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Christian Gudehus, Douglas Irvin-Erickson and Melanie O'Brien

Editor's Introductionxx

Articles

Greta Uehling

Genocide's Aftermath: Neostalinism in Contemporary Crimea3

Stephen Blank

A Double Dispossession: The Crimean Tatars After Russia's Ukrainian War18

Karina Korostelina

Crimean Tatars From Mass Deportation to Hardships in Occupied Crimea33

Kelly Maddox

"Liberat[ing] Mankind from such an Odious Scourge": The Genocide Convention and the Continued Failure to Prevent or Halt Genocide in the Twenty-First Century.....48

Paul Morrow

The Thesis of Norm Transformation in the Theory of Mass Atrocity66

Rhiannon S. Neilsen

"Toxification" as a More Precise Early Warning Sign for Genocide Than Dehumanization? An Emerging Research Agenda.....83

Anthonie Holslag

The Process of Othering from the "Social Imaginaire" to Physical Acts: An Anthropological Approach.....96

Book Reviews

The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine

edited by Bohdan Klid and Alexander J. Motyl, reviewed by Laura C. Collins114

Violence: The Enduring Problem

by Alex Alvarez and Ronet Bachmann, reviewed by Christian Gudehus..... 116

Warning Signs of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective

by E. N. Anderson and Barbara A. Anderson, reviewed by Christopher Powell ... 119

Film Reviews

Pawel Pawlikowski, *Ida*,

reviewed by Jack Palmer..... 122

Ross Kauffman and Katy Chevigny, *E-Team*,

reviewed by Rafiki Ubaldo 125

Editor's Introduction

Even though issue 9.1 is not a special issue, the first three papers have a thematic focus. The anthropologist Greta Uehling, the political scientist Stephen Blank, and the social psychologist Karina Korostelina employ different disciplinary perspectives to analyze the historic and ongoing violence against the Crimean Tatars in the Soviet Union and today's Russia.

Between the 1930s and 1950s, the Soviet government under Joseph Stalin's direction forcibly removed entire national groups from strategic areas of the Soviet Union.¹ These groups included the Balkars, Chechens, Crimean Tatars, Finns, Georgian Kurds, Germans, Ingush, Kalmyks, Karachays, Khemshils, Koreans, Meshketian Turks, Poles, Pontic Greeks, and many others. More than two million people from these groups were deported from their traditional homelands and forced to resettle in other parts of the Soviet Union under the pretext that they were inherently treasonous. Hundreds of thousands died along the way, and thousands more died in exile of hunger, disease, and exhaustion. The forced deportations of these national groups accompanied state-initiated attempts to starve to death other national groups, from Ukraine to Kazakhstan; state dekulakization policies intended to liquidate the imagined class enemies of prosperous and exploitative peasants; Stalin's notorious political purges; and the extrajudicial execution of over one million citizens.²

Uehling, Blank, and Korostelina take up the case of the Crimean Tatars, who were deported from Crimea in May 1944, one month after the German army retreated. Within two days—without knowing where they were going nor why—nearly 200,000 people were loaded into cattle cars and transported to Uzbekistan, the Volga basin, and Siberia. In June, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians were also accused by the Soviet government in Moscow of collaborating with the German occupation during the Second World War, and were forcibly removed from Crimea too. Historians have estimated that forty percent of the Crimean Tatars who were deported died during the forced evacuations, or died in exile within twelve months. For the next two decades, the Crimean Tatars were given special settler legal status—which prohibited them from returning to Crimean lands.³

The canon of genocide studies has not widely considered Soviet genocides. Indeed, until recently, even the most deadly cases of Soviet horrors, such as the Ukrainian and Kazak state orchestrated famines, easily could have been termed forgotten genocides. Crimean Tatar political activists, however, first began using the term "genocide" in the 1970s to describe their treatment at the hands of the Soviet state, to qualify their suffering as an international crime, and to lend credibility to their international human rights campaign.⁴ Outside this community of Crimean Tatar activists and the international Tatar diaspora, the case of the Crimean Tatars was not widely considered a genocide. For this and many other reasons, the plight of the Crimean Tatars has been under-studied in our field, and beyond.

In 2014, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea called attention to the importance of studying this historical case. As Uehling, Blank, and Korostelina each argue, the unsettled legacy of Soviet-era genocides against the Crimean Tatars has had lasting consequences that shape the present situation the Crimean Tatars face in Russian Crimea. Together, the articles make clear that the social and political implications of how this history of genocide is remembered in Crimea, Ukraine, and Russia—and the complicated and contested relationship between the past and the present—is necessary for understating the social, cultural, and political dynamics of the current repression faced by Crimean Tatars in the wake of the Russian annexation of Crimea.

