized genocide of the century, disagreeing with Irving Louis Horowitz who,

> misleadingly in my view calls Germany 'a genocidal society' because during one terrible period of *political* aberration the 'state bureaucratic apparatus' was used for 'a structural and systematic destruction of innocent people.' My conception of a genocidal *society* – as distinct from a genocidal state – is one in which the whole bureaucratic apparatus might officially be directed

> to protect innocent people but in which a whole race is nevertheless subject to remorseless pressures of destruction (239–40).

This opposition and segregation of state from society appears very arbitrary in the 20th century and excludes, rather than uncovers, clues to their relationship. Substantively, Barta does not clarify the process of destruction of indigenous peoples and ignores major genocides. As Chalk puts it,

> In Barta's configuration, Australian society is genocidal for taking the lives of over 20,000 aborigines, but German society, whose victims number in the millions, is not. Barta makes no attempt to explain the significance for his analysis of Germany's devastation of the Herero people of South West Africa in the years from 1904 to 1907 (1988, 11).

... Thompson and Quets suggest eliminating the question of intent and the objectives of the perpetrators, proposing

> A sociological definition of genocide as a continuous multidimensional variable.... Genocide is the extent of destruction of a social collectivity by purposive action, and has a theoretical range from none to total.... *Genocide is the extent of destruction of a social collectivity by whatever agents, with whatever intentions, by purposive actions which fall outside the recognized conventions of legitimate warfare* (1987, 1, 11).

This definition is severely flawed by 1) the omission (in the first) of a perpetrator and 2) the lack of boundaries due to their omission of intent, allowing the inclusion of accidents, ecological and environmental damage; it is unclear why Thompson and Quets exempt war and war crimes given the boundlessness of their definition. Further, they confuse the definition of genocide and the scale of measurement; whether genocide has occurred is a different question from its effects – e.g. the percentage of the targetted population killed. Moreover, they extend the connotations of genocide to cover all kinds of acts undermining collectivities as a result of social policy – 'sociocide,' 'linguicide,' 'cultural genocide' – so that genocide becomes not only unbounded but banal, an everyday occurrence. If both the US and France (states which do uniformally promote or tolerate bilingual education) are in the same class (of perpetrators) as Nazi Germany and the USSR, we have a construct good for nothing.

In practice, Thompson and Quets have conceptually aggregated cases of genocide and collective violence – pogroms, lynchings, certain kinds of race riots – collective terrorism and homicides which are intended to destroy members of 'a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such.' Certainly collective violence could be defined and measured on a con-

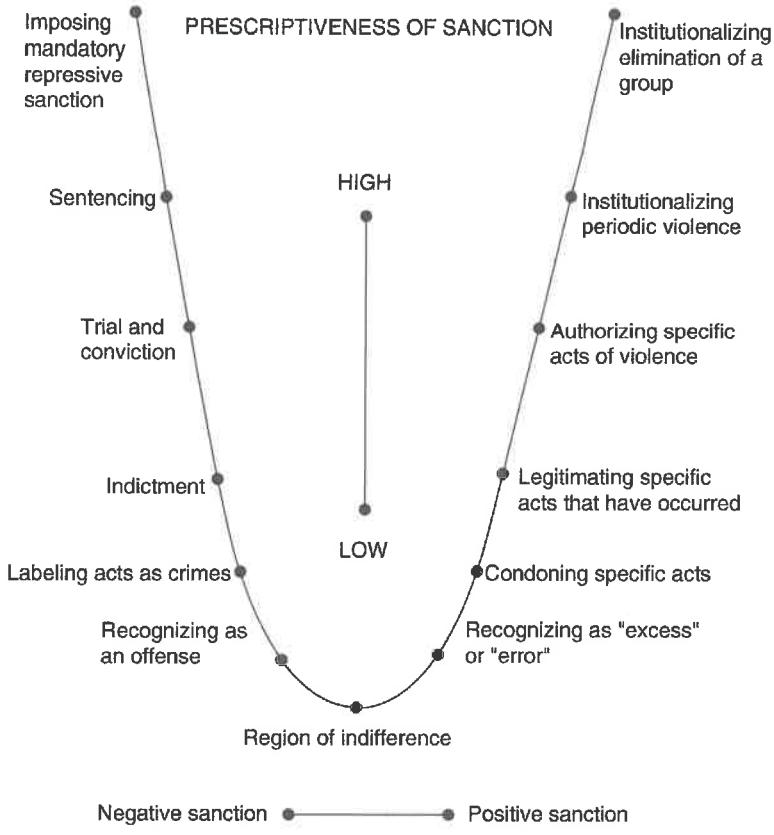

Figure 24.1 Stages in the sanctioning of collective violence
Source: Fein (1977: 186)

tinuum of state authorization and continuity as I suggested (Fein 1977, 186) – see figure 24.1[1]

Modern collective terrorism, organized acts in which the victims are picked by their membership in a collectivity in conflict with that of the victimizer – perpetrated recently in the Punjab, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Northern Ireland – could fit under the definition of genocide of the UNGC: '... acts [killing members of the group] committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such.' The definition does not prescribe a minimal threshold. Some may assume that terrorists who strike group members episodically aim not to kill them but kill for an instrumental political purpose. But, in most cases, the acts speak for themselves: the victims are picked because of who they are – Hindu and Buddhist bus riders, Jews praying in an Istanbul synagogue,

Irish Protestants and Catholics drinking in a pub or shopping. The perpetrators do not ask anything of the victims or the bystanders as the price to spare them; the victims are seldom used as hostages for bargaining.

We are not inhibited from labelling such acts as genocide by the definition of genocide but by an unexplicated assumption of scale and continuous action: we assume that the victimizers do not have the capacity to kill a significant part of the group and that such acts are likely to be episodic rather than continuous.

One solution to this problem of scale is to label such events as *genocidal massacres*, giving recognition to the intent inherent in the selection of victims, as many have labelled large-scale and semi-organized communal massacres (e.g. India before and during partition) as genocidal massacres. Genocidal massacres – pogroms, collective terrorism, some race riots – may be clues or predecessors of future genocide. But the universe of genocidal massacres is much wider than that of genocides, indicating the operation of control and authorization by the state and other authorities.

Intent Re-examined

One contribution of Thompson and Quets has been to substitute purposive action for intent in definition, a term many of us confuse but is clear in law. As sociologists, immersed in the distinctions between 'manifest' and 'latent' function as a paradigm of intended and unintended action (Merton 1957, 31), we have needlessly confused the meaning of intent. Intent or purposeful action – or inaction – is not the same in law or every-day language as either motive or function. An actor performs an act, we say, with intent if there are foreseeable ends or consequences: for what purpose is different from why or for what motive is the act designed.

Two teams of scholars/lawyers/activists discuss this issue in arguing for the finding of genocide in Cambodia and Afghanistan. The key concept of Art. 2 of the UNGC – '[specified] acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious *group as such* [my italics]' is illuminated by referring back to the UN debate.

> a Venezuelan amendment eventually adopted substituted the phrase 'as such' for this specific listing of motives.... Mr Perez Perozo (Venezuela) recalled that he had already stated... that *an enumeration of motives* was useless and even dangerous, as such a restrictive enumeration *would be a powerful weapon in the hands of the guilty parties and would help them to avoid being charged with genocide.... The aim of the amendment was to give*

wider powers of discretion to the judges who would be called upon to deal with cases of genocide....

As some attempt to make a case under the Convention (not, so far, instigating the UN to act) we can see that the Convention has greater flexibility than understood by some.

> The 'intent' required by the Convention as a necessary constituent element of the crime of genocide cannot be confused with, or interpreted to mean, 'motive.'... The 'intent' clause of article II of the Genocide Convention requires only that the various destructive acts – killings, causing mental and physical harm, deliberately inflicted conditions of life, etc. – have a purposeful or deliberate character as opposed to an accidental or unintentional character (Hannum and Hawk 1986, 140–6).

Hannum and Hawk documented mass killings in Kampuchea – as well as the deliberate targetting of minority ethnic groups and Buddhist priests – authorized by the Khmer Rouge, arguing that such mass killing – often called 'autogenocide' – is proscribed under the Convention because the Khmer Rouge aimed to destroy a significant part of the majority Khmer people (Hannum and Hawk, 1986). This was (despite the fact that their brief had no legal effect) a remarkable innovation because it made the case that genocide could be committed by perpetrators of the same ethnicity who justified their murders by an ideology which reclassified and labelled the victims, discriminating their collaborators and those to be saved as a new kind of people.

Reisman and Norchi (1988) argued that the Soviet destruction of the Afghan people through depopulation, massacre, mass bombardment and bombing of refugees (which led to the killing of about 10 percent of them in eight years) and the forced removal of children demonstrated Soviet and Afghan government intent to destroy the Afghan people as a people – an intent which could be masked or explained by political and social motives. However, intent, they argue, should be simply construed as deliberate or repeated acts with foreseeable results rather than motive. Thus, the sociological concept of purposeful action is the bridge paralleling the legal concept of intent in the Genocide Convention; this lies between legal guilt (an external judgment) and the perpetrator's construction of an account or motive (a psychological variable).

War and Genocide

Since much killing of unarmed civilians is a foreseeable consequence of war – conventional or nuclear – and several cases have been presented of

genocides during wars, one may ask whether wars – or certain wars – are inherently genocidal. Should nuclear or massive aerial bombardment of civilians in war be construed as intrinsically genocidal? Both Chalk and Jonassohn (1990) and Thompson and Quets (1987) exclude such killings. Kuper, in contrast, repeatedly refers to nuclear and conventional bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Dresden, and Vietnam as genocidal massacres (1981, 14, 17, 34–5, 45–6, 50, 55, 91–2, 102, 139, 174). Dadrian (1975) labelled deaths from such causes as 'latent genocide.'

Markusen (1987), surveying the definitions and attributes of 'total war' and of genocide, concludes that these state-sanctioned mass killings have several significant similarities: dehumanization of the enemy, mass killing of civilians, bureaucratic organization and the use of technology distancing the perpetrators from the victims. But Markusen fails to note that both distancing and bureaucracy are very variable attributes of modern genocide. Nor does Markusen note the dissimilarities: the selection of victims for genocide is not based on where they are but who they are; were the victims during war to surrender, their killing should cease (assuming adherence to the war convention) but the surrender of victims in genocidal situations does not avoid their mass murder but expedites it.

Changes in the norms and technology of war are evident over time but they are contradictory; some expanded and others diminished the scope of killing of innocent civilians. Chalk and Jonassohn concluded that the first genocides in history arose from attempts in antiquity of imperial powers to destroy their recurrent enemies; best known of these is the destruction of Carthage (1990, 32–5).

Surveying such wars in antiquity, Lerner infers slavery arose from the successful separation of conquered peoples, slaughtering the males and incorporating the females into the nation of the conqueror (1986, 9, 78–81). Changes in sex roles and the patriarchal organization of society now make women more vulnerable to genocide than ever before, Smith observes (1989). In premodern times, women belonging to enemies defeated in war were enslaved and raped as they were valued for their reproductive power and could be incorporated in a new society, isolated from social participation and power. But women in the twentieth century have been both perpetrators and victims of genocide.

The social relationships between antagonists and types of war also seem to condition the likelihood of observing the war convention. Wright has recorded the rise of conventions of war in many different civilizations and also observed how states are much less likely to adhere to these in civil wars and in colonial wars involving antagonists of different races and civilizations (1942, 2: 810–12). Walzer, considering how the war convention – based on the premise that fighters must respect the immunity of civilians – has evolved, observes how war crimes and the use of terror

emerge in different situations – anti-guerrilla warfare, total war – and the moral questions posed by the escalating technology of warfare (1977).

We can not yet conclude there is any simple or linear relation between genocide and historical trends in destructiveness in the conduct of wars; both may be curvilinear, diminishing as European states regulated warfare, confining fighting to a specialized force, and enlarging as modern war becomes more total, involving mobilization of whole populations.

Taylor observes that a

> very basic characteristic of the laws of war and war crimes is that, as these names indicate, they concern only conduct which is directly related to *war* – to hostilities in progress between organized belligerent forces. When the Nazis killed or assaulted German Jews in Germany, that may have been a crime, but it was not a war crime.... today [such atrocities] would no doubt be covered by the international treaty defining and condemning genocide... (1971, 30–1).

The question of whether killings of civilians in war are war crimes, consequences of acts of war admissible under the war convention, or instances of genocide has been clouded by the fact that genocide-labelling of wars today is often a rhetorical stratagem for political delegitimation of specific wars which the labeller opposes.

Genocide was charged by several influential critics of the US war in Vietnam, principally Sartre (1968) and Falk: but Daniel Ellsberg dissented from this, saying: 'I have misgivings about the use of the word "genocide" in the context of the Vietnam war... An escalation of rhetoric can blind us to the fact that Vietnam is... no more brutal than other wars in the past' (in Knoll and McFadden 1970, 81–2). Bedau concluded, after careful conceptual and legal analysis, that the charge was 'Not proven, not quite' (Bedau 1974, 46). Similarly, Bassiouni concluded the three essential elements of genocide were absent: 1) the opposing parties were not separate national or ethnic groups; 2) US actions 'could [not] be classified as part of a coordinated plan to destroy in whole or in part any particular national, ethnical, racial or religious group' and 3) 'American activities in Vietnam were not conducted with sufficient intent to support a charge of 'genocide' (1979, 174–6). But Hannum and Hawk's brief on the Khmer Rouge genocide (1986) implicitly rejects Bassiouni's first criteria.

Both Reisman and Norchi (1988), in their (previously discussed) analysis of Soviet (and Afghan) government actions in Afghanistan and Goodwin (1988) assert there has been genocide in Afghanistan. Yet there has been almost no serious discussion of their charges. No antiwar movement developed in the Soviet Union or in the west on the scale of the anti-Vietnam War movement. Even the opponents of the Soviet Union's

intervention have often overlooked the character of the war. This again illustrates the highly variable concern with genocide: the likelihood a case will be recognized and labelled as genocide arises both from the biases and organization of protesters.

Journalists and scholars examining how little response there was to the initial news of the Khmer Rouge genocide have made the same point; it was generally not recognized by the media or opinion-leaders because it challenged our biases, confirming the communist blood-bath theory (Shawcross 1984; DeMarco 1988; Adams 1980). Similarly, Mace has shown how prominent western journalists denied the existence of the famine that Stalin created in the Ukraine in 1932–3 – a famine estimated to have killed five to seven million Ukrainians – from ideological and opportunistic motives (1988).

A Sociological Definition Proposed

I believe that the UNGC definition of genocide can be reconciled with an expanded – but bounded – sociological definition if we focus on how the core concepts are related. From the root of *genus* we may infer that the protected groups were conceived (by Lemkin and the UN framers) as basic kinds, classes, or subfamilies of humanity, persisting units of society. What is distinctive sociologically is that such groups are usually ascriptive – based on birth rather than by choice – and often inspire enduring particularistic loyalties. They are sources of identity and value; they are the seedbed of social movements, voluntary associations, congregations and families; in brief, they are *collectivities*.

Further, these collectivities endure as their members tend to reproduce their own kind (to the extent in-group marriage is the norm). But collectivities need not be self-reproducing to be cohesive over a given span in time.

The UNGC implies a universalistic norm: each group has a right to exist and develop its own culture, assuming neither their aim or methods are criminal; all collectivities should be protected from such crimes against humanity. One can also argue that political, sexual, and class-denominated status groups or collectivities, just like ethnic and religious collectivities, are basic continuing elements of the community. (Whitaker (1985) made a similar argument for extension of the UNGC.)