The following four papers in this issue illustrate perfectly the wide range of disciplines and topics the research on genocide comprises. However, all of them cover topics that are central for every serious attempt of preventing extreme collective violence. As different as they might appear on the first view, three of these articles offer different perspectives on a very similar topic. Namely, how a social and psychological environment is created that leads to or enables the killing, robbing, and raping of defined groups. Paul Morrow, a political scientist, adds to the literature on norm transformation, which is being discussed as a crucial factor of all genocidal processes. Morrow

sees social norms as not only highly relevant for individual and collective action, but argues that norm changes should be taken into account when assessing legal and moral accountability within the context of mass violence. Rhiannon Neilson, an expert on international relations and peace and conflict studies, introduces the concept of "toxification" as a crucial aspect for the escalation towards genocidal violence. This discursive branding of the victims to be seen not only as enemies or non-human(s), but an imminent danger for each individual and the national group as a whole, is presented as a more precise warning sign for such violence than the often used concept of dehumanization. The anthropologist Anthonie Holslag explores the explanatory usefulness of the social anthropological concepts of selfing and othering in regard to collective violent behavior. This issue concludes with a paper by Kelly Maddox on the UN Genocide Convention and the failure to prevent genocide. The historian is concerned with the political bodies and mechanisms that should help to stop extreme collective violence but, so her depressing conclusion finds, has failed to do so.

It seems worth mentioning that the concept of genocide used in many of the papers in this issue focuses not so much on the physical destruction of a people, but rather on the violent transformation of societies as a whole by collective and organized action. Or, in the words of Daniel Feierstein, the authors have chosen not to define genocide as a single event, but as a social practice.⁵

Christian Gudehus
Douglas Irvin-Erickson
Melanie O'Brien

Endnotes

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- 2 Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
- 3 For further study, see: Nikolai Bugai, *The Deportations of Crimean Peoples: Documents, Facts, Commentaries* (Moscow: INSAN, 2002); Aurélie Campana, "The Soviet Massive Deportations: A Chronology," *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, [online], published on 5 November 2007, accessed 8 May 2015, URL: <http://www.massviolence.org/The-Soviet-massive-deportations-A-chronology>, ISSN 1961-9898; Jean-Jacques Marie, *Les Peuples Déportés d'Union Soviétiques* (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1995); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *The Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998): 813–861; Aleksandr Nekrich, *The Punished Peoples. The Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War* (New York: Norton & Company, 1978); J. Otto Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing in the USSR, 1937-1949* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999); Pavel Polian, *Against Their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003); Roman Serbyn, "Lemkin on Genocide of Nations," *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 7, 1 (2009): 123–130; Roman Serbyn, "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 as Genocide in the Light of the UN Convention of 1948," *The Ukrainian Quarterly* 62, 2 (2006): 181–194.
- 4 Reza Baraheni, Pavel Litvinov, and Martin Sostre, "Free Mustafa Dzhemilev," *The New York Review of Books*, July 15, 1975. Available from <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1976/jul/15/free-mustafa-dzhemilev/>.
- 5 Daniel Feierstein, *Genocide as a Social Practice: Reorganizing Society Under the Nazis and Argentina's Military Juntas*, trans. Douglas Andrew Town (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014).

Genocide's Aftermath: Neostalinism in Contemporary Crimea

Greta Uehling

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Abstract: *The Crimean Tatars' genocide is one of the clearest, and yet least studied of twentieth-century genocides. This article explores that genocide's aftermath, beginning with the Crimean Tatars' attempts to reinscribe their presence in their historic homeland following the 1944 deportation. The ongoing contestations over the past are examined here as a historical habitus informing attitudes and behavior in the present. Drawing on unparalleled interview data with the Russian-speaking population in Crimea, I explore the durability and ontological resonance of constructions of Tatars as traitors both past and present. Ethnographic insight into the local understandings that feed exclusion, discrimination, and hatred enhance our understanding of genocide as a social process. Given the lack of either guilt or shame regarding the 1944 deportation, I suggest that Crimea currently lacks the cognitive and affective foundation to create a more inclusive future.*

Keywords: *Genocide, Stalin, Crimea, Crimean Tatars, ethnic cleansing, commemoration, deportation, ontological resonance*

The Crimean Tatars' genocide is one of the clearest, and yet least studied twentieth-century genocides. The definition used here is an inclusive one, best summarized by Alexander Hinton as "the more or less coordinated attempt to destroy a dehumanized and excluded group of people because of who they are."¹ The death toll as a result of the 1944 deportation was catastrophic: 46 percent of the population is believed to have perished at that time.² In addition to this physical destruction, efforts were made to cleanse all traces of them from the Crimean landscape, and to ensure the assimilation of survivors in places of exile. Analyzing these and subsequent events within the framework of critical genocide studies reveals the treatment of the indigenous Crimean Tatars as an ongoing social practice and technology of power on the part of first the Russian and then the Soviet regimes.³

The systematic erasure of the Crimean Tatars was holistic in nature. Crimean Tatar place names were changed to Soviet ones; mosques were turned into movie theatres (or worse); homes, livestock and gardens were given away; and mention of Crimean Tatars was deleted or abbreviated in reference works. Crimean Tatars were not allowed to reside in, or speak of, their homeland. It wasn't even possible to preserve a Crimean Tatar identity in personal documents. In Central Asia, before efforts to assimilate the survivors were underway, Crimean Tatars lived in a Special Settlement regime in which tens of thousands died of malnutrition, dehydration, and disease. They were also demonized. To give but one example, Crimean Tatars describe how children's heads were checked for horns by their Central Asian school teachers.

This article unfolds in several steps. Considering that one component or aftermath of genocide is the attempt to erase the group from official history, I explore sites of memory, especially public commemoration. Although the ability of Crimean Tatars to commemorate their past as part of independent Ukraine at first suggests resilience, their efforts to reinscribe their presence on the peninsula and regain their rights have been met with opposition and resistance. Public commemorations interest me because they are one way in which competing interpretations of history become audible or legible and are then contested. Two insurrections of subjugated knowledge as part of independent Ukraine, billboards and a film, demonstrate these contestations. That the Crimean population, for the most part, does not recognize the treatment of the Crimean Tatars as genocide at all calls for deeper analysis. In the next part of the paper, I explore the thoughts and emotions behind the antipathy that continues to be directed at this indigenous people. Ethnographic insight into the local understandings that feed exclusion, discrimination, and hatred will enhance our understanding of genocide as a social process. My approach extends the work of other scholars of genocide by suggesting there is a historical habitus, or ingrained

way of interpreting and embodying the past. These interpretations are fortified by what Hinton has called the ontological resonance of genocide. In Crimea, this ontological resonance manifests in categorical distinctions of Crimean Tatars as dangerous Others. Finally, I show how the post-annexation treatment of the Crimean Tatars by local and Russian Federation authorities shows an effort to restructure relations among the living yet again, in part by circumscribing interpretations of the past. Taken together, this exploration leads me ask whether we are witnessing what scholars of genocide would call an extended aftermath, or priming for a new round.

Methods

This article is based on long-term fieldwork conducted in Crimea in 1995, 1997-98, 2001, 2004, and 2011, when I lived and worked among the indigenous Crimean Tatar population. During the 1997-98 fieldwork, I lived in both Central Asia, where the majority of Crimean Tatars remaining in diaspora and their descendants reside, and in Crimea. The ethnography published in 2004 did not delve deeply into the views of Russians in Crimea. This article begins to fill that gap. I returned in 2013 and, struck by signs of neo-Stalinism, collected the data presented here.

The ethnographic fieldwork carried out in May and June 2013 sought to better understand how and why *Tatarophobia*, or xenophobia had become so prevalent on the peninsula. During the fieldwork, I gathered several kinds of data, interpolated here. First, unstructured interviews with political and cultural leaders, school teachers and principals, newspaper editors, journalists, and civil society monitors enabled me to begin tracking the ground level processes through which shared interpretations were being formed. Second, taped, semi-structured interviews conducted with a stratified sample of sympathizers with the Russian Federation⁴ (ethnic Russians and mixed Russian and Ukrainians) using visual images of Stalin to elicit responses provided another layer of information. These data are not intended to be representative: my objective is rather to reveal some of the deeper layers informing the abysmal treatment of the Tatars that are obscured in other accounts. I used visual prompts because as Plamper has shown, reverence for Stalin was “overwhelmingly a visual phenomenon, tailored to a population whose mental universe was shaped primarily by images as opposed to written words.”⁵ The deep psychological and spiritual importance of images of the so-called father of peoples is clear considering that Stalin portraits were often hung in the corner of the home that had previously been reserved for icons.

In 2013, I also drew on a third source of information: participation in a number of commemorative activities related to the Day of Mourning. The interviews and participant observation in Crimea upon which the core of my argument is built are supplemented by ongoing communication with consultants in the region, as well as close attention to Crimean Tatars’ news reporting available on the Internet today.