There is no categorical line, in fact, between the enduring character of ascribed (heritable) identities and elected or achieved identities: both may be constructed or passed on generationally. Being an Italian working-class Communist Party member may be just as heritable a characteristic as being an Italian church-going Roman Catholic. Indeed, church and party

could be regarded as counter-congregations or counter-cultures. Both affiliations may be outcomes of election or ascription, conscience or inheritance.

A new sociological definition should include the following elements: a) it should clearly denote the object and processes under study and discriminate the latter from related processes; b) it should stipulate constructs which can be transformed operationally to indicate real-world observable events; and c) the specification of groups covered should be consistent with our sociological knowledge of both the persistence and construction of group identities in society, the variations in class, ethnic/racial, gender, class/political consciousness and the multiplicity and interaction of peoples' identities and statuses in daily life. Further, d) it should conform to the implicit universalistic norm and a sense of justice, embracing the right of all non-violent groups to co-exist.

Briefly put,

> **Genocide is sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of the surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim.**

To expand on this sociological definition, one can also show how it encompasses the legal definition {terms of the UNGC are noted in these brackets}:

Genocide is sustained purposeful action [thus excluding single massacres, pogroms, accidental deaths] **by a perpetrator** (assuming an actor organized over a period) **to physically destroy a collectivity** {'acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part a national/ethnical/racial or religious group:' Art. 2}] **directly** (through mass or selective murders and calculable physical destruction – e.g. imposed starvation and poisoning of food, water, and air – {see Art. 2, a–c}) **or through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members** (preventing births {Art. 2, d} and {'forcibly transferring children of the group to another group' Art. 2, e}, systematically breaking the linkage between reproduction and socialization of children in the family or group of origin.

This definition would cover the sustained destruction of nonviolent political groups and social classes as parts of a national (or ethnic/religious/racial) group but does not cover the killing of members of military and paramilitary organizations – the SA, the Aryan Nations, and armed guerrillas.

Documenting *genocide* or **genocide** demands (at the very least) identifying a perpetrator(s), the target group attacked as a collectivity, assessing its numbers and victims, and recognizing a pattern of repeated actions

from which we infer the intent of purposeful action to eliminate them. Such inference is easiest to draw when we can cite both preexistent plans or statements of intent and the military or bureaucratic organization of a death machine; seldom do we have both kinds of evidence.

Despite the increased level of violence of modern warfare, we can still distinguish war crimes from genocide and crimes against humanity if we specify the criteria further: the following paradigm aims to clarify this and other questions.

A Paradigm for Detecting and Tracing Genocide

I have culled the elements of a paradigm to detect genocide and to document its course from my own studies and others. Propositions 1–5 state necessary and sufficient conditions for a finding of genocide; these are followed by questions noting the variable characteristics of the criterion specified. Questions 6–14 examine variable reinforcing conditions, contexts, responses and effects.

1) *There was a sustained attack or continuity of attacks by the perpetrator to physically destroy group members:* a) Did a series of actions or a single action of the perpetrator leading to the death of members of group X occur? b) What tactics were used to maximize the number of victims? Tactics include preceding round-ups, isolation, and concentration of victims and orders to report. c) What means, besides direct killing were used to destroy the victims or to interdict the biological and social reproduction of the group? Actions may include poisoning air or water, imposed starvation, or disease; forcible prevention of birth; involuntary transfer of children. d) What was the duration, sequence of actions, and number of victims? Trace the time span, repetition of similar or related actions, and the number of victims.

2) *The perpetrator was a collective or organized actor or commander of organized actors.* Genocide is distinguished from homicide empirically by the fact it is never an act of a single individual – thus we want to know: a) Were the perpetrators joined as an armed force, paramilitary force or informal band? b) Was there a continuity of leadership or membership of perpetrators or similar bases of recruitment for such forces? c) Were these forces authorized or organized by the state to exist? d) To whom were those forces responsible – an agency of the state, army, or party? e) Were they organized and garbed to display or to deny government responsibility?

3) *Victims were selected because they were members of a collectivity:* a) Were victims selected irrespective of any charge against them individually? b) Were they chosen on the basis of a state administrative

designation of their group identity, their own criteria of identity, or by physical, linguistic, or other signs or stigmata of identity? c) Were they chosen on the basis of status within the collectivity?: e.g. priests, religious leaders, or educated class. d) What was the basis of the collectivity? E.g. religion, race, ethnicity, tribal or linguistic status. e) Were they pre-selected before killing? Evidence of pre-selection includes their prior legal definition; stripping of citizenship, civil rights, state posts, licenses and benefits and legal group recognition; segregation and marking; rounding-up and ghettoization or concentration.

4) *The victims were defenseless or were killed regardless of whether they surrendered or resisted.* a) Is part of the victims' group armed and organized to physically resist the perpetrators' group? b) Is their level of armament sufficient and is their stated intent to wage war against the perpetrators? Or is it to defend themselves from being seized? c) Is there evidence (if the victims were armed) that they were purposefully killed after surrender and that unarmed members of the group were systematically killed?

5) *The destruction of group members was undertaken with intent to kill and murder was sanctioned by the perpetrator.* a) Can deaths of group members be explained as accidental outcomes? b) Is there evidence of repetition of destruction by design or as a foreseeable outcome? c) Is there direct evidence of orders or authorization for the destruction of the victims? d) At what level did the authorization occur? e) Is there prima facie evidence that the pattern of acts and personnel involved show that authorities had to plan, organize, or overlook a pattern of destruction? f) Is there any negative evidence of sanctions against agents responsible for such acts?

6) *Consistency of sanctions for killing group members:* a) Are there any rules promulgated by the perpetrator to punish or to exonerate individual murder, torture and rape of members of the victim group? b) Are there institutional mechanisms to implement such rules? c) Are there examples of sanctions enforced against murder of members of the victim group or for failure to protect them from attacks by members of the perpetrator group? Are there sanctions for refusing to participate in killing the victims or for reporting commission of killings?

7) *Ideologies and beliefs legitimating genocide:* a) Is there evidence of an ideology, myth, or an articulated social goal which enjoins or justifies the destruction of the victim? Besides the above, observe religious traditions of contempt and collective defamation, stereotypes, and derogatory metaphor indicating the victim is inferior, sub-human (animals, insects, germs, viruses) or super-human (Satanic, omnipotent), or other signs that the victims were pre-defined as alien, outside the universe of obligation of the perpetrator, subhuman or dehumanized, or the enemy – i.e., the victim needs to be eliminated in order that we may live (Them or Us). b) If

destructive acts were acknowledged by the perpetrator, how were they labelled and justified? c) Did the acknowledgment, labelling, and justification change before different audiences?

8) *Contexts of genocide:* Contexts include specific perpetrator–victim interactions and critical conditions of state and society. In the former case, one asks what kinds of relations characterized the perpetrator and victim before genocide. In the latter, one asks in what historical and political context did these acts occur? Contexts include post-revolutionary states, diminishing states losing control or territory after defeat, expanding states and empires colonizing other continents or an undeveloped interior, war between and within states, and eras of consolidation of centralized state power. Social-psychological contexts include social and personal disorganization and cultural crises of identity and meaning.

9) *Bystanders' responses:* What kinds of responses did bystanders, other states, regional and international organizations, make to the perpetrators and victims?

10) *Victims' responses:* How did the victims understand and respond to the situation?

11) *Interactions:* What effect did the bystanders' responses have on the victims and the perpetrators?

12) *Effects on victims:* What was the impact of the genocide on the victims at the time and later? Specify destruction of individuals and the community, personal and social disorganization, post-traumatic stress, and enduring personal and trans-generational consequences.

13) *Effects on the perpetrators:* a) What was the impact of the genocide on the perpetrators? b) Could these effects be foreseen or calculated? c) Were they? d) Did they acknowledge or deny the genocide? e) Did they offer restitution or agree to such to the victims later? f) What effect did their acknowledgment or denial have on their state and society?

14) *Effects on the world system:* How did the recognition or lack of recognition and sanctions against genocide affect the actions of other states and peoples?

NOTE

1 By collective violence, I refer to all violation of victims chosen by one collectivity because of membership in another racial, religious, tribal, or ethnic collectivity; this includes group punishment, random punishment and exemplary punishments. It is similar to Janowitz's use (1969) of communal violence and to Tilly's early use of primitive violence (1969) but both Janowitz and Tilly use collective violence to refer to what others call mass or political violence.

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25

Is the Holocaust Simply Another Example of Genocide?

MARK LEVENE

What is genocide?[1]

The term 'genocide' was coined by the distinguished international jurist, Raphael Lemkin, in 1944 with particular reference to the Nazi extermination of European Jewry.[2] Lemkin defined genocide as a co-ordinated plan, composed of various actions, aimed ultimately at the annihilation of a national or ethnic group. The full extent of the Holocaust was at that time still not known or understood in the wider world although the immediate prelude to it – namely the systematic persecution of the Jews – was. Genocide for Lemkin, therefore, consisted of two major elements: persecution of a group, meaning an attack on its 'political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion, and... economic existence',[3] with a view to undermining its viability, constituted genocide, just as did complete physical extermination.

Lemkin's subsequent efforts to have both his terminology accepted and such acts of persecution and destruction internationally outlawed led to a United Nations resolution in 1946 which called genocide 'a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups', going on to note 'many instances of such crimes... when racial, religious, political and other groups have been destroyed entirely or in part'.[4] This statement implied a potential broadening of scope to include victim groups who did not come within the boundaries of a *genos* (the Greek word for 'race' or 'tribe'). Nevertheless, the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide, *for entirely political reasons*, reverted to Lemkin's more narrow definition of genocide as acts 'committed with intent to destroy, in whole, or in part, a national, racial, religious or ethnic group'.[5]

The origins of the term and its ultimate deployment in international convention is important on two counts. First, as a key contemporary

Mark Levene, "Is the Holocaust Simply Another Example of Genocide?" from *Patterns of Prejudice*, 28, 2, 1994, pp. 3–26.

work on the subject has noted: 'The lack of rigour in the UN definition ... is responsible for much of the confusion that plagues scholarly work in the field.'[6] Certainly, there have been some notable studies of genocide since Lemkin's and these almost unanimously confirm that it is a *particular* category of mass killing, distinct from others. There is now almost universal agreement too that the perpetrators of genocides are states, or state-sanctioned bodies, an issue which Lemkin did not properly address. There is, however, much less agreement on the issue of intentionality, on the question of whether or not genocide has to involve the physical destruction of the individuals constituting the victim group or only their collective attributes, and, most important of all, on what constitutes a victim group.[7] Many (including myself) consider the *genos* in 'genocide' both unfortunate and unsatisfactory;[8] not only is it exclusive but, more critically, it confuses the issue as to what actually constitutes 'genocide'.

Having said that, the UN yardstick would still embrace the destruction of the Nuba in the Sudan, the Yanomani in Brazilian Amazonia, the peoples collectively referred to as Jummas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, the islanders of Indonesian-occupied East Timor, the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq and, most recently and dramatically, the slaughter of Tutsis in the Central African state of Rwanda.[9] These are examples of genocide which are happening in our contemporary world. In terms of numbers involved, they are not the only or even necessarily the most serious examples of current mass killing,[10] a fact that in itself raises further questions about inclusive or exclusive definitions of genocide.[11] On the human level – the level at which the victim as well as the perpetrator *experiences* events – none of this is very helpful or meaningful. The title of this essay, in this significant respect, is flawed: the Holocaust cannot simply be *another* example of genocide since no example of genocide or mass killing can be; each, in its own terms, is utterly without precedent and quite unique.

Nonetheless I begin with the premise that genocide, *as a specific category of mass killing*, embraces separate examples through the characteristics, features and patterns which they hold in common. Though the *particular* circumstances and events leading to each genocide will always be different, the features and patterns are, nevertheless, accessible to comparison.[12]

The Case of the Holocaust

Lemkin's starting point for his categorization was an examination of the persecution and destruction of the Jews. But his broader intention was to create general rules about the nature and classification of genocide which would prevent what had happened to them happening to other groups.

On this second count, relating to the origins of the term, however, there is a major paradox. Any attempt to read the Holocaust in a comparative sense has, since Lemkin, been consistently challenged by a body of opinion which argues that the very idea is inapplicable. This alternative position on the Holocaust embraces a large spread of views, ranging from the rational to the mystical. It is coherent as a body only inasmuch as it agrees that the Holocaust should be treated as a separate and unique category standing on its own.[13] Most of its adherents are Jewish, but then so was Lemkin and most of the scholars who have argued for a comparative model. The 'singularist' position is doubly paradoxical given that many of its most distinguished exponents are associated with Yad Vashem in Israel and, more recently, the Holocaust museums in the United States, institutions which generally hammer home a universalizing message about the Holocaust and the potential for recurrence in the future – when the victims will not necessarily be Jews – if we fail to comprehend the warning signals.[14]

If there are contradictions involved here, they are not so easy to debate. Indeed, because the Holocaust, largely retrospectively, has been deployed as a legitimation for the existence of the State of Israel, any attempt to challenge the former's unique quality is also liable to be treated, by a broad Jewish constituency, as an attack upon the latter's right to exist.[15] Vigilantly guarded, and treated like a shrine, the Holocaust has become a subject which, despite the huge scholastic industry which has grown up around it, seems often closed to examination and evaluation except within previously agreed and authorized parameters.

The critical question is whether the Holocaust should be treated within a category of genocide or be placed in a category of its own.

The global reach of the western media enables a mass public audience to be informed of a range (though not necessarily all instances) of mass killings in the contemporary world which, at least notionally, could be referred to as genocides. Public awareness may be confused but it is nevertheless cumulative and very often, *pace* Bosnia, responsive. The task of political scientists is to move beyond cataloguing to determining not only how and why genocides happen but also, if they are attempting to understand them in comparative terms, to establish whether their geographical and societal diversity precludes common characteristics and patterns. The comparative historian's role must be to deepen this study, particularly by providing an explanation of causative factors which might determine whether such events can be placed within some larger, longer-term process of state or societal development.

This not only begs the general question about whether comparison between genocides is valid or useful; it also throws up specific problems in relation to the Holocaust which, after all, is one genocide which, in terms

of academic study, is so totally oversubscribed that the sheer weight of scholarly material produced completely dwarfs studies of other genocides. Having established itself, in this way, as *the* genocide, one might be inclined to approach the broader comparative field by ignoring the Holocaust altogether. This would at least have the advantage of allowing an investigation that was unencumbered by constant reference back to it. Yet such an approach (which this historian originally considered) is patently self-defeating. First, it confirms the Holocaust 'singularity' thesis; second, it assumes that the Holocaust has nothing to teach us about other genocides or, more significantly, the context within which genocides continue to take place.