Aftermaths: Independent Ukraine

Any country emerging from a totalitarian, genocidal, or war-torn past must confront questions about how to frame and incorporate that past while designing a better future. As Nanci Adler has argued, “The process of fashioning a good future out of a ‘bad past’ is tricky and may require the creation of a ‘usable past’ for the national narrative.”⁶ The field of reconciliation studies suggests there are multiple layers and approaches here, including acknowledgement, apology, truth, justice, and reparations.⁷ And yet, post-Soviet Russia only made limited efforts to confront its Stalinist past, seeming to prefer to suppress memories of repression.⁸ As a result, surviving victims of Stalinism have been insufficiently acknowledged. Adler sees the prevalence of the state-sponsored narrative over the victims’ counter-histories as part of a larger failure to create adequate transitional justice mechanisms and move toward full-fledged civil society. From her perspective, Russia has not yet created a space for what she calls “engaging dialogues,” that could lead to inclusive history.⁹

Within a framework of critical genocide studies, we can go farther. Not only has their been insufficient acknowledgement, but the Crimean Tatar genocide is treated first by Soviet and now Russian Federation authorities as something the Crimean Tatars brought upon themselves. Locals allege the Crimean Tatars’ punishment was justified, even though there is no morally or ethically sound justification for the treatment they received. In part, this is a result of diametrically opposed interpretations of history. Russians and those of mixed Russian and Ukrainian heritage who are

pro-Russia tend to deploy an idiom that legitimizes their presence by referencing the fact that Crimea was a part of Russia from 1783 until 1954, and reiterate the charges of treason during the Nazi occupation of Crimea. The Crimean Tatars counter this by pointing to what the charges elide, which is that members of all ethnic groups contributed to the Nazi occupation, and that these are not the people who were punished by the 1944 deportation, which carried away innocents. That Crimean Tatars soldiers fought (and gave their lives) on the Soviet front and were demobilized into exile is of course a moral outrage. They also emphasize their autochthonous origins on the peninsula, long before Ekaterina II annexed the peninsula. Thus it is important to recognize the extent to which different ethnic groups—and here I will focus on the pro-Russian contingent and Crimean Tatars—have competing idioms for relating to, and when necessary justifying their presence on, the peninsula they share.¹⁰ While their idioms overlap on concern with the meaning of homeland, patriotism, and treason, they have very different reference points.

It is worthwhile to contrast the situation in the Russian Federation with post-genocidal settings where transitional justice mechanisms, however imperfect or limited, have been established. For example, Molly Andrews has argued the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission created a national narrative and ultimately a common framework for the whole country to understand the past.¹¹ She suggests that (again, in spite of many shortcomings) the South-African commission managed to forge a dialogue between official and personal narratives, and to formulate an inclusive history. A rich line of research into the reconciliation process explores the nuances of this process in a variety of countries.¹²

As a part of Ukraine, Crimea occupied a volatile and yet fertile position between these two variants. An insurrection of previously subjugated knowledges led, while the Autonomous Republic of Crimea was part of Ukraine, to writing the 1944 deportation back into history books, putting the minarets back on the mosques, and erecting multiple public monuments to commemorate Crimean Tatar military heroes and cultural leaders. While the process was far from complete, and characterized by failures and frustrations, it is important to recognize the extent to which Crimean Tatars were able to reinstate their rightful presence on the peninsula, and reinscribe their history on the landscape they hold sacred.

Even as they became legible on the Crimean peninsula, however, it became a landscape of hatred and distrust as monuments and memorials were marked with swastikas or other xenophobic graffiti, and groups clashed over such matters as placing a market on a Crimean Tatar sacred site. As part of Ukraine, hostility against Crimean Tatars included attacks and pogroms against Crimean Tatar settlements and property in 2004. An attack on a Crimean Tatar settlement backed by special Ukrainian *Berkut* riot police in January and November, 2007; the attack and beating of Crimean Tatars on the *Ay-Petri* plateau in November 2007; and vandalism of Crimean Tatar cemeteries and memorials in Zaprudne, Zuya. Saq, Bagcasaray, Nyznohirskiyi and many other locales. The Foundation for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples that tracks these activities concluded vandalism is more the rule than the exception.¹³

How to understand these contestations? Within the framework of critical genocide studies, a Foucauldian genealogy with its concepts of counter-memory and counter-history helps to decipher the struggle over commemoration and competing visions of the past.¹⁴ This approach is relevant because as part of Ukraine, cross currents of power and resistance appeared to be reshaping the field of commemoration and expanding the space for remembering different, sometimes painful aspects of the past. By way of background, counter-histories try to undo the silences imposed by official histories, and to undermine the unity and continuity that dominant histories produce. The ability to identify omissions and to fill discursive gaps previously imposed by authorities is an important component of exercising agency and resisting both hegemonic power/knowledge frameworks and, at a more concrete level, sociopolitical subjugation.