Genocide and Modernity

Something of this problem is addressed in a recent groundbreaking study by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. In his *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Bauman throws a spanner into a widely-held orthodoxy concerning the essentially humanistic, Enlightenment-grounded nature of modernity by arguing that the Holocaust, far from being in some sense counter to this development, is rather one of its definitive products. To focus on the barbarism of the Nazis is, for Bauman, to miss the point; the Holocaust can only be fully comprehended within the framework of the processes and mechanisms which have made modern 'civilized' society as a whole.[16]

Bauman did not seek to make a comparative study out of this thesis, nor to offer any real consideration of what relationship might exist between the *modernization process* and genocide. Yet such an analysis had already been presented by Ronald Aronson, in an extremely compelling, if much less widely read, precursor to Bauman. In *The Dialectics of Disaster*,[17] Aronson suggests a linkage between the Holocaust, the series of genocides in Stalin's Russia and the destruction by the United States of Vietnam in the 1960s and early 1970s, connected by comparable disjunctures between modern technologically-based projects for rapid social transformation and an ultimate impotence to achieve them. In each case, despite the obvious dissimilarities between, for instance, an 'underdeveloped' Soviet Union of the 1930s and an 'overdeveloped' United States of the 1960s, the assumption of the ability to implement social transformations is based, according to Aronson, on deluded notions concerning both the rationality of the projects and the enabling power of an unfettered, seemingly all-powerful state and its apparatus. This produces in each case 'a rupture with reality' or, in other words, a 'madness', the consequence of which is genocide. The argument that the United States perpetrated a 'genocide' in Vietnam (as opposed to some other category of

mass killing) is, though persuasive, not entirely convincing. Nevertheless, Aronson's critique – more than simply an examination of the relationship between genocide and modernity – provides important signposts for locating actual instances of genocide, or genocidal behaviour, in a dynamic involving state power, technology and an 'unreasoned' state-led thrust towards rapid development.

One criticism that might be levelled against this approach concerns its implication, or perhaps assumption, that genocide is a modern phenomenon. Examples of mass killing of a genocidal nature can be traced back through the millennia of human history. Some scholars, notably Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, while noting distinctions between Genghis Khan and Hitler, do categorize their respective mass killings as 'genocides'.[18] With reference to Bauman and, more particularly, Aronson, my own position is that there *is* a distinctly modern version of the phenomenon. This version, however, has nothing to do with a technological ability to kill more people *per se* or even necessarily the introduction of more efficient or streamlined means. The Holocaust unfolded both as primitive mass slaughter and 'state of the art' industrial cleansing. What makes modern genocide different from earlier wars of extermination is not the *form* it takes but the *framework* within which it occurs; its study thereby requires contextualization within those broader processes of change and development associated with the creation of the modern world.

This in itself does not explain the actual phenomenon. However, a critical factor, again with reference to Aronson, may be the degree of state-led, *forced* acceleration of social change in the direction of modernity.[19] Rapid social transformation is thereby indissolubly linked to accelerated state-building, whether of the 'pure' nation-state variety or some other homogenizing equivalent, such as in the Soviet Union. The key challenge to this hypothesis is the question why some states geared towards this radical transformation commit genocide and others do not.

Genocide and the Crisis of Development

Significantly most key European or western societies in upheavals associated with rapid social transformation or nation-state building, *have* exhibited genocidal tendencies. Many of these 'modern' upheavals considerably predate the twentieth century. The 'new' Spain of 1492 in its Jewish and later Morisco expulsions provides an early signpost.[20] The catalogue might continue with Cromwellian 'Britain' and its Irish policy in the late 1640s and early 1650s,[21] revolutionary Jacobin France and its attempts to bring resistant western zones, notably the Vendée, firmly within the fold of the newly organized nation-state in the early 1790s,[22]

colonial Britain, again, and its rapid settlement and development of Tasmania in the late 1820s and 1830s,[23] the United States, at the culmination of its trans-continental nation-building, particularly in the late 1860s and 1870s,[24] and Imperial Germany and its consolidation of South West Africa in the early 1900s.[25]

In all these cases what is actually at stake is the developmental agenda of each state at some crisis point in the process of its implementation. This is a moment or phase when the fate of the agenda becomes clear, revealing either its successful fulfilment or, alternatively, its collapse with potentially catastrophic consequences for both itself and possibly the integrity of the state as a whole. The actual causation in each case will vary though the actions and thought-processes of the policy-makers will always be critical to the outcome. A sense of external threat, or the perceived need to catch up with other states more rapidly consolidating than one's own, might be significant. These perceptions might then feed into and conflate other perceived needs, such as, for instance, the inclusion or integration of some 'remote' region or area on the frontier or margin of the state or its territories for its resources or geo-strategic value. Clearly where implementation is carried forward without obvious hindrance, no issue arises. If, however, the attempt at implementation leads instead to a crisis both of state and agenda, perceived 'people-obstacles' may, at this juncture, become the central focus of the state's attention. These people-obstacles would almost certainly have been perceived as a danger to the agenda at a much earlier moment. What the crisis situation provides is a heightened sense that the only way to its fulfilment is through their physical eradication. The crisis, in other words, acts as catalyst, translating an already existing potential for genocide – implicit in the state's agenda – into actuality.

Thus, in relation to its modern manifestation, I would argue that genocide occurs where a state, perceiving the integrity of its agenda for change to be threatened by an aggregate population – defined by the state in collective or communal terms – seeks to remedy the situation by the systematic, *en masse*, physical elimination of that aggregate, *in toto*, or until such time as it is no longer perceived to represent a threat.

Certainly, this proposition is bald. (Additional commentary, for which there is not space here, would be needed to fully explore the causes, nature and typologies of modern genocide.[26]) But can it be applied to the Holocaust? One way of answering the question might be to note other events near it in time, namely the previous decade, to which the proposition might equally be applied, including:

- in Kemalist Turkey, the sequence of systematic massacres and large-scale deportations perpetrated on Kurds from Eastern Anatolia,

persisting, with interregnums, from the 1920s through to the outbreak of the Second World War;[27]

- in neighbouring Iraq, in 1933, what became known as 'the Assyrian affair', involving army units in an organized attempt to exterminate the minority Assyrian community, called off after British diplomatic intervention;[28]
- in Italian-occupied Cyrenaica, the mass deportation leading to extirpation, in 1930–1, of the hill tribes by Mussolini's army, as part of its efforts to destroy the Senussi resistance to Italian rule;[29]
- most dramatically, in Soviet Russia – particularly the Ukraine, North Caucasus, Ukrainian Kuban and Kazakhstan – in the period 1930–2, the deportation and/or extirpation of large numbers of peasants and nomads, under the catch-all charge of being 'kulaks', that is 'class enemies', including, in addition, the elimination of a wide spectrum of occupational groups, including party members and Soviet state functionaries, especially in 1937–8, and large sections of the population, particularly the élite groups from formerly Polish and Baltic state territories incorporated into the USSR following the 1939 Non-Aggression Pact with Nazi Germany.[30]

To argue that these far-flung events have common characteristics which define them as examples of genocide is itself to question some basic, traditionally-held assumptions. In particular, while neither Kurds nor kulaks, for instance, are that easy to define in group terms, the former – as an ethnic, even proto-national agglomeration – could be embraced within the definition of the UN Convention while the latter, as a class, or more accurately a crypto-class label of convenience applied by those responsible for the genocide,[31] clearly could not. My proposition, however, intentionally avoids the issue of the *actual* composition of the victim group. Indeed, whether Kurds or kulaks define themselves as such or whether there is actually such a thing as a 'kulak' is immaterial to the argument. All that is needed is that the perpetrators of the act perceive them as a group and that, as such, they are *perceived* as representing a threat to the state's agenda. The proposition thus shifts the cause of genocide away from national, racial or ethnic prejudices and hatreds *per se* – though these elements may play a crucial role[32] – and towards the power relationships existing between the state and particular populations within its territories.

Here, however, we encounter a further problem. If it could be argued that a population – whether self-defining or defined by the state – poses a genuine political threat to the state authorities and their agendas, might this not exonerate the latter's acts as justifiable self-defence? Theda Skocpol, in her comparative study of states and social revolutions, has noted that the Soviet peasantry in the 1920s did have 'the aggregate

capacity, so to speak, to make or break the national economy'.[33] Could it not therefore be argued that Stalin was simply 'getting in his retaliation first'? A passage from Patrick Brogan's recent book, *World Conflicts*, referring to events in Eastern Anatolia in 1915, takes this inference a stage further: 'Though countless Armenians were massacred by Turkish troops,' he notes, 'Turkey's object was its own security, not genocide. There were no gas chambers.'[34] From this perspective, the victim group, in this case the Armenians, were involved in some sort of dynamic relationship with the perpetrators and, by allegedly undermining, sabotaging or wrecking the latter's agenda, were, at the very least, co-responsible for the outcome. In short, the state's action is not genocide but *retribution* for something the victim group has done, and not only pardonable but entirely 'rational'. The victims, of course, are simply getting their just deserts.[35]

Here is the paradox at the heart of genocide. A genuine dynamic *does* exist between victim and perpetrator involving, on occasion, a tangible, objective challenge by the former to the latter's agenda or state control. Yet the dynamic may as easily be fed by distorted, inflated or indeed entirely illusory notions about the victim group in the minds of the perpetrators, amounting to Aronson's 'rupture with reality'. It is, above all, the mind-set of the Young Turks which is thus crucial to understanding the Armenian genocide of 1915, and similarly the mind-sets of the Stalinist or Kemalist states which explain their respective onslaughts on kulaks and Turkish Kurds.[36]

The Holocaust: A Genocide Like No Other?

A superficial cross-reference between the key criteria of genocide as outlined above and salient facts of the Holocaust might seem to confirm the latter's 'singularity':

- There is clearly no dynamic involving Jews *qua* Jews, who presented no political or economic threat to the German state either from within or without. The Holocaust, thus, was an end in itself.
- Jews could not be perceived as an aggregate or collective power bloc. Their ubiquitous geographical distribution and lack of territorial, religious or any other power base made this impossible.
- Far from being geographically or socially marginal or 'backward', as might be argued in the case of the Kurds, kulaks or Vendean or Irish peasants, Jews, albeit with wide regional variations, were settled, often highly integrated or integrating elements in the respective countries of which they were citizens. They, for the most part, were in the van of societal transformation, not its antagonists.[37]

- The Nazis killed the Jews for no other reason than that they were Jews.[38] To quote Michael Marrus: 'Unlike the case with any other group, and unlike the massacres before or since, *every single one* of the millions of targeted Jews was to be murdered. Eradication was to be total.'[39]

A historian such as Saul Friedlander, then, seems to be on secure ground when he states that 'the absolute character of the anti-Jewish drive of the Nazis makes it impossible to integrate the extermination of the Jews, not only within the general framework of Nazi persecutions, but even within the wider aspects of contemporary ideological-political behaviour such as fascism, totalitarianism, economic exploitation and so on'. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he concludes that 'the Holocaust does not fall within the framework of explanatory categories of a generalising kind'.[40] This does not place Friedlander within that body of opinion which refutes *any* framework within which it can be comprehended.[41] On the contrary, he argues it to be 'the result of cumulative historical trends that can, in part at least, be identified and explained'.[42] But the strong implication is that these trends are always Holocaust-specific.

Nor is Friedlander alone amongst historians. His position has been buttressed by two scholars, Steven Katz and Yehuda Bauer, who have more directly addressed the issue of comparison. Katz has his own simple if ingenious proposition: the Holocaust is the *only* known genocide. Going to considerable lengths to examine other potential examples, his conclusion is that these other cases of mass killing are different because their perpetrators have not 'set out' to wholly exterminate the victims. For Katz not only is the issue of motivation crucial to genocide but the Jewish case is the only one in which he can discern it.[43]

Unlike Katz, Yehuda Bauer, the doyen of Holocaust studies – by accepting Lemkin's definition which includes persecution as well as systematic destruction – is prepared to concede that there have been other examples, notably the Armenian massacres of 1915.[44] Bauer's position, however, while more nuanced than that of Katz, is also more contradictory, with the Armenian genocide being viewed both as occupying the same continuum as the Holocaust (albeit with the latter at its most extreme end) yet also with differences which outweigh their similarities. Ultimately his position is not so very dissimilar to that of Katz, in which cases 'of what is loosely termed genocide' are seen to lack the essential ideological motivation which drove the Holocaust.[45]

While not wishing to cast aspersions on the motives of these three distinguished scholars, it may be that what is at stake here is something other than a historian's reading of history.[46] Friedlander has stated as much when, responding to the call of his German colleague, Martin

Broszat, for the study of Nazism to be historicized (i.e. subjected to the same methods of scholarly enquiry as other periods),[47] he argued that it would lead 'to the elimination from human memory of its criminality'.[48] One can certainly sympathize with this position. The 'normalization' of the Nazi period, which Broszat has sought, could easily slide down the slippery slope towards trivialization and devaluation. Worse, historicization, as Friedlander predicted,[49] seems to have provided an opportunity for right-wing German historians who have sought to relativize the Holocaust by arguing, in the case of Ernst Nolte, a causal linkage between the killing of kulaks and Jews, between gulag and gas chambers, in which the latter were somehow a defensive – and thereby rational and legitimate – reaction to the former. Though Nolte's tenuous argument, which triggered the still-simmering German *Historikerstreit*,[50] was staunchly resisted by Broszat,[51] the issue, in the highly-charged climate of post-Communist, reunified Germany, has already moved beyond a debate among historians. The idea of a sort of 'moral equivalence' between the Nazis and Communists (with the implication of the latter's connectedness *with* if not direction *by* Jews) is no longer simply the reserve of a small coterie of neo-Nazis and ultra-nationalists but has rapidly infiltrated mainstream German popular discourse.[52]

The question is, while Friedlander and others might well be justified in arguing that historians bear a particular social responsibility *vis-à-vis* the Holocaust, does it therefore follow that their only means of acquitting themselves is by hermetically sealing the Holocaust off from comparison? Granted, if no grounds for comparison, say, with the chronologically-close mass killings of kulaks or Turkish Kurds exist, then the special status of the Holocaust must be reaffirmed. Bauer and Katz are certainly right to note the *degree* of ideological motivation involved in the Nazi onslaught on the Jews, particularly in its visionary, Manichaean qualities.[53] But the elimination in the 1930s of 'kulaks' and other Soviet 'enemies of the people' as well as the partial destruction of the Turkish Kurds were also ideologically motivated, at least inasmuch as they were indissolubly bound to Stalinist and Kemalist agendas for creating new physically transformed, yet homogeneous, societies 'cleansed' of extraneous or harmful elements.[54] Certainly, the social engineering involved followed entirely different trajectories to that of the Nazis. Certainly, too, the 'rupture with reality' inherent in the projection of Jews as 'enemy' was altogether more intense and absolute.[55]

Yet it is precisely within the intense pathology of the Holocaust that we can trace some of the attributes which, earlier, we noted were lacking for its necessary qualification as a genocide. Though there are certainly no grounds for asserting an objective Jewish–Nazi dynamic in which the former represents a threat to the latter, such a dynamic is provided and

then fully played out entirely within the Nazis' own conspiracy-laden *Weltanschauung*. In this classic example of projection, 'the Jews' are not just any obstacle to the Nazi new order, they are *the* obstacle: a monolithic, utterly ruthless, staggeringly powerful, international enemy who will stop at nothing to destroy completely the Nazi quest for racial utopia.[56] Indeed, this helps explain how utterly and relentlessly intent Hitler was on exacting a collective retribution on *real* Jews, beginning in the late summer of 1941 when his timetable for the military and political annihilation of the allegedly Judeo-Bolshevik-led USSR starts going drastically wrong.[57] What we have, therefore, is the most complete and perversely 'perfect' model of a genocide: one based entirely on a mental fixation so intense that it demanded a systematic, continent-wide *modus operandi* not attempted before or since.