My 2004 ethnography detailed how activists in the Crimean Tatar national movement such as Mustafa Cemilev, Reshat Cemilev, Aishe Seitmuratov, Rustem Khalilov, Izzet Khairov and many others, clearly articulated a counter-narrative explicating how the 1944 deportation violated the laws and principles of the Soviet regime, and subjected the Crimean Tatar people to decimation. They also make clear that by the time of the deportation, the Crimean Tatar people had survived not just the initial colonization, but confiscation of their property, state-induced famine, purges of clergy and

intellectuals, and Nazi occupation.¹⁵ In a personal interview, this was aptly summarized by Mustafa Cemilev as being caught between to hegemony, neither of whom promised any protection or relief.¹⁶

What I am concerned with presently is less the historical scholarship and activism facilitating the Crimean Tatars mass return in the 1990s, than the public spaces where ordinary Crimean Tatars, Ukrainians and Russians are now interlocutors. These sites demonstrate that there is no single aftermath of genocide: it becomes a plural noun. Pro-Russian and pro-Crimean Tatar versions of the past are diametrically opposed. The differing perspectives on the past led, unquestionably, to different perspectives on the future. We now see each group has very different access to rights and resources on the peninsula as a legacy of the deportation.

The Contested Past

In spite of attempts to erase and assimilate them, the Crimean Tatars survived their exile, launched a powerful national movement, and mobilized sufficient personal and political resources to repatriate.¹⁷ Since they began returning, Crimean Tatars have struggled to reverse the effects of the literal and discursive cleansing.¹⁸ Examples show the slow movement of a previously marginalized Crimean Tatar past into the Crimean imagined community.

One example is the commemoration of the 1944 deportation, referred to in Crimea as a “день память и скорби” or day of memory and mourning. In a move that would certainly have been quashed 20 years ago, some twelve billboards calling participants to observe the occasion were positioned across Crimea. One billboard calling for observance of the day showed an image of several intersecting lines of barbed wire and a message about the 69th commemoration, bringing knowledge that was previously disqualified and excluded into the public space. Another billboard brings home the point even more clearly.



Figure 1. Billboard of Iminov painting calling for commemoration. Source: Author's photograph.

Rustem Iminov's painting of a crowded train car, once concealed in his private studio on a quiet street in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, was suddenly enlarged many times and thrust into the visual field of all drivers in Crimea, whether Russian, Ukrainian, or Crimean Tatar. The billboard makes visible how women, children, and the elderly were carried away in cattle cars, not to mention the soldiers' unfortunate demobilization. Thanks to the artist's willingness for others to use this image, it has become iconic of the Crimean Tatars' deportation. I turn to the billboards because they are one way that the Crimean Tatars can speak to other residents of Crimea with whom they might not otherwise exchange views.¹⁹

I first met Iminov and saw the painting in 1998, when he was living in Central Asia. I learned that whereas Iminov's father, also a painter, was forced to communicate his ideas cryptically in symbolic codes, Iminov succeeded in putting his mother's individual memories of deportation in public, pictorial form.²⁰ The trajectory of this painting from a private Tashkent studio to a Simferopol billboard indexes the Crimean Tatars' own journey from silenced and exiled, to repatriated citizens of independent Ukraine. The billboards constitute an intervention into the hegemonic conception of the past that failed to register the Crimean Tatars during their absence.

A second example of the insurrection of previously subjugated knowledge, and one that generated a great deal more epistemic friction²¹ is provided by the 2013 release of a feature film about the 1944 deportation, *Haytarma*.



Figure 2. Promotional flyer for the film *Haytarma*. Source: The image is taken from the jacket of the CD, and was the flyer for the showing of the film as well.

The film is structured around the life of the half Crimean Tatar fighter pilot, Amet-Han Sultan. The film follows the protagonist through his service when he was stationed in Crimea. The major turn in the plot comes when Amet-Han Sultan is given leave to see his family on the eve of the deportation. He and two friends find themselves in Amet-Han's native village on the night of the mass deportation. We then experience a filmic representation of that terrible night.

The film has been criticized on the grounds that it uses the language and iconography of the colonizers to communicate its message.²² Admittedly, we see a colonized people taking on, and quite literally acting in, the uniform of the oppressor. While this reading of the film is valid on formal grounds, a more nuanced reading is possible if we listen to the conversations about the film among Crimean Tatars. Recalling that Crimean Tatars were banned from speaking of Crimea in exile, and that no images of the actual deportation are known to exist, the film elevated previously silenced and submerged memories of war and deportation. While perhaps not a counter-history in the sense of a full-fledged denunciation of the Soviet regime, the film does critique the Soviet's 1944 deportation. By portraying Amet-Han's bravery and patriotism fighting on the Soviet side, the film also attempts to deconstruct the racist categorization of Crimean Tatars as solely collaborators with the German occupiers, and shows ethnically-integrated villages. Like the billboards, the film fills a visual lacuna.