Moreover, this cannot be divorced from the developmental framework so central to modern genocide. The Nazi 'revolution' was founded on a vision of a racial 'national community' which in practical terms demanded both selection and 'improvement' of elements considered racially valuable and the complete elimination of those considered impure, weak or unworthy. As Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wipperman have recently spelt out in *The Racial State*, Nazi racial-hygienic 'rationalizations' provided for the 'removal' not simply of Jews but also of Gypsies, those deemed 'criminal' or 'asocial' and a whole range of physically and mentally ill children and adults slated as *lebensunwertes Leben* ('lives unworthy of life'). Burleigh and Wipperman are correct to note that the different elements of this racial-social blueprint (i.e. including persecution and elimination of the Jews) cannot be treated in isolation although the overall social engineering involved was *sui generis*. What Burleigh and Wipperman perhaps underplay is the broader context in which this was all to occur.

The Nazi attempt to realize an 'ideal future world',[58] in the interests of teutonic supremacy and well-being, could only be secured through the creation of a vast imperial hinterland – stretching far away to the east of Germany's traditional borders and thereby providing living space, *Lebensraum*, for Germany's expanding population – and an autarkic system of economic self-sufficiency guaranteed by the complete subjugation and monopolization of the region's labour, industrial and agricultural infrastructure and resource base, on terms to be determined exclusively by Berlin.[59] The Nazi racial agenda was thereby indissolubly linked to a developmental strategy of monumental proportions, embracing not only the fate of Jews and Gypsies but millions of Czechs, Poles, Russians and other Slavic peoples.

But how would the agenda *actually* be implemented? Would these populations be 'merely' enslaved, driven out to make way for new

German settlers or actively exterminated? Nobody responsible for planning in the apparatus of the pre-war Nazi state quite knew. The near-realization of the territorial element of the design, in the period 1938–42, simply threw up huge logistical problems in regard to the broader demographic-cum-social engineering issues at stake. Where did one begin? What was going to be the timescale for implementation? What proportion of the conquered populations was going to be needed to provide labour for the Reich? How do you classify who is productively useful and who is expendable? What do you *do* with the expendable ones? Certainly, despite the fact that these questions applied to all the subject populations, almost everybody in the new post-1939, and then post-1941, Nazi administrations in the occupied East agreed, at least *in principle*, that both Jews *and* Gypsies, in particular, would have to be removed.[60] The corollary was that Germany's satellite states – Croatia, Slovakia and, especially, Hungary and Romania – were thinking along similar lines as they developed their own smaller, imitative versions of empire within the framework of Nazi hegemony in the East. 'Getting rid' of the Jews seemed, moreover, to provide specific additional benefits for all participants: the removal of a particularly problematic 'high profile' element in the socio-economic matrix, the freeing up of expropriated capital and resources for national goals, occupational and business openings, much needed housing – in short, a window of opportunity for overall social and economic restructuring.[61]

The Holocaust is thus closely linked to the Nazi developmental agenda: a forced-pace programme of social and economic transformation, more stunning and radical than anything a Mussolini, a Kemal Atatürk, even a Stalin could have envisioned. Yet all these leaders willingly tore up the rule book of traditional and accepted means of incremental growth, and to varying degrees committed themselves to audacious programmes of 'alternative' development.[62] The problem they shared was that their achievement was entirely dependent on the taking of enormous risks from which the leaders of most states, most of the time, would flinch or ultimately turn back.

These particular state leaderships were, of course, not ordinary ones but themselves the products of extraordinary crisis-laden circumstances associated with massive social and economic dislocation, war and/or revolution, whose whole *raison d'être* was founded on the conviction that all other routes to national or societal regeneration and prosperity had been exhausted. It was their absolute insistence on their particular project for salvation, founded in turn upon some particular ideological premise about the nature of social reality, which inevitably posed questions about actual or perceived groups who either did not fit into, or actively opposed, their vision of the future shape of society and polity. In the examples

under discussion, that vision was, *in its respective forms*, a streamlined, homogeneous mono-culture. Any attempt to realize it was bound to give rise to conflict. But it was the running jump at political and societal transformation in the broadest sense and the inevitable crisis which resulted that accounts for a lurch, in each case, into the actuality of genocide.

In no case was this more true than with the Nazis. The only way they could come close to realizing their particular, special programme of development was through the ultimate, high-risk strategy of war. This however was not war *à la* Clausewitz, for limited ends otherwise unattainable through diplomacy, but total war geared towards the military and political annihilation of key opponents. The crux was the final phase of the process: the destruction of (Jewish-led) Soviet Russia. Achieve this and one could start putting all the other pieces of the programme into place, including the removal of extraneous, dangerous elements. A 'final solution of the Jewish question', 'a getting rid of' Jews to somewhere else, out there, perhaps over the Urals, or maybe even to Madagascar,[63] at long last seemed a feasible objective.

All this was dependent on a tremendous act of faith. Nobody in the Nazi hierarchy had considered what would happen if the overall agenda became unstuck, particularly if Soviet Russia failed to crumble under the impact of Operation Barbarossa. Genocide of the Jews may have been implicit before the summer of 1941 but it was certainly not explicit. No evidence exists for a planned programme of *systematic* physical elimination until this moment, a situation which closely approximates the chronologies of other key modern genocides. As elsewhere, it was the frustration of the vision, exacerbated, in this instance, by the monumental recognition that, by having attempted and then failed to destroy the Soviets, the Nazi state had engineered its own road to oblivion,[64] which precipitated the vengeful drive towards Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Auschwitz.

Added to this was the actual demographic and logistical bottleneck produced by the military stalemate in the East. The Nazi 'final solution' had been predicated on getting 'rid' of the Jews, not having millions of them to house and feed. At least Stalin, after 1939, had somewhere to send his 'dangerous' Balts, Ukrainians and, later, Tatars, Volga Germans and other ethnic 'enemies', even if hundreds of thousands died en route, even if millions more were ruthlessly hyper-exploited to death in slave labour camps in deepest Central Asia or Siberia.[65] Here, somewhat paradoxically, was an alternative scenario for Hitler, one which presents itself to any genocidal practitioner. Instead of exterminating the Jews outright would it not be better to punish them through hyper-exploitation? The new realities of late 1941–2 – the rapidly escalating war in the East, which would now certainly be a life-and-death struggle, not only with

Soviet Russia but also with the western Allies – posed the issue starkly: either Germany made good her acute manpower losses through maximization of the labour potential of her subject populations or her military-industrial complex would simply go under. Millions of Soviet POWs, Poles, Czechs and other Europeans were henceforth brought into the Reich,[66] thereby undermining the Nazi vision of its pure racial community, yet providing an essential – if expendable – slave labour force. The trajectory for the Jews was entirely different. Wherever possible, Jews were by this stage being deported *away* from the central Reich territories. As for the hyper-exploitation argument which sought to utilize the able-bodied amongst them in labour camps in the East, or even to enlist complete Polish ghettos in favour of war production, this was either quickly rejected or, when it did occur, was no more than a prelude to the Nazis' new and *final* final solution of the Jewish question, namely systematic conveyer-belt extermination.[67]

It is this aspect, and the extreme lengths to which the Nazis went to accomplish it, which surely lends to the argument for the special categorization of the Holocaust a cogency which it seems objectionable to dispute. Those efforts, thanks to Raul Hilberg's first groundbreaking study thirty years ago, are well-known: the enlistment of the instruments, skills and techniques of modern technology and administrative processes, of scientific expertise not to mention railway time tabling, of the resources of state bureaucracy as well as the military-industrial complex, and thus of the entire apparatus of the modern state.[68] All these were put at the disposal of those appointed, namely the SS, to carry out the extermination, even to the point, at critical moments, when resources were reallocated away from urgent military priorities. It is this relentless systematization and routinization of the process that led to the final destination for the victims in the gas chambers which, argues Zygmunt Bauman, represents the ultimate – to date – in what can be achieved in deploying modernity on behalf of genocide.[69]

Yet even here, while acknowledging these facts, there may be a danger in reading into them a uniqueness over and above what is obviously unique. The process of killing Jews in the Holocaust followed, in part, well-defined contours associated with other twentieth-century genocides. These included death through malnutrition, famine and disease in enclosed 'reservations' (i.e. ghettos), through, as already noted, hyper-exploitation in slave labour camps, through mass deportations which turned into death marches, and through extremely gruesome, often messy executions and massacres in pits, trenches and ravines, using nothing more sophisticated than revolvers, rifles and machine guns. Recent research has confirmed that Nazi-sponsored mass murder of Jews in, for instance, Lithuania and the Balkans was far from industrial or tidy. On the

contrary, hot-blooded slaughter carried out by ordinary Wehrmacht soldiers, as well as by Einsatzgruppen and other paramilitary auxiliaries, was a persistent feature of both 'the war in the East' and the Balkan theatre.[70] Certainly, in terms of repeatedness and scale, these actions *on their own* dwarfed those committed by other modern genocidal practitioners against other victim groups. Certainly, too, the invention of gassing vans and then gassing chambers represented an attempt to surmount the actual logistical limitations inherent in these more traditional killing methods. Gas chambers were about the streamlining of process, an innovation which came as near as possible to an industrial method for liquidating unwanted human beings on the basis of a daily quota. Specially developed and, as it were, patented for this explicit purpose, though not exclusively for Jews, their killing and crematoria disposing functions, with those at Auschwitz as their model *par excellence*,[71] indicate, together with the atom bomb, developed more or less simultaneously, the modern world's capability to organize mass death on a new, more advanced and scientifically planned basis.

But the modern world is itself dynamic. Technological progress, particularly in military-industrial fields, is research-led and quickly renders former innovations obsolete. In the circumstances, one would not expect Auschwitz to be the last word on genocide any more than the now very antiquated 'dirty' bombs which destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki would be acceptable to NATO planners as the last word on 'limited' nuclear war.

Today's Genocide: The Case of the Marsh Arabs

Today, in the marshlands of southern Iraq, Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime is committing genocide. The number of people threatened at the moment, perhaps 100,000, is obviously smaller than that of the Nazis' victims, and it is not clear yet whether Saddam's ultimate intention is to eliminate physically each and every one of them, or simply to 'get rid of them' by a programme of terror designed to drive them *en masse* across the border into Iran or into Iraq's own desert region.[72] What is clear is that he is punishing a people, the Marsh Arabs, most immediately, for daring to back the post-Gulf War Shia resistance to his regime and, more generally, for being different, for failing to conform to the Ba'athist agenda for development. All the evidence suggests that Saddam is going to any lengths to accomplish these ends, deploying his most advanced resources, technology and talented engineers to dam and drain thousands of square miles of marshlands,[73] while engaging his scientific experts to create a new generation of chemical weapons to target their inhabitants.

The geographical inaccessibility of the Marsh Arabs gives to this genocide a specificity of its own. Unlike the Jews of Europe, they cannot be easily located, rounded up and then deported to some suitable death camp. They first have to be flushed out of the marshes and this requires method. All sorts of formulas have been tried: there have been air attacks using napalm, artillery bombardments using phosphorus; the agricultural chemicals, Indolin and Endrine 192, have been poured into the water systems to poison it. Now there is evidence of a new range of chemical warheads which appear to be lethally toxic to both plant and animal life, including human beings. The results of a lot of these high-tech strategies are so far inconclusive – even rather messy.[74]

Far from abandoning his scheme, however, Saddam seems to be more than ever committed to finding ways and means of succeeding. The draining of the Hammar, Amara, Mosharah and Quma marshes – a huge water-filled environment which has supported a unique human habitat and culture stretching back millennia[75] – will certainly go down in the annals of prodigious Iraqi engineering feats. The marshes will be drained out of existence, wiped out, obliterated from the map. But the ultimate aim is not simply one of an environmental transformation, but of an Iraqi-style version of what can only be described as the 'final solution' of the Marsh Arab question.

Conclusion

With reference to – and dare one say on behalf of – the Marsh Arabs, let me re-state the main thrust of this thesis. The occurrence of genocide in the modern world is associated with processes of attempted state-led modernization and, more particularly, a forced-pace acceleration of that modernization. The states in question, for whatever reason, seek to bypass or avoid generally accepted ground rules and conventions on incremental growth,[76] and in the attempt to execute their 'alternative' agendas encounter serious impediments which, symptomatic of the overload or overstretch implicit within them, threaten both agenda and state alike.[77] It is in such crisis situations that something, so to speak, has to give, that the state takes out its frustration on one or more perceived people-obstacles in its path, the destruction of whom, it is mentally posited, will enable the successful completion of its agenda.

In our contemporary age of resource scarcity, the most likely targets for this sort of genocidal victimization are likely to be 'marginal', native peoples in so-called Third World countries, where the consolidation and development of residual frontiers continues unabated. Any alleged threat which the victims pose, in these instances, is clearly going to be more

imaginary than real, though, paradoxically, increasing awareness, mobilization and resistance among native peoples, plus international support for them,[78] may exacerbate the perpetrators' *perception* of threat. If in these examples a 'dynamic' of genocide is created essentially out of the perpetrator's own state of mind, it does not follow that there cannot be circumstances in which the actual situation is more amenable to interpretation. It could be argued, for instance, that secessionist or neo-secessionist struggles in the modern world, such as the Kurds in inter-war Turkey or, more recently, in Ba'athist Iraq, have presented a more tangible challenge to their respective states.[79] Certainly, where party-led, ideologically-driven states, such as Iraq, promise to deliver on all fronts and then catastrophically fail, the actual succeeding power struggle is likely to be real and acute. In such circumstances the tendency of a Saddam to strike out at all and sundry – Kurds, Shia, Marsh Arabs as well as other more sharply defined 'political' opponents – may also suggest how tenuous are the distinctions between categories labelled as genocide or politicide.[80]

One does not have to refute the obviously visionary, indeed bewildering Manichaean elements in the Holocaust, nor the long historical backdrop provided by a christologically-inspired antipathy towards Jews, to argue that it, too, is a genocide, sharing features in common with others. Certainly, its intense projection, and subsequently the actual mechanics of a process in which the Nazis, having gone down a *cul-de-sac* of their own making, held every last Jew accountable for it, is altogether more toxic and far-reaching than anything comparable to date. Though projection, visionary ideology and a belief in some specially-ordained sanction to expunge the victim group are common, indeed prevalent, features of genocidal pathology, the Holocaust on all these accounts is the model *par excellence*.[81]

But that neither locates the Holocaust outside history nor demands that it be explained by a wholly different framework. Certainly the Holocaust as a product of its own time continues to stand as a warning and challenge to ours. But this statement also contains only half the truth. The destruction of Nazism in 1945 did not represent some cut-off point which precluded *other* genocides from ever being committed. On the contrary, not only have many been committed since then,[82] but the potential for more – simply bearing in mind Max Weber's observations on the claims by the modern state to hold a legitimate monopoly of physical violence within its territorial boundaries[83] – is ever-present. While the well-springs of genocide in the modern world, namely the demands of modernity itself, are hardly being addressed, the active insatiable drive towards rapid, fast-paced development is being confronted by all too obvious limiting factors: economic competition, demographic explosion, resource scarcity and massive ecological degradation. Forecasters of a world without genocide in the twenty-first century are optimists indeed.