For younger Crimean Tatars, parents' and grandparents' stories were finally in a visual format. Crimean Tatars who acted in the film describe participation as an intense, even cathartic experience. At the premier I attended, the film was followed by stunned silence and muffled sobbing. The film also received many standing ovations by audiences in Crimea and Kyiv. It is fair to say the film punctured the silenced history of deportation and brought Crimean Tatar patriotism into public view. If respondents in my fieldwork were correct in their assessment, a page that had been left blank, and that had long complicated the mourning process, was now filled, helping to resolve some emotions about the event.

The film's release generated a great deal of epistemic friction concerning how to most accurately portray the Crimean past. The controversy began when the Consul General for the Russian Federation in Crimea, Vladimir Andreev, admonished the Russian generals trained by Amet-Han Sultan not to attend the Premier. Six of the eight surviving generals took his advice.²³

Mr. Andreev clarified his position publically on Crimean television. Resurrecting a trope from the Second World War (referred to as Great Patriotic War in Crimea), Andreev stated that Russia should not be represented at the premier of a film that falsifies the truth of this war. His primary argument was that the film did not grapple with the ostensibly salient theme of collaboration on the part of Crimean Tatars with the fascist occupiers. Public discourses like these are a primary way that ideologies and cultural stances are not just created, but maintained. Andreev's remark seems designed to create cultural continuity at a moment when it was threatened by change in post-Soviet Ukraine. By resurrecting the old categorizations of Crimean Tatars as somehow disloyal to the homeland, Andreev re-polarized the field of commemoration in a move seemingly intended to inscribe the Soviet-era social hierarchy.

Based on the reaction in the family I was living with at the time, Andreev's comments left the Crimean Tatars feeling angry and emotionally bruised. One of my hosts stood and paced, another turned red in the face, and all three raised their voices to talk back to the TV. Andreev's remarks also set off a series of demonstrations that were publicized on the nightly news. Holding Andreev's portrait flanked by pictures of Beria and Stalin, Crimean Tatars countered the slur by pointing out the symbolic isomorphism between the present Consul General and past Soviet leaders. There were also a series of verbal duels that ricocheted through social media like Facebook.

While the Crimean Tatar contribution in the Second World War remains hotly contested in Crimea, Andreev's intolerance was not accepted, even by authorities. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry immediately requested Russian Federation authorities to evaluate the statements. In an address before the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, then Vice President of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis Refat Chubarov demanded the Russian Federation deplore the intolerant statement. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation did indeed acknowledge the statement was inappropriate, and Andreev resigned. As we can see from the conflict over Andreev's remarks, references to collaboration with the Nazi forces are particularly toxic in Crimea where, even though all the ethnic groups collaborated, Crimean Tatars have been consistently singled out as responsible. Ukraine rose, however feebly, in the Crimean Tatar defense.

While a great deal of the contemporary friction is generated by the issue of Second World War collaboration, the roots of mistrust lie deeper in the colonial past. The Russian Empire saw Crimean Tatars as uncivilized, inferior to Russians, and potentially disloyal. This references events during the Crimean War. Raids on Muscovy in the Middle Ages are also often cited today.²⁴ In light of these analyses, Tatarophobia has less to do with the Second World War than the Crimean Tatars' long term positioning on the peninsula. Views of the peninsula's past have remained in separate, diametrically opposed, silos. While ethnic Russians see themselves as the original inhabitants of Crimea, and argue the Crimean khanate had a weak economy and was only a vassal of the Ottoman Empire, Crimean Tatars assert that the Crimean khanate was a highly civilized state in which all faiths were accepted, ethnic groups flourished, and the economy thrived. Both are of course simplified interpretations. What is more destructive is the view (whether embraced by ethnically Russian or ethnically mixed individuals) that Russian culture is superior, supranational, and provides a consolidating function. There is also an essentialism that Crimean Tatars are inherently hostile and cruel, another justification for their removal from Crimea. From a broader perspective, then, the Crimean Tatars were prefigured for *predatel'stvo* or treason.

Neostalinism

To reestablish the Crimean Tatar presence on the peninsula would require restructuring the worlds of meaning in which Crimean Tatars are cast as traitors or villains. Efforts during the Ukrainian period marking the anniversary of the 1944 deportation, erecting monuments to the Crimean Tatar past, and writing the 1944 deportation back into history, re-politicized space and time.²⁵ As if obeying Newton's Third Law, for every Crimean Tatar action there was an equal and opposite reaction. A paradigmatic example is the counter-movement revalorizing Stalin in Crimea. In 2012, an organization named *Essence of Time* held an exhibition commemorating the 133rd anniversary of Stalin's birth. They combined about 150 images with laudatory comments about Stalin. These were presented on large placards in the center of the capitol city where descendants of the victims of genocide would be sure to look on. The Crimean Tatar executive body, the *Mejlis*, spoke out during

the planning stage, pointing out such an exhibit would be profoundly disrespectful to victims of Stalin. The exhibit took place nonetheless.



Figure 3. Stalin lauded in capitol of Crimea, 2013. Source: Информационное агентство «е-Крым» <http://www.e-crimea.info>

On the opening day, the Head of the International Relations department of the *Mejlis* went to the exhibit with the head of the Secretariat of the Crimean Parliament.²⁶ They called on the organizers to take down the images, pointing out that Stalin was found guilty of the death of millions of people, and had personally ordered the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, a criminal act. When the organizers refused to remove the exhibit, the offended visitors dismantled the stands themselves.

Several dozen law enforcement officers present at the rally did not intervene. The authorities' non-response, effectively allowing residents of Crimea to battle for commemorative space themselves, reveals official ambivalence, or perhaps uncertainty about how to effectively moderate competing claims. As one respondent put it, "the Mayor who allowed it knew it was against the law, but in the depths of their souls, they don't want to see us here, they hate us. They know they have taken other peoples' places."²⁷ The exhibit took place in a time and place when Stalin enjoyed fabulous public ratings. Levada Center polls showed that among other things, people credited victory in the Second World War to Stalin himself, and felt that the importance of the victory far outweighed any mistakes that were made.²⁸ Another survey suggested that respondents saw Stalin as one of the "most eminent figures of all time."²⁹

How could Stalin enjoy such a long political life? Considering there was not one but two intensive efforts de-Stalinize the Soviet Union and facilitate political liberalization, this at first seems remarkable. The first attempt was after the 20th Party speech by Nikita Krushchev, which broke a silence about Stalin's repressive regime and called for the removal of Stalin from public spaces. The second effort was part of President Gorbachev's reforms. Gorbachev recognized the need for the Soviet government to give consistent financial and moral support to people who could speak openly. Gorbachev's de-Stalinization in the 1980s faced many of the same problems that Krushchev's had in the 1960s.³⁰ Polly Jones suggests the enduring criticisms are that de-Stalinization is a form of "de-heroization," "falsification," and "ideological deviation."³¹ The psychology that keeps Stalin alive aligns with the work of Freud, Derrida, and Gilroy on melancholia, helping us to understand neostalinism as an inability to distinguish between past and present.³² Freud's famous delineation of melancholia from mourning is useful here.

Why wasn't the Soviet government more successful in de-Stalinizing the country? Jones suggests that what is blocking genuine de-Stalinization is what she calls the "mutual interference" of memories of terror and memories of war victory.³³ This is to say that there is a central, seemingly irresolvable tension at the core of public memory: how to celebrate the Soviet victory and confront its failures, so as to recognize the victims too? In Russia, organizations like Memorial have tried to grapple with this issue, and their work has resonated with tens of thousands of people. This is an especially fraught issue in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, where the problem is ethnically-charged.

Ontological Resonance

The outward struggle over this field of commemoration is energized by what Pierre Bourdieu would call a habitus or durable disposition. Habitus is Bourdieu's notion of a "system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions."³⁴ Habitus is eminently historical: "The habitus, a product of history, produces individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history."³⁵ We can understand this as something that is simultaneously micro and macro-sociological: a neo- or pro-Stalinist disposition is acquired through a gradual process of inculcation at the same time that it reflects the social conditions in which it was acquired. A habitus is never independent of its field, what Bourdieu saw as a set of objective, historical relations, anchored by power.³⁶ Along similar lines, in *Why Did They Kill*, Hinton argues that genocide is complex and involves a certain "ontological resonance" of local cultural knowledge that, through a variety of factors, rises to the level of having motivational force. Like Hinton, I am interested in the role of the patterns of being-in-the-world that are constituted over time as people engage in social practices that ultimately come to inform acts of political violence, whether the Khmer, Russian, or Soviet.³⁷

To better understand the disposition informing the exhibit to rehabilitate Stalin in Crimea, and to glean insight into ongoing antipathy towards Crimean Tatars, I interviewed a stratified sample of respondents from the roster of the Russian Society.³⁸ I used images of Stalin collected in Corbescero's research in Russia as prompts to elicit informants' feelings about the leader.³⁹ The first image was a famous portrait of Stalin in uniform.



Figure 4. Portrait of Stalin by Aleksandr Laktionov. Source: Corbescero (2011).