NOTES

1 A version of this article was originally presented as part of the University of Southampton Parkes Seminars (autumn 1993). I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the support of Dr Tony Kushner at the University of Southampton for encouraging and expediting its publication, Dr Iain Smith of the University of Warwick and Dr David Cesarani of the Wiener Library for their helpful comments on its first draft.
2 Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (Washington, DC 1944).
3 Quoted in Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide* (New Haven, CT 1990), 8–9.
4 See Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the 20th Century* (New Haven, CT 1981), 23.
5 See Kuper, 19–39, for a full, critical discussion of the UN Convention and Soviet resistance to the use of 'political' in the definition.
6 Chalk and Jonassohn, 11.
7 See Chalk and Jonassohn, 12–23, for a broader review of the literature.
8 Lyman Letgers, 'The Soviet gulag: is it genocidal?', in Israel W. Charny (ed.), *Towards the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide* (Boulder, CO and London 1984), 62–5, argues for socio-economic groups to be included alongside national, ethnic and religious ones as identifiable victims of genocide. Chalk and Jonassohn, 22–6, argue more coherently that the victim group is defined by the perpetrator in instances of genocide, regardless of whether it *is*, in its own terms, a group. Similarly Helen Fein, 'Genocide: a sociological perspective', *Current Sociology*, vol. 38, 1990, 24, confirms that 'genocide is sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to destroy a collectivity...'.
9 Survival's *Urgent Action Bulletins* provide detailed information on most of these cases: on the Nuba, *Bulletin*, January 1992; on the Yanomani, *Bulletin*, September 1993, and Robin Wright, 'The Yanomani saga', *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, vol. 5, 1982, 27–9; on the Jummas, *Bulletin*, May 1992 and January 1994, the Anti-Slavery Society's Report no. 2, *The Chittagong Hill Tracts, Militarisation, Oppression and the Hill Tribes* (London 1984), and Amnesty International, *Bangladesh. Unlawful Killings and Torture in the Chittagong Hill Tracts* (London 1986); on the Maubere of East Timor, Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei, *The War against East Timor* (London 1984) and, more recently, Hugh O'Shaughnessy, 'Secret killing of a nation', *Observer*, 7 April 1991; on the Marsh Arabs, see Shyam Bhatia, 'Murder in the marshes', *Observer*, 28 February 1993, and also the impassioned appeal from Conservative MP Emma Nicholson, *Why Does the West Forget?* (Sevenoaks, Kent 1993). At the time of writing, in early May 1994, the Rwanda massacres, which had been going on for nearly a month were finally being referred to both by the UN Secretary-General, Boutros-Ghali, and by relief agencies as an example of genocide; Oxfam explicitly compared the scale of the killings to Kampuchea in the late 1970s (see Oxfam advert in leading Sunday newspapers, 8 May 1994).

10 Death tolls in the 1993 phase of the civil war in Angola, reported to have run at its high point at a thousand a day, topped the contemporary league of civil wars, wars between states and communal massacres *until* they were dwarfed by the army and death squad massacres in Rwanda in April and early May 1994, when possibly 250,000 died in the space of a few weeks. Other conflicts – in neighbouring Burundi and Zaire, the Sudan (SPLF versus government), Bosnia, Afghanistan, Moldova, Georgia, the Armeno-Azeri conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh as well as some other post-Soviet Central Asian republics – have exhibited extreme genocidal characteristics including ethnic cleansing, selective *and* indiscriminate massacres, i.e. of communal groups and populations regardless of age and gender. *In principle*, genocide has not occurred in these cases because the apparatus of state – and hence an overwhelming control of the means of systematic violence – has been fragmented between more than one competing group. In practice, *pace* Rwanda where a more traditional two-sided armed struggle parallels the state-sponsored massacres of civilians, what we are dealing with is a very broad, extremely fluid continuum of mass killings, with noticeable grey areas between different forms. Note both the main title and subtitle of Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide: A First Inside Account of the Horrors of Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia* (Shaftesbury, Dorset 1993); see also R. J. Rummel, 'Democide in totalitarian states: mortacracies and megamurderers', in Israel W. Charny (ed.), *Genocide. A Critical Bibliographical Review*, vol. 3 (London 1994), for a definition intended to embrace *all* state-organized mass killings.

11 Note Charny's ultra-inclusivism on this score: 'Unless clear-cut self-defence can be reasonably proven, whenever a large number of people are put to death by other people, it constitutes genocide' (*Genocide*, xiii). This definition, amongst many other things, begs the question of what constitutes 'clear-cut self defence' given that practically all genocidal practitioners offer this justification (see note 34 below).

12 Note Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past. History, Holocaust and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA 1988), 69: 'To compare two events does not entail claiming that one caused the other. Comparison is a dual process that scrutinizes two or more systems to learn what elements they have in common, and what elements distinguish them. It does not assert identity; it does not deny unique components.'

13 See, as examples, a psycho-social perspective in George Kren and Leon Rappoport, *The Holocaust and the Crisis of Human Behaviour* (New York 1980), a theological one in Roy A. and Alice Eckardt, 'The Holocaust and the enigma of uniqueness: a philosophical effort at practical clarification', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 450, 1980, 165–78, and a measured historical one in Otto Dov Kulka, 'Singularity and its relativisation', in Yehuda Bauer *et al.* (eds.), *Remembering for the Future* (Oxford 1988), suppl. vol., 217–32. All these discussions assume that the Holocaust is only about Jews and does not embrace Gypsies, Russian POWs, Slavs, homosexuals and other Nazi victims. To avoid a weakening of the general line of argument I have – for the purposes of this article – accepted that the term 'Holocaust' refers exclusively to the Jewish victims.

14 Note, for instance, the lament of Elie Wiesel, *One Generation After* (New York 1970), 15: 'Nothing has been learned: Auschwitz has not served as a warning. For details consult your daily newspaper.' Yet the paradox here is that Wiesel, who has been prominent and tirelessly strenuous in his outreach to the non-Jewish world, is another exponent of the incomprehensibility of the Holocaust (see note 41 below). If, however, it *is* ultimately incomprehensible then there cannot logically be any point in relating it to other 'comprehensible' events.

15 Note, for instance, Peter Baldwin (ed.), *Reworking the Past. Hitler, the Holocaust and the Historians Debate* (Boston 1990), 21: 'The singularity of the Jewish suffering adds to the moral and emotional claims that Israel can make on her citizens and on other nations.'

16 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Oxford 1989).

17 Ronald Aronson, *The Dialectics of Disaster. A Preface to Hope* (London 1983). Aronson's work is part scholarly treatise, part committed polemic which may account for its neglect by academics.

18 See Chalk and Jonassohn, 27–40. For a 'modernist' focus, see Gil Elliot, *Twentieth Century Book of the Dead* (London 1972).

19 I am perfectly aware that, by tentatively implying an interest in modernization theory, I am in conflict with those such as Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wipperman who have argued that such theories are 'intellectually redundant'; see their *The Racial State. Germany 1933–1945* (Cambridge 1991), 2. In fact, I accept their thesis that Nazi Germany in its emphasis on a racial blueprint had unique characteristics. What I fail to understand is why this precludes Nazism from being a particular developmental strategy which can be compared to other, equally idiosyncratic developmental strategies. Processes of modernization do not have to follow pre-ordained 'enlightened' or benevolent paths. They may include pronounced 'reactionary' elements and display 'archaic attributes'. However I accept that this begs important (and persistent) questions about the nature of both modernity and modernization.

20 See Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain* (London 1985) and his 'The Expulsion: purpose and consequences', in Elie Kedourie (ed.), *Spain and the Jews* (London 1992), 74–91; also Andrew Hess, 'The Moriscos: an Ottoman fifth column in sixteenth century Spain', *American Historical Review*, vol. 74, 1968, 1–25. Forced assimilation not extermination was the original governmental intention in this instance, but made more toxic by a sense of internal threat which either Jews or Moriscos were perceived as posing to the body politic at key crisis moments.

21 See Peter Berresford Ellis, *Hell or Connaught! The Cromwellian Colonisation of Ireland 1652–1660* (London 1975) and, more recently, Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland 1645–1653* (Oxford 1992), 357–64. Gentles argues for a systematic scorched earth policy in the *aftermath* of the extirpation of Irish resistance which was directly responsible for a population collapse from an estimated 1.5 million in 1641 to only 850,000 in 1652.

22 See Reynauld Secher, *Le Genocide franco-français. La Vendée-Venge* (Paris 1986) which has caused controversy with its thesis of a genocide committed

by Frenchmen against Frenchmen. So, too, has its estimate of 117,000 genocide-related deaths. Yet an older, more conservative study, Peter Paret, *Internal War and Pacification: The Vendée 1789–1796* (Princeton 1961), 68, argues for 130,000 direct deaths or 15 per cent of a pre-Revolution population of 800,000.

23 See notably Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore* (London 1987) and Alan Moorhead, *The Fatal Impact. An Account of the Invasion of the South Pacific 1767–1840* (London 1966). The Tasmanian aboriginal population was completely eradicated.

24 For particularly noteworthy case histories involving direct, intentional and systematic native-American destruction, *prior* to the final consolidation of the frontier, see Lynwood Carranco and Estle Beard, *Genocide and Vendetta: The Round Valley Wars of Northern California* (Norman, OK 1981) and Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict between the California Indians and White Civilisation* (Berkeley 1976).

25 See Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting. The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism 1884–1915* (London 1980) and Helmut Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule* (London 1971). An estimated 60 per cent of the tribal population was liquidated between 1904 and 1907.

26 See Helen Fein, 'Scenarios of genocide: models of genocide and critical responses', in Charny (ed.), *Towards the Understanding*, 3–31. Fein's 'ideological', 'developmental', 'retributive' and 'despotic' types of genocide represent the best and clearest working classification to date, though I might choose both to omit 'despotic' as being in practice indistinct from 'retributive' and to use my preferred term 'visionary' in place of 'ideological'. I would add that most genocides contain elements of more than one and often all three types.

27 See Kendal, 'Some reflections on Kemalism', in Gerard Chaliand (ed.), *People without a Country. The Kurds and Kurdistan* (London 1980), 68, quoting the Turkish Communist Party estimate of between one and one-half million Kurds deported and massacred between 1925 and 1938. Further corroboration and a fuller breakdown is needed to confirm these figures.

28 R. S. Stafford, *The Tragedy of the Assyrians* (London 1935).

29 Giorgio Rochat, 'La repressione della resistenza in Cirenaica (1930–31)', *Il movimento di liberazione in Italia*, vol. 110, 1973. See also his *Militari e politici nella preparazione della campagna d'Etiopa* (Milan 1971) for similar genocidal intentions and action in the Abyssinian campaign of 1935–6.

30 Robert Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow. Soviet Collectivisation and the Terror-Famine* (London 1986). The inclusion of post-kulak killings might be considered controversial in terms of a traditional definition of genocide. My inclusion does not relate to the gulag labour camp system *per se* in which survival was in principle (though rarely in practice) possible. Rather, it refers to the categories and groups who were marked down for *direct* physical elimination on the grounds of their alleged conspiracies against the Soviet state. This process embraced either the liquidation of their families and offspring as co-conspirators or the untying of the physical and social connection between conspirators and family members, e.g. through the placing of

children in orphanages geographically far removed from their home communities. Note again Fein's 1990 definition in which she states that genocide 'can be accomplished through the imposed proscription or restriction of reproduction of group members, increasing infant mortality, and breaking of linkage between reproduction and socialization of children in the family or group of origin' (Fein, 'Genocide', 24); see also *Genocide in the USSR: Studies in Group Destruction* (Munich 1958) and Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror. A Reassessment* (New York 1990).

31 See Moshe Lewin, *The Making of the Soviet System* (London 1985), especially the chapter, 'Who was the Soviet kulak?'

32 'Alienation does not always have to be synonymous with enmity, as a lot of people in New York consider the Puerto Ricans to be foreign but do not kill them. Many people do not like blacks but do not kill them. A large number of people can be antagonistic towards another national group but it does not mean there has to be some ultimate reckoning. But it is bad. It is always bad, because dislike and alienation are the beginning of a far-reaching dislike, perhaps prejudice, perhaps hate. That is bad, but it does not have to all be thrown into the same pot, as it is not the same' (Professor Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, quoted in Antony Polonsky (ed.), *My Brother's Keeper. Recent Polish Debates on the Holocaust* (London 1990), 227).

33 Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions. A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge 1979), 221.

34 Patrick Brogan, *World Conflicts* (London 1989), 604. Note also the following: 'Operating within the confines of this dominant political logic, the invocation of communal "self-defence" against Armenian sedition, actual and possible, explains nearly all that needs to be explained about Turkish behaviour during this critical moment of potential national dissolution' (Steven T. Katz, 'The Holocaust and comparative history', *Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture*, no. 37 (New York 1993)).

35 No state in the process of perpetrating such acts ever admits to them being genocide. Any such charge is refuted as a malicious fabrication. But Turkey is perhaps exceptional in that it has maintained this sophistry for seventy years by claiming the whole thing to be an Armenian-inspired conspiracy against the national interest. This includes 'scholarly' denials. See, for example, Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File. The Myth of Innocence Exposed* (London 1985).

36 See Robert F. Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (Chicago 1992), especially the chapter, 'The Turkish revolution and the Armenian genocide'; Lewin, especially the chapter, 'Society, state and ideology during the first Five Year Plan'; Kendal, 68–72.

37 See Calvin Goldsheider and Alvin S. Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews* (Chicago 1984). The same point has also been made about Armenians; see Robert F. Melson, 'Revolutionary genocide: on the causes of the Armenian genocide of 1915 and the Holocaust', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 4, 1989, 161–74.

38 Steven Katz calls it their 'biological givenness'; see 'Auschwitz and the gulag: discontinuities and dissimilarities', in Steven T. Katz, *Historicism, the*

Holocaust and Zionism. Critical Studies in Modern Jewish Thought and History (New York 1992), 150.

39 Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (London 1987), 24.

40 Saul Friedländer, 'On the possibility of the Holocaust: an approach to historical synthesis', in Yehuda Bauer and Nathan Rotenstreich (eds.), *The Holocaust as Historical Experience* (New York 1981), 2, 6.

41 For example, Nora Levin, *The Holocaust. The Destruction of European Jewry 1939–1945* (New York 1973), xi–xii: '... the events surrounding it [the Holocaust] are in a very real sense incomprehensible... The accumulation of facts does not yield this understanding; indeed comprehensibility may never be possible... The world of Auschwitz was, in truth, another planet.' For a linguistic corrective, see Dan Margushak, 'The 'incomprehensibility' of the Holocaust: tightening up some loose usage', *Judaism*, vol. 29, 1980, 233–42.

42 Friedländer, 'On the possibility', 2.

43 See 'Quantity and interpretation – issues in the comparative historical analysis of the Holocaust', in Katz, *Historicism*, 105–37, an essay (admittedly a prelude to a much larger study) in which Katz focuses on a number of historical comparisons – with witchcraft, black slavery, the native populations of the Americas – subjects which most scholars would agree do not, in general, fall within the framework of genocide. Though Katz's essay considers Gypsies, Poles and Ukrainians killed by the Nazis in the Second World War, he ultimately dismisses these as examples of victims of genocide. Neither, strangely, does he concern himself with, for instance, the Armenian massacres of 1915–16 or those in Cambodia of 1975–79. In another essay, 'Auschwitz and the gulag' (*Historicism*, 138–61), Katz concentrates on the Soviet camps making up the gulag system, not on the direct elimination of 'kulaks' or other 'class enemies' who, again, might seem more obvious candidates for categorization as victims of genocide. However he has addressed himself more recently to the issue of the Armenian massacres of 1915; see his 'Holocaust and comparative history'. Yet here again he downplays the whole episode both by attributing co-responsibility for these events to the Armenians and by seeking to demonstrate that the Turkish intent was not to eliminate the Armenian population *in toto*. As demonstrated elsewhere in my article these elements do not in themselves contradict a case for genocide.

44 Yehuda Bauer, 'The place of the Holocaust in contemporary history', *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 1, 1984, 201–24. A number of articles on the Armenian massacres have also appeared in the formerly Yad Vashem (currently United States Holocaust Research Institute) journal, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, of which Bauer was editor-in-chief.

45 Bauer's insistence (in 'The place of the Holocaust') on ideological motivation as the critical separating point between the Holocaust and other genocides is noteworthy given that many genocide scholars would confirm that motivation is crucial to *all* genocides; see, for instance, Vakahn N. Dadrian, 'Towards a theory of genocide incorporating the instance of the Holocaust', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 5, 1990, 129–43, and Frank Chalk, 'Definitions of genocide and their implications for prediction and prevention', in Bauer *et al.* (eds.), *Remembering*, 67–79. By contrast, there is a whole body of Holocaust

'functionalist' historians who question the centrality of ideological motivation as the key to its particular outcome; see most obviously Karl A. Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz. Nazi Policy towards German Jews, 1933–1939* (Urbana, IL, Chicago and London 1970). In other words, the debate about motivation is vigorous both for the Holocaust and other genocide case histories. My personal view is that a different terminology (which I only allude to here as the development from 'potentiality' to 'actuality') might give a more accurate insight into what actually happens in a genocidal scenario.

46 Note, for instance, Katz, 'Auschwitz and the gulag' (*Historicism*, 142): 'The Holocaust remains always "beyond comprehension", an event as much revealed as mysterious, much as we must insist that it be open to scholarly investigation and ordinary rules of historical and philosophical enquiry. It is these very qualities that lead to the constant temptation – *to be resisted* – to remove it altogether from history.'

47 Martin Broszat, 'Plädoyer für eine Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus', *Merkur*, vol. 39, 1985, 373–85, reprinted in English as 'A plea for the historicization of National Socialism', in Baldwin (ed.), 77–87.

48 Saul Friedländer, 'Some reflections on the historicization of National Socialism', in Baldwin (ed.), 100.

49 Friedländer, 'Some reflections', and his letters to Broszat in 'A controversy about the historicization of National Socialism', in Baldwin (ed.), 102–28.

50 See Ernst Nolte, 'Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 1986. There is now considerable literature on the historians' debate; for its development, see Baldwin (ed.) and Maier, *Unmasterable Past*.

51 Broszat's letters to Friedländer in 'A controversy', in Baldwin (ed.), 102–28.

52 See Hans Mommsen, 'Reappraisal and repression. The Third Reich in West German historical consciousness', in Baldwin (ed.), 179, and Alvin H. Rosenfeld, 'Another revisionism: popular culture and the changing image of the Holocaust', in Geoffrey Hartman (ed.), *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective* (Bloomington, IN 1986), 90–102; also the pertinent comments of Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 3rd edn. (London 1993), 208.

53 See especially Bauer, 'The place of the Holocaust', and Uriel Tal, 'On the study of the Holocaust and genocide', *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. 13, 1979, 7–52.

54 See Moshe Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* (London 1968), especially chapter 17, and Raymond A. Bauer, *The New Man in Soviet Psychology* (Cambridge 1952). On the creation of the 'new' Turkey, see Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London 1993), especially the chapter, 'The new Turkey: society and economy (1923–1945)'.

55 On this point, Katz argues that 'ideologically, even for Stalin, re-education, not physical extermination, is the consummate goal. Bolshevism declares an uncompromising war against the class enemy *qua* class enemy, against his class status: it does not declare an unlimited, annihilatory war against his person *qua* person' (Katz, 'Auschwitz and the gulag', in *Historicism*, 150). The point might be legitimate if, as Katz implies, all 'enemies of the people'

were sent to the gulag. The problem is that a very considerable percentage was consciously and systematically executed as soon as they were found 'guilty': on the basis of Conquest's estimates in *Harvest of Sorrow*, 301–6, at least some of the three million immediate casualties in the anti-'kulak' drive of 1930–2, and at least another million at the height of the *Yezhovshchina* between mid-1937 and late 1938 (*Great Terror*, 485–6). In these terms, Stalin's repeated references to the liquidation of the kulaks as a class and the necessity to eradicate class enemies must be taken literally as intent physically to do just that.

56 There have been notable studies of this aspect of Hitler's psychopathological make-up; see Robert G. L. Waite, *The Psychopathic God. Adolph Hitler* (New York 1977) and the more determinist Rudolph Binion, *Hitler among the Germans* (New York 1976); see also, most obviously, Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide. The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (London 1967).

57 I am treading on dangerous ground here, particularly in disputing the potent argument of a number of historians, notably that of the 'moderate functionalist', Christopher R. Browning; in his *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution* (New York 1985), Browning argues that it was success and elation, not a premonition of disaster, which precipitated the 'final solution'. The latter position has, however, been most recently – if controversially – upheld by Arno Mayer, *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The 'Final Solution' in History* (New York 1988) and also by Phillipe Burrin, *Hitler et les Juifs. Genèse d'une génocide* (Paris 1989). My own broader comparative research leads me to conclude that the lurch into genocide is *often* precipitated by military set-backs or disasters; see Mark Levene, 'The frontiers of genocide: Jews in the eastern war zones, 1914–20 and 1941', in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Minorities in Wartime* (Oxford 1993). There is certainly evidence for a radicalization of killing, shifting from selected adult male targets to whole communities in the high summer of 1941; see Jurgen Forster, 'The Wehrmacht and the war of extermination against the Soviet Union', *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. 14, 1981, 7–34, and Christian Streit, 'The German army and the policies of genocide', in Gerhard Hirschfeld (ed.), *The Policies of Genocide* (London 1986), 1–14. Nevertheless, my assumption as to the exact catalyst for the 'final solution' may simply be incorrect.

58 Burleigh and Wipperman, 306.

59 See Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's Weltanschauung: A Blueprint for Power* (Middletown, CT 1972).

60 Getting rid of the Gypsies was distinct from getting rid of the Jews inasmuch as the former were perceived (not just by the Nazis) as the European example *par excellence* of a 'backward', socially as well as racially deviant group whose very existence challenged basic assumptions as to the nature of society and of its development. These distinctions, however, do not invalidate the comparable aspects of the Nazi and satellite regimes' genocidal policies towards *both* Gypsies and Jews, particularly the ultimate totality of their genocidal intent; see recent studies such as Sybil Milton, 'Nazi policies towards Roma and Sinti, 1933–1945,' *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 5th Series,

vol. 2, 1992, 1–18, and Ian F. Hancock, 'Uniqueness, Gypsies and Jews', in Bauer *et al.* (eds.), *Remembering*, 2017–25.

61 One does not have to accept the conclusion of the Aly and Heim thesis that the 'final solution' sprang from the initiatives of an economic 'planning intelligentsia' within Reich ministries to agree that technocratic arguments for a coherent developmental strategy did play an unquestionable role in its rationalization; see Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, 'Die Ökonomie der Endlösung. Menschenvernichtung und Wirtschaftliche Neuordnung', *Beiträge sur Nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 5: *Sozialpolitik und Judenvernichtung: Gibt es eine Ökonomie der Endlösung?* (Berlin 1987), 7–90.

62 For a discussion of Nazism in terms of modernization and development, see Rainer Zitelmann, *Hitler, Selbsverständis eines Revolutionärs* (Hamburg, Leamington Spa, New York 1987), although, for a more nuanced account of it as a special 'third way' route to utopia, see Horst Matzerath and Heinrich Volkmann, 'Modernisierungtheorie und Nationalsozialismus', in Jurgen Kocka (ed.), *Theorien in der Praxis des Historikers* (Göttingen 1977), 90–109. For Mussolini, see A. James Gregor, *Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship* (Princeton 1979), especially the chapter, 'Fascism and development in comparative perspective'. For Kemal Atatürk, see Ali Kazancigil and Ergun Özbudun (eds.), *Atatürk. Founder of the Modern State* (London 1981), notably the Ahmad Feroz article, 'The political economy of Kemalism', and Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey. A Study in Capitalist Development* (London 1987), especially the chapter, 'State and capital'. For Stalin, see Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London 1976), especially the chapter, 'The great leap forward. i. collectivisation'; also Robert Bidelux, *Communism and Development* (London 1985), especially the chapter, 'Socialist forced industrialisation strategies'.

63 On this point, see notably Christopher R. Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (Cambridge 1992), especially 'Nazi resettlement policy and the search for a solution to the Jewish question, 1939–41', 3–27.

64 Note the intriguing comment of Alfred Jodl, chief of Hitler's general staff, from the vantage point of defeat, in 1946: 'Long before anyone else in the world, Hitler suspected or knew that the war was lost' (quoted in Percy Ernst Schramm, *Hitler. The Man and the Military Leader* (Chicago 1971), 204).

65 See Robert Conquest, *The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities* (New York 1970) and Aleksandr Nekrich, *The Punished Peoples: The Deportation and Tragic Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War* (New York 1978).

66 Ulrich Herbert, 'Arbeit und Vernichtung: Ökonomisches Interesse und Primat der Weltanschauung im Nationalsozialismus', in Dan Diner (ed.), *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte?* (Frankfurt 1987), 198–236.

67 Certainly, there was a hyper-exploitation option and a running battle between those who favoured production versus extermination; Arno Mayer, however, in his chapter on 'Auschwitz' in *Why Did the Heavens*, overstates the case for the former; see also Christopher Browning's corrective in 'German

technocrats, Jewish labour and the final solution' and 'The Holocaust as by-product? A critique of Arno Mayer', in *Paths*, 59–76, 77–85.

68 Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3 vols (New York 1985), III, 994: 'The machinery of destruction, then, was structurally no different from organised German society as a whole. The machinery of destruction was the organised community in one of its special roles.'

69 Bauman, especially chapter 4, 'The uniqueness and normality of the Holocaust'.

70 See notably Dina Porat, 'The Holocaust in Lithuania: some unique aspects', and Jonathan Steinberg, 'Types of genocide? Croatians, Serbs and Jews, 1941–5', both in David Cesarani (ed.), *The Final Solution. Origins and Implementation* (London 1994); see also the studies by Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front 1941–45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare* (London 1985) and Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece. The Experience of Occupation 1941–1944* (London 1993). Jonathan Steinberg, 'The Holocaust, society and ourselves', *Jewish Quarterly*, no. 153, spring 1994, 46–50, contains a valuable critique of Zygmunt Bauman in relation to these and other issues.

71 See Konnilyn G. Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps: The Sanity of Madness* (New York 1981), Joseph Borkin, *The Crime and Punishment of I. G. Farben* (New York 1978) and, most recently, the English edition of Teresa Swiebocka (ed.), *Auschwitz. A History in Photographs* (Bloomington, IN 1994).

72 See Julie Flint, 'Shi'ites flee new marsh drainage', *Guardian*, 13 November 1993.

73 Flint, in which Dr Hussein Shahristani, formerly Iraq's leading nuclear scientist, was quoted as saying that 'Saddam is putting all his engineering talents into this new project, using literally hundreds of machines'.

74 Bhatia; see also Julie Flint's reports in the *Guardian*, 23 and 27 October, 8 and 13 November 1993.

75 See Wilfred Thesiger, *The Marsh Arabs* (London 1964) for the definitive work on the subject.

76 Who makes the ground rules is something which will need to be examined further. What is not intended here is a suggestion that *only* a totalitarian state is thereby capable of genocide while 'liberal' capitalist ones are not; see, by contrast, the sociologist, Irving Louis Horowitz, *Taking Lives. Genocide and State Power* (New Brunswick, NJ 1980), who argues that societies can be classified as genocidal or non-genocidal depending on where they are on a spectrum running from repressive and totalitarian at one end to permissive and pluralist at the other. The Horowitz model is certainly valuable but does not address processes of historical change or crisis in which a society might pass from being non-genocidal to genocidal, or indeed vice versa.

77 Aronson, 169, pertinently refers to these scenarios as attempts to 'realise the unrealisable'.

78 See Julian Burger, *Report from the Frontier. The State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (London 1987), especially chapter 13, 'International action'.

79 See Martin van Bruinessen, *Aghas, Shaiks and State. The Social and Political Structure of Kurdistan* (London 1990), especially the chapter on Shaik Said's revolt of 1925; Chaliand (ed.); Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq.*

Tragedy and Hope (New York 1992); Alexis Heraclides, *The Self-determination of Minorities in International Politics* (London 1991); as well as Mark Levene, 'Yesterday's victims: today's perpetrators?', *Jewish Quarterly*, no. 152, winter 1993/4, 11–16.

80 I would argue that the only essential requirement for a politicide to be labelled genocide is, with reference to Fein's terminology (see note 30 above), when the perpetrators seek to remove their 'enemies' in biological terms, i.e. not simply adult males and/or females but also a wider swathe of family members, including children and babies, if not always by direct elimination then by the removal of children from their biological relationships and social communities. On these grounds I would cite Argentina's 'Dirty War' (1976–80) as an example of politicide or genocide; see Barbara Harff, 'Recognising genocides and politicides', in Helen Fein (ed.), *Genocide Watch* (New Haven, CT 1992), 27–41.

81 'The ultimate and archetypal genocide' as Alan L. Berger refers to it in his contribution to Charny (ed.), *Genocide*, 59.

82 See the catalogue of cases in Harff, 32–6.

83 Max Weber, 'Politik als Beruf', *Gesammelte Politische Schriften. Zweite* (Tübingen 1958), 494; see also Kuper, 161: 'the sovereign territorial state claims, as an integral part of its sovereignty, the right to commit genocide, or engage in genocidal massacres, against people under its rule, and... the UN for all practical purposes, defends this right.'

26

Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the "Racial Century": Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust

A. Dirk Moses

Hegel was well aware of the terrible cost exacted by the march of civilization. Yet, precisely because the 'History of the World is not the theatre of human happiness', as he put it rather coyly, Hegel felt compelled to develop a philosophy of history that invested cosmic meaning in what otherwise would be an intolerable spectacle of pointless carnage.[1] He was thereby proposing a secular 'theodicy', a term coined by the German philosopher G. W. Leibniz in 1710 to mean 'justification of God'.[2]

In 1940, at the beginning of a European catastrophe that would urgently re-pose the question of evil, the German-Jewish critic Walter Benjamin poured scorn on theodicies because they necessarily view the past through the eyes of its victors and retrospectively justify their actions and morality. Could the European civilization that produced colonial violence and the First World War be the greater good that redeemed the immeasurable suffering it caused? 'There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism', Benjamin wrote famously in his 'Theses on the philosophy of history'.[3] Rather than continue the destruction wrought by such barbarism, he urged 'anamnestic solidarity' with its victims as a way of interrupting the supposedly ineluctable and necessary 'progress' of civilization.[4]

Benjamin's plea for the primacy of the victims' point of view has certainly been absorbed by the scholarly community that studies genocides. But Hegel, or at least theodicy, still commands a following, for the

A. Dirk Moses, "Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the 'Racial Century'. Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust," from *Patterns of Prejudice*, 36, 4, 2002, pp. 7–19.

enquiry into the extermination of so-called native or indigenous peoples continues to be overshadowed by the nationalistic and totalitarian 'cleansing' programmes of the twentieth century, particularly the Holocaust. Mark Mazower suggests two reasons for this low priority:

> I think there may have... been a widely-held unspoken assumption that the mass killing of African or American peoples was distant and in some senses an 'inevitable' part of progress while what was genuinely shocking was the attempt to exterminate an entire people in Europe. This assumption may rest upon an implicit racism, or simply upon a failure of historical imagination.[5]

Another reason is the fact that the nation-states of 'the West', which are responsible for upholding human rights and the moral universalism on which they are based, profited enormously from imperialism, and often owe their very existence to their projects of settlement. The genocides of indigenous peoples by colonial powers and settlers necessarily pose thorny questions today regarding the dark past or provenance of these societies.[6] Then there is the prosaic problem that very few scholars dispose over sufficient knowledge to make plausible comparisons and linkages between different genocidal episodes. The upshot is that the genocide of European peoples in the twentieth century strikes many American, Anglo-European and Israeli scholars as a more urgent research question than the genocide of non-Europeans by Europeans in the preceding centuries or by postcolonial states of their indigenous populations today.[7]

Underlying this asymmetry is the claim that the Holocaust is 'unique', 'unprecedented' or 'singular'. Its implications for the study of indigenous genocide are as significant as they are dire: that such 'lesser' or 'incomplete' genocides – if indeed they are considered genocides at all – are marginal or even 'primitive', thereby reinforcing hegemonic Eurocentrism;[8] and that the moral caché of the indigenous survivors of colonialism is less than that of Jews. Predictably, they are rejected by some scholars who counter that genocide lies at the core of western civilization,[9] and by others who extend its meaning to a wide variety of phenomena, for example, to a European interest in indigenous spirituality, birth control for African Americans, disease in Hawaii and the murder of street children in South American city slums.[10] 'The coinage has been debased', observes Michael Ignatieff with exasperation: 'What remains is not a moral universal which binds us all together, but a loose slogan which drives us apart.'[11] Identity politics and academic enquiry are often conflated in polemical expressions of group trauma, and rancour sets the tone. The question almost raises itself: should the victim's point of view be authoritative in this field when different victim groups make incommensurable, indeed competing, claims?[12]

If we are to move beyond this unproductive intellectual and moral stalemate, rehearsing the now familiar arguments is insufficient.[13] A critical perspective that transcends that of victims (articulated by Benjamin) and perpetrators and their descendants (advanced by Hegel) is clearly necessary. Whether it can be done with sensitivity is a question I am not in a position to answer. One method has been undertaken by the anthropologist Michael Taussig. Turning to Benjamin for inspiration, he invokes the presentational strategy of montage to disrupt the normative status of the given order, placing stress not on 'facts and information in winning arguments... [but]... the less conscious image realm and in the dreamworld of the popular imagination'.[14] But what if the popular imagination is hopelessly divided about the identity of the 'real' victims of history or the hierarchy of their suffering?[15] In that case, an approach that lays bare the group traumas blocking conceptual development and mutual recognition can aid in their working through, as well as in stimulating the critical reflection needed to rethink the relationship between the Holocaust and the indigenous genocides that preceded it.[16]

Trauma, the Sacred and the Profane

What is at stake in the 'uniqueness' question? In order to grasp its existential importance, it is necessary to appreciate that the events of the Holocaust were experienced by members of the victim group as a trauma of virtually metaphysical proportions, a defining rupture in personal and collective identity with world-historical significance. Many Jews, especially the direct survivors, accordingly treat this genocide as sacred,[17] and it has become an important marker of collective Jewish identity,[18] notwithstanding considerable discomfort in that community with such a heteronomous determination.[19]

Emile Durkheim's theory of the sacred provides a useful tool for understanding this phenomenon. Group identity, he wrote, is constituted by a shared sense of the basic division of the world into two domains, the sacred and the profane. The former comprises objects and events that are loved, venerated or dreaded, and that are superior in dignity to the ordinary world of the profane. This division implies an obvious hierarchy: the sacred is special, and the profane is not. Without a shared sense of the sacred, group identity would dissolve. But preserving the sacred status of certain objects and events is not only a matter of communal survival; it is a response to suffering. For the cosmic order provided by the sacred–profane division endows the survivor of trauma with 'more force either to endure the trials of existence or to conquer them'.[20]

Durkheim's analysis also helps expose other aspects of the Holocaust's sacredness. He calls the group's most holy thing or object its 'totem', the sacred aura of which extends to two further domains: the sign or representation of the totem, and the members of the clan (Durkheim had in mind indigenous Australians) who comprise the core of the community.[21] On this account, the survivors themselves assume a sacred status, and it is no surprise that they also vigilantly guard representations of the Holocaust lest it be defiled or contaminated.[22] This endeavour is necessarily sectarian. Finally, the Holocaust is read as a negative cult, a *piaculum*, as Durkheim would have it: the commemoration of a calamity, that is, a trauma.[23] Utilizing the literature on trauma, the historian Dominick LaCapra has come to similar conclusions:

> Those traumatized by extreme events, as well as those empathizing with them, may resist working through because of what might almost be termed a fidelity to trauma, a feeling that one must somehow keep faith with it... Moreover... there has been an important tendency in modern culture and thought to convert trauma into the occasion for sublimity, to transvalue it into a test for the self or the group and an entry into the extraordinary ... Even extremely destructive or disorienting events, such as the Holocaust or the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki may become occasions of negative sublimity or displaced sacralization. They may also give rise to what may be termed founding traumas – traumas that paradoxically become the valorized or intensely cathected basis of identity for an individual or a group rather than events that pose the problematic question of identity.[24]

Of course, contemporary Jewish individual and religious identity precedes the Holocaust and continues apart from it. Jewish identity is not automatically Holocaust-centric.[25] Yet, for some influential contributors to the field, the Holocaust does in fact possess this status, due perhaps to their catholic interest in the fate of all Jews, since all Jews, irrespective of religious or political hue, whether religious or secular, were potential victims of National Socialist designs. 'I admit that my personal starting point, my bias if you will', confesses the historian Yehuda Bauer, 'is formed by my overriding interest in the fate of the Jews'.[26] The Holocaust is the trauma that all Jews share and it functions thereby, George Steiner observes, as the cement binding post-Holocaust Jewry. The *Shoah* (a term he prefers to 'Holocaust' because of its connotation of sacrifice), he writes,

> is the one and only bond which unites the Orthodox Jew and the atheist, the practising Jew and the total secularist, the people of Israel and the Diaspora, the Zionist and the anti-Zionist, the extreme conservative Jew... and the Jewish Trotskyite or Communist. Above all else, to be a Jew in the second

> half of this century is to be a survivor, and one who knows that his survival can again be put into question ... We are, in certain respects, a traumatised, a crazed people. How could we not be? Especially where it is that trauma which keeps us from final dispersal.[27]

Elie Wiesel has made the logical connection between trauma, group identity and the insistence of uniqueness:

> I always forbade myself to compare the Holocaust of European Judaism to events which are foreign to it. Auschwitz was something else. The Universe of concentration camps, by its dimensions and its design, lies outside, if not beyond, history. Its vocabulary belongs to it alone.[28]

Accordingly, he has expressed alarm that other victim groups are 'stealing the Holocaust from us ... we need to regain our sense of sacredness'.[29] Renowned scholars such as Lucy Dawidowicz, Steven T. Katz and Bauer do not differ from Wiesel and survivors in this regard, even if they locate the Holocaust in history. Bauer himself has pointed out the traumatizing effect of the Holocaust on Israeli society, demonstrated, above all, by its instrumentalization by all sides in public debate for partisan political purposes.[30] And with characteristic forthrightness Katz insists on its centrality for Jewish identity:

> To understand ourselves [as Jews] requires ineluctably that we come to some grasp of these events [the Holocaust] and our relation to them ... Those who would enquire what it means to be a Jew today must ask not, or even pose primarily, vague and unformed questions about Jewish identity and the relation of Judaism and modernity and Judaism and secularity, but must rather articulate the much more precise and focused question through which all other dimensions of our post-Holocaust identity are refracted and defined: 'What does it mean to be a Jew after Auschwitz?' Auschwitz has become an inescapable *datum* for all Jewish accounts of the meaning and nature of covenantal relation and God's relation to man. Likewise, all substantial answers also need to be open and responsive to the subtleties of the dialectical alternation of the contemporary Jewish situation: that is, they must also give due weight to the 'miracle' which is the state of Israel. They must thoughtfully and sensitively enquire whether God is speaking to the 'survivors' through it, and if so how.[31]

Because Katz and Bauer locate the Holocaust at the centre of Jewish life, they are forced to insist on its uniqueness, for to do otherwise would undermine their personal identity and concept of collective Jewish existence.[32] The significance Katz and Bauer attach to the Holocaust cannot be sustained if it is 'merely' another case of the mass killing that punctuates

human history, for the problem of evil – the mystery of undeserved suffering – cannot be faced without the sense of a cosmic meaning subtended by the division of the world into sacred and profane domains.[33]

Consequently, both men have devoted considerable energy to establishing the logical corollary of their implicit faith in the sacredness of the Holocaust, namely, the division of all genocide victims into the same two categories, sacred and profane.[34] Although they profess not to posit a hierarchy of victims or to claim that individual Jewish victims suffered more than non-Jewish ones, the burden of their argument nonetheless is that the Jewish victims of the Holocaust are sacred, and that those of other genocides are not, because only the Jews as a group were singled out for total extermination.[35] For this reason, Bauer dismisses David E. Stannard's claim of an 'American Holocaust' (that is, of the Native Americans) with the telling statement that it 'cannot be seen on *a par* with the Holocaust'.[36]

Indeed, Bauer decries such equivalences as antisemitic. The temptation to 'submerge the specific Jewish tragedy in the general sea of suffering caused by the many atrocities committed by the Nazi regime', he fears, is in fact a 'worldwide phenomenon connected with dangers of anti-Semitism'.[37] Herewith, he acts out the two collective traumas of European Jewry: the suffering caused by more than a millennium of Christian anti-Judaism (including the Holocaust), and the 'second victimization' through the 'unspeakability' of the Holocaust in the immediate post-war years.[38] Now only the memory of the Jewish Holocaust can prevent the flourishing of the antisemitism that led to the catastrophe in the first place: 'A reversion back to "normalcy" regarding Jews requires the destruction of the Holocaust-caused attitude of sympathy'.[39] Understandable as this position is, it leaves Bauer open to the charge of Norman Finkelstein and denialists that he instrumentalizes the Holocaust to gain a moral advantage for Jews.[40]

Certainly, Bauer has made a career not only of policing the compound around the Holocaust, but also of regulating its meaning for Jewish self-understanding:

> all these universalizing attempts [regarding the Holocaust] seem to me to be, on the Jewish side, efforts by their authors to escape their Jewishness. They are expressions of a deep-seated insecurity; these people feel more secure when they can say 'we are just like all the others'. The Holocaust should have proved to them that the Jews were, unfortunately, not like the others. Obviously it did not.[41]

The link between the ongoing maintenance of group identity and the sacredness of the Holocaust could hardly be made more explicitly than in this extraordinary statement.

Even Bauer's elucidation of the universal meaning of the Holocaust denies other victims of Nazi racial policies a place around its holy penumbra. The 'unique situation of Jewry in Western culture', he insists, meant that it alone was the object of fantasies of complete destruction; consequently, the specifically Jewish experience must be raised above all others in order to serve as a general warning for all minority groups, since they too could one day suffer a holocaust.[42] But this reasoning is muddled, because if the Jewish position in Europe was unique then the likelihood of another ethnic minority becoming the object of the same rhetoric of total extermination is more than highly improbable.[43] In fact, the logical conclusion of the argument that the less-than-total, non-Jewish, profane genocides are much more common is that they should be the focus of scholarly attention and public memory.

To be sure, Bauer has developed his position over the years, now characterizing the Holocaust as 'unprecedented' rather than 'unique', and pleading for a 'spectrum' of genocides, with the Holocaust at one end as the most extreme example of extermination. His sincere and generous advocacy on behalf of other victim groups is well known.[44] Yet, this concession to comparison does not alter significantly his consistently held belief since the 1970s that the differences between the Holocaust and other genocides outweigh any similarities, and that the Holocaust is thereby special (or sacred). He appears to confuse two, distinct tasks: on the one hand, reflecting specifically on the burden of history and identity for post-Holocaust Jewry; on the other, explaining generally how and why genocides occur. By collapsing the latter into the former, he ends up at times proffering identity politics in the name of disinterested scholarship.

Both in his and Katz's particular and universal rendering of the Holocaust, then, the centrality of Jewish victims must be foregrounded lest its meaning be traduced. In order to maintain the border between sacred and profane victims of genocide, they have to downplay the similarities between all victims of genocide by referring, somewhat ironically, to Hitler's own faith in the 'redemptive' act of killing all Jews, an unfortunate authority to which to appeal.[45] The point of drawing attention to their strategies, however, is not to dispute the fact that the Holocaust can be distinguished from other genocides in important respects. It is to note in this field of enquiry that group trauma is acted out in truculently held intellectual positions whose articulators are prepared to climb out on very thin limbs to make their cases.

As might be expected, the uniqueness argument is a particular anathema to members of the victim groups it consigns to profane status.[46] Historians from these groups have responded in three ways. First, they question whether there was in fact a Nazi will for total extermination of Jews, thereby desanctifying Jewish victims.[47] Second, they claim that the

Holocaust was a copy of the mass exterminations that had already taken place in the European colonies, thus claiming priority for such genocides. 'In fact, the holocaust of North American tribes was, in a way, even more destructive than that of the Jews', claims Russell Thornton provocatively, 'since many American Indian peoples became extinct'.[48] A third argument substitutes total regularity for absolute uniqueness: 'Queen Elizabeth, King Ferdinand, Queen Victoria, King Louis and so on were the "Adolf Hitler's" [*sic*] of their day', a collective of Canadian authors suppose. '"Auschwitz" was an everyday reality for many people across the world during the years of colonialism and the years that followed.'[49] The indignation stems from the fact that Native American deaths are considered 'unworthy' because they died at the hands of 'our very own [white] forebears', as Stannard notes: that is why there is no Holocaust Memorial for Native Americans or other victims.[50] This is a telling point, for most American public leaders and intellectuals are happy to pontificate about genocide in every country but their own.[51] Because of this taboo, Stannard has to resort to making creative analogies with the Holocaust: if Jews who died as slave labourers or of disease in the camps rather than in the gas chambers were equally victims of the Holocaust, then Native Americans who died in analogous circumstances, that is, from 'natural causes', were similarly victims of the 'American Holocaust'.[52]

Such reasoning is not the innocent product of the ivory tower as the prolific Native American scholar and activist Ward Churchill makes clear with endearing candour when he proclaims the purpose of his scholarship to be 'unequivocally political'. His explicit aim is to invest American Indians with 'every ounce of moral authority we can get. My first purpose is, and always has been, to meet my responsibilities of helping deliver that to which my people is due.'[53] Here are echoes of Bauer's position, and not surprisingly Churchill goes on also to claim uniqueness for the suffering of his group: 'The American holocaust was and remains unparalleled, both in terms of its magnitude and the degree to which its goals were met, and in terms of the extent to which its ferocity was sustained over time by not one but several participating groups.'[54]

That such a claim cannot be dismissed out of hand, as writers like Katz are inclined, has been shown recently by David Moshman in a searching article entitled 'Conceptual constraints on thinking about genocide'. The problem with definitions of genocide so far, he argues, is that they have been based on prototypes: a paradigmatic genocide underlies the normative definition against which all others are measured. Hitherto, the prototype has been the Holocaust, especially in relation to the centrality of state intention. But such a choice is conceptually capricious, he thinks, and there is no reason why another genocide could not be prototypical.

> Suppose, for example, that we construed the European conquest of the Americas as a singular and ultimate set of interrelated genocides. This mega-genocide... has been deliberately aimed at, and has succeeded in eliminating, hundreds of discrete cultures throughout the Americas. Moreover, it has for the most part been a consensus policy, pursued generation after generation by the governments of multiple colonial and emerging nations... The Holocaust, from this perspective, might be dismissed as relatively minor, having targeted only a handful of cultures and having ended after just a few years when the Nazi regime was defeated.[55]

Such a minimization of the Holocaust, Moshman adds, would be 'indefensible', but no less so than the 'routine genocide denials that result from taking the Holocaust as unique and/or prototypical'. The point, then, is to avoid one kind of mass death as prototypical.[56]

Indeed, there are good reasons to regard the indigenous critiques, at least in certain modes, with caution, for they too seek to be prototypical and proffer a metaphysics of their own. Consider Lilian Friedberg's 'Dare to compare' and John C. Mohawk's *Utopian Legacies*. Both authors attribute the colonial and twentieth-century genocides to the essence of the western intellectual tradition, namely, the epistemological hubris according to which all things are knowable and possible, and in the name of whose 'master race' other cultures and peoples can be destroyed.[57] For Friedberg, the universal meaning of the Native American Holocaust is elucidated when it is placed next to the Jewish Holocaust, for only in this way can the incubus of western civilization be laid bare. 'If we are to divert the disaster [of human self-destruction], Mount Rushmore must be placed on a par with burning synagogues, whose fires can never be extinguished.'[58]

Clearly, the problem with Holocaust–indigenous genocide discourse is that it is structured as a zero-sum game. Where Bauer and Katz see equations with the Jewish Holocaust as antisemitic and as the occlusion of its world-historical meaning, Friedberg regards the resistance to precisely such analogies as anti-Native American and the enabling condition for the continuing rape of the world by the western spirit. The discourse is also remarkably static because each side dogmatically asserts the similarities or differences between cases for its own advantage without exploring the conceptual and historical relations between them. What is more, whether the similarities are more significant than the differences is ultimately a political and philosophical, rather than a historical, question and, as we have seen, the answers are driven by passionate, extra-historical considerations. Consequently, creative research questions about the processes that link the genocides of modernity are hindered by the mechanism that prompts each side to stress the specialness (or sacredness) of its respective genocide in the face of contrary assertions.

This game has no winner, unless the dreary spectacle of assertion and counter-assertion can pass for innovative scholarship. It is time for historians in the field to play by other rules, namely, those of the community of scholars dedicated to presenting arguments directed to and for the world at large, rather than primarily to and for an ethnic or political group. It is necessary also for them to dispense with the vocabulary of uniqueness they have all appropriated and abused. Uniqueness is not a useful category for historical research; it is a religious or metaphysical category, and should be left to theologians and philosophers to ponder for their respective reading communities.[59] Where historians employ it, they stand in danger of relinquishing their critical role and assuming that of the prophet or sage who offers perspectives for group solidarity and self-assertion.

Indigenous scholars and their supporters may object that this entreaty sounds like yet another technology of western domination from which they can derive little benefit, because they need to cultivate group solidarity in the face of colonialist dissipation.[60] Yet, abandoning the communicative rationality inherent in the appeal to the putative universal reader risks relinquishing the very weapon with which to unmask exploitation and extermination. Moreover, an overarching moral consensus on the value of alterity is necessary to secure its existence, and this perforce entails appealing to standards of verification to which everyone can assent. To valorize difference implies the universalization of this particular good.[61] But what if most readers view colonial genocide through the lenses of the Holocaust and thereby discount it, as Churchill and others complain? Counter-claiming uniqueness or primacy of indigenous genocides may have raised the profile of the latter, but it can no longer advance the scholarly or political discussion. The categories and critical tools with which historians approach the subject need to be rethought.

NOTES

1 G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (New York: Dover 1956), 26.

2 Zachary Braiterman incorrectly asserts that Leibniz coined the term 'after an earthquake devastated Lisbon in 1755', but Leibniz died in 1716!: Z. Braiterman, *(God) after Auschwitz* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1998), 19.

3 Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the philosophy of history', in W. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books 1969), 256. Michael Löwy, 'Revolution against "progress": Walter Benjamin's romantic anarchism', *New Left Review*, no. 152, July–August 1985.

4 For an analysis of the concept of 'anamnestic solidarity' and its appropriation, see Max Pensky, 'On the use and abuse of memory: Habermas, "anamnestic solidarity", and the *Historikerstreit*', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1989, 351–81.

5 Mark Mazower, 'After Lemkin: genocide, the Holocaust and history', *Jewish Quarterly*, vol. 5, winter 1994, 5–8.

6 For useful surveys of issues surrounding genocide and indigenous peoples today, see Robert T. Hitchcock and Tara M. Twedt, 'Physical and cultural genocide of various indigenous peoples', in Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Israel W. Charny (eds.), *Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (New York and London: Garland Press 1995), 483–514; Katherine Bischoping and Natalie Fingerhut, 'Border lines: indigenous peoples in genocide studies', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 33, no. 4, 1996, 481–506; John H. Bodley, *Victims of Progress* (Menlo Park, CA: Cummings 1975).

7 Ziauddin Sardar, Ashis Nandy and Merryl Wyn Davies, *Barbaric Others: A Manifesto on Western Racism* (London and Boulder, CO: Pluto Press 1993); Donald Bloxham and Tony Kushner, 'Exhibiting racism: cultural imperialism, genocide and representation', *Rethinking History*, vol. 2, no. 3, 1998, 349–58.

8 Scott L. Montgomery, 'What kind of memory? Reflections on images of the Holocaust', *Contention*, vol. 5, no. 1, autumn 1995, 101.

9 Native American scholar and activist Ward Churchill goes so far as to claim that the uniqueness argument is tantamount to the denial of indigenous genocides; indeed, that it is worse, because it dovetails with the exculpatory imperatives of colonial-national governments at the expense of their impotent indigenous minorities, and is purveyed by those with institutional power: *A Little Matter of Genocide* (San Francisco: City Lights Books 1997), 31–6, 50.

10 Bron Taylor, 'Earthen spirituality or cultural genocide? Radical environmentalism's appropriation of native spirituality', *Religion*, vol. 27, 1997, 183–215; Simone M. Caron, 'Birth control and the black community in the 1960s: genocide or power politics?', *Journal of Social History*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1998, 545–69; O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilisation: Germs and Genocide in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 1993); Nancy Scheper-Hughes, 'Small wars and invisible genocides', *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 43, no. 5, 1996, 889–900.

11 Michael Ignatieff, preface, in Simon Norfolk, *For Most of It I Have No Words* (London: Dewi Lewis 1998).

12 Arlene Stein, 'Whose memories? Whose victimhood? Contests for the Holocaust frame in recent social movement discourse', *Sociological Perspective*, vol. 4, no. 3, autumn 1998, 519–41.

13 The relevant arguments have been analysed thoroughly in two recent publications: Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, 'The politics of uniqueness: reflections on the recent polemical turn in Holocaust and genocide scholarship', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1999, 28–61; Alan S. Rosenbaum (ed.), *Is the Holocaust Unique?*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 2001).

14 Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1987), 368ff.

15 Katherine Bischoping and Andrea Kalmin, 'Public opinion about comparisons to the Holocaust', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 4, winter 1999, 485.

16 Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 2001).

17 Adi Ophir, 'On sanctifying the Holocaust: an anti-theological treatise', *Tikkun*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1987, 61–7. Ophir calls it 'a new religion' with its own commandments: 'Thou shalt have no other holocaust'; 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or likeness'; 'Thou shalt not take the name in vain'; and 'Remember the day of the Holocaust to keep it holy, in memory of the destruction of the Jews of Europe'. Cf. Mark Levene, 'Is the Holocaust simply another example of genocide?', *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1994, 6.

18 Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: Houghton Mifflin 1999). For critical discussion, see Harold Kaplan, 'Americanizing the Holocaust', in John K. Roth and Elisabeth Maxwell (eds), *Remembering for the Future*, vol. 1 (London: Palgrave 2001), 309–21; and Berel Lang, 'On Peter Novick's *The Holocaust in American Life*', *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2001, 149–58.

19 For a plea that the Holocaust not become 'the crucible of [Jewish] culture', see David G. Roskies, *Against the Apocalypse: Responses to Catastrophe in Modern Jewish Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1984), 9. See also Michael André Bernstein, *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1994), 10, 13.

20 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press 1915), 52–4, 142, 240, 464.

21 Ibid., 140, 150ff.

22 Witness the bitter protest of survivors against the New York exhibition, 'Mirroring evil: Nazi imagery/recent art', which opened on 17 March 2002. See Walter Reich, 'Appropriating the Holocaust', *New York Times*, 15 March 2002, A23.

23 Durkheim, 434ff.

24 LaCapra, 22–3.

25 Space does not permit considering the differences between Jewish identity in different countries.

26 Yehuda Bauer, 'A past that will not go away', in Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (eds), *The Holocaust and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1998), 20. To be sure, Bauer maintains, against theologians, that the Holocaust is 'meaningless', but it nonetheless remains for him a sacred event in the Durkheimian sense.

27 George Steiner, 'The long life of metaphor: an approach to "the Shoah"', *Encounter*, February 1987, 57.

28 Elie Wiesel, 'Now we know', in Richard Arens (ed.), *Genocide in Paraguay* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press 1976), 165. To be sure, in the Paraguayan genocide of the Aches, Wiesel recognizes the analogy: 'it is indeed a matter of a Final Solution: It simply aims at exterminating this tribe' (166).

29 Quoted in Robert G. L. Waite, 'The Holocaust and historical explanation', in Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski (eds), *Genocide and the Modern Age* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1987), 169. Cf. Zev Garber and Bruce Zuckerman, 'Why do we call the Holocaust "the Holocaust"?', *Modern Judaism*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1989, 197–211.

30 Yehuda Bauer, 'We are condemned to remember', *Jerusalem Post*, 19 April 2001. Bauer assumes the posture of the analyst.

31 Steven T. Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues* (New York and London: New York University Press 1983), 142f. See also the chapter 'The "unique" intentionality of the Holocaust', 287–318. Cf. Yehuda Bauer, who makes the same point in 'The place of the Holocaust in contemporary history', *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 1, 1984, 224.

32 Durkheim, 427–33, 462–79. Conversely, Jews that do not put the Holocaust at the centre of Jewish identity presumably do not have to insist on its uniqueness.

33 This point is elaborated in A. Dirk Moses, 'Structure and agency in the Holocaust: Daniel J. Goldhagen and his critics', *History and Theory*, vol. 37, no. 2, 1998, 194–219. See also Braiterman.

34 This observation is John M. Cuddihy's in 'The Holocaust: the latent issue in the uniqueness debate', in Philip F. Gallagher (ed.), *Christians, Jews and Other Worlds* (London and New York: University Press of America 1988), 62–79.

35 Steven T. Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Context*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press 1994). See also Steven T. Katz, 'The Holocaust: a very particular racism', in Berenbaum and Peck (eds.), 56–63, in which Katz takes pains to distinguish between the eugenic world-view that underlay Nazi policies towards all supposed racially inferior people from anti-Jewish racism.

36 Yehuda Bauer, 'Comparison of genocides', in Levon Chorbajian and George Shirinian (eds), *Studies in Contemporary Genocide* (New York: St Martin's Press 1999), 33, emphasis added.

37 Yehuda Bauer, 'Whose Holocaust?', in Jack Nusan Porter (ed.), *Genocide and Human Rights: A Global Anthology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America 1982), 35, 38, reprinted from *Midstream*, vol. 26, no. 9, November 1980.

38 Jean-Michel Chaumont, *Die Konkurrenz der Opfer: Genozid, Identität und Aerkennung*, trans. Thomas Laugstein (Lüneburg: Dietrich zu Klampen Verlag 2001). See also Gerd Korman, 'The Holocaust in American historical writing', *Societas*, vol. 2, no. 3, 1972, 251–70.

39 Bauer, 'Whose Holocaust?', 44.

40 Norman Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry* (London and New York: Verso 1999).

41 Bauer, 'A past that will not go away', 17.

42 Ibid., 43; Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York: Franklin Watts 1982), 332.

43 See Dan Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust: Genocide and History* (London: Vallentine Mitchell). Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), ch. 3: 'Comparisons with other genocides'; and Yehuda Bauer, 'Plenary address', in Roth and Maxwell (eds), 21–4.

44 Bauer is an active member of the Elmau Initiative: An International Taskforce to Prevent Genocide.

45 Cuddihy, 72.

46 It is also the object of attack by Jewish scholars. Ismar Schorsch warns that the insistence of uniqueness 'impedes genuine dialogue, because it introduces an extraneous, contentious issue that alienates political allies from among other victims of organized human depravity': 'The Holocaust and Jewish

survival', *Midstream*, vol. 17, no. 1, January 1981, 39. Steven T. Katz attempts a refutation in his *The Holocaust in Historical Context*, 39–42; David Biale critically reviews Katz and attacks the uniqueness thesis in *Tikkun*, vol. 10, no. 1, January–February 1995, 79–82. See also the differentiated discussion by Irving L. Horowitz, 'Genocide and the reconstruction of social theory', in Wallimann and Dobkowski (eds), 61–80.

47 Ian Hancock, 'Uniqueness as denial: the politics of genocide scholarship', in Rosenbaum (ed.), 163–208. Hancock is greatly irritated by Bauer's contention that Gypsies represented only a 'minor irritant' for the Nazis.

48 Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press 1987), xvi; M. Annette Jaimes, 'Sand Creek: the morning after', in M. Annette Jaimes (ed.), *The State of Native America* (Boston: South End Press 1992), 1–12; Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*; David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 1992), 255.

49 Antoon A. Leenaars *et al.*, 'Genocide and suicide among indigenous people: the North meets the South', *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1999, 338.

50 David E. Stannard, 'Preface', in Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*, xviii. Here Stannard is influenced by the thesis of Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky that the West divides victims of genocide and government oppression into two categories, worthy and unworthy, depending on its foreign policy agenda. See their *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon Books 1988), 37.

51 Symptomatic of this taboo is Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books 2002). She is scathing of the United States as an impotent bystander to genocides abroad, but does not consider the possibility that her country might be a co-perpetrator or that it was founded on genocide.

52 Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 255. By contrast, Gavriel Rosenfeld thinks that the uniqueness thesis is a defensive response to attempts by writers like Stannard to equate all genocides (Rosenfeld). There is insufficient space here to address this issue.

53 Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*, 11.

54 Ibid., 4.

55 David Moshman, 'Conceptual constraints on thinking about genocide', *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2001, 436.

56 Ibid.

57 Lilian Friedberg, 'Dare to compare: Americanizing the Holocaust', *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2000, 353–80; John C. Mohawk, *Utopian Legacies: A History of Conquest and Oppression in the Western World* (Santa Fe, NM: Clear Lights Publishers 2000).

58 Friedberg, 373.

59 Philosophical reflections include: Raimond Gaita, *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love, Truth and Justice* (London: Routledge 2000); Avishai Margalit and Gabriel Motzkin, 'The uniqueness of the Holocaust', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1996, 65–83. There is insufficient space

here to consider Steven T. Katz's claims to have access to a 'phenomenological' reality in which the Holocaust is unique: *The Holocaust in Historical Context*, 51–64. Surprising is the little space he devotes to justify posing the question in the first place.

60 In the place of numerous references: Hayden White, *The Content of the Form* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1987), 80ff.; and Jan Kociumbas, 'Introduction', in Jan Kociumbas (ed.), *Maps, Dreams, History: Race and Representation in Australian History* (Sydney: Department of History, University of Sydney 1998).

61 Thomas McCarthy, 'Doing the right thing in cross-cultural representation', *Ethics*, no. 3, 1992, 644. McCarthy calls the resulting ethic 'multicultural universalism'.