The second was the same portrait remade as a vodka label, a third depicted the same Stalin image writ large on a bus to celebrate the 9th of May,⁴⁰ and the last image showed demonstrators each carrying an individual Stalin portrait in a demonstration. The images elicited reactions both verbal and visceral: respondents laughed and cried when they viewed the images. Their reactions suggest deep emotional connections to the past and a durable disposition integrating past experiences and present perceptions.

Neither guilt nor shame

Veneration for Stalin reverberated throughout the interviews with Russians and individuals with mixed Russian and Ukrainian heritage but embracing a pro-Russian perspective, in Crimea.

Presented with images of the leader, respondents used expressions like “gratitude that we are alive,” “pride for the activities he carried out,” “empathy,” “neutral,” “accepting,” and “this is the image of a good person,” to describe their feelings. Sometimes, the thinking had twisted logic: “If he was such a tyrant, they would have shot him!” This respondent clearly had not thought through how tyranny works, or the way in which it is the very tyranny of the tyrant that protects him.

One strategy that seemed to help respondents maintain a positive image of the leader was to minimize his crimes:

How do you feel when you look at this portrait?

Respondent: How to put it into words? Empathy. Empathy that he may have overplayed his leadership somewhat. True, he was on the cruel side.⁴¹

In a dizzying moral inversion, this respondent chose to empathize with the leader, rather than his victims. In making the comment, this respondent used the word жестоковата, using a qualifier to say Stalin was “on the cruel side,” shrinking massive crimes against humanity into a minor attribute. It is only in the context of this frame of mind that the crude and ultimately inaccurate binary between Russian patriotism and Tatar collaboration can be maintained. Officially sanctioned amnesia of Crimean Tatar patriotism, and willed forgetting of the true level of Stalin’s crimes perpetuate this outlook.

Minimization went hand in hand with justification. Part of the justification appeared based on survival. Respondents hypothesized that what Stalin did was necessary for victory, and linked their personal survival to his tactics:

How do you feel when you look at this portrait?

Respondent: Gratitude that we are alive [starting to cry] During the war, we had nothing, nothing [explanation of things eaten to survive]. Then, after the war, my mother and I had tea with sugar in it and I will remember that tea for the rest of my life, it made such an impression after going for so long with so little.⁴²

The survival of extreme deprivation understandably elicits gratitude. But if we juxtapose the sweetness of the tea with the death toll from Stalin’s regime, the “cost” of that tea, and the respondent’s apparently complete emotional disconnection from the magnitude of the crimes committed in the name of her homeland, becomes evident. Due to the secrecy surrounding the camps, the length of time that has elapsed, and the variety of means to eliminate people, an exact death toll is difficult to calculate. However, representatives of the Soviet security services gave the figure of 18 million.⁴³ These facts are lost to residents of Crimea when focused on reliving and recognizing victory. The neostalinist views expressed by non-Crimean Tatar informants suggest a durable disposition or habitus cultivated for decades.

Justifications for deporting innocent women, children, elderly, and war-wounded residents of Crimea were also based on the idea that the Crimean Tatars somehow deserved and, in thinking that stretches credulity, even benefitted from the deportation. Russian justifications tend to be dissociated from the reality of genocide. As one example:

If Stalin decided it, then that means it was necessary. And the thing is, they [Crimean Tatars] slaughtered whole villages under the fascists. He [Stalin] cast them out, but he sent them to a warmer climate! It was a radical measure that was correct at the time. See how spiteful [Crimean Tatars] are to complain? They left a place where life was good.⁴⁴

The place they left is of course Central Asia in the 1980s and 1990s. The sentiments expressed here are widespread in Crimea, where the non-Crimean Tatar population often alleges that it was “humanitarian” to deport the Tatars to a warm climate rather than exterminating them. The acceptance of Stalin’s act emerging in these interviews reveals the affective and cognitive substrate, the habitus informing events like the commemoration of Stalin in the center of Simferopol in 2012, and subsequent events.

Writing about Crimea, Rory Finnin explores the potential of poetry to shift one's perspective from focusing on the victor to a more empathic position in relation to victims. He explores how two poems, one by Chichibabin and one by Nekipelov, create receptivity to perceive the mass deportation of innocents (collaborators are believed to have been evacuated with the retreating German army) as one of Stalin's greatest crimes. Thinking of more tolerant and empathic segments of the population than I spoke with, Finnin suggests that a deep reading of the poems can engage a reader in "an act of guilt-processing conducive to committed activism."⁴⁵ Finnin thinks literary works can prompt recognition of the complicity of Soviet citizens in the deportation. The twist is that the process is more likely to succeed when hearing from some subject positions rather than others: if the literary work comes from the victimized community, it is liable to evoke shame, which is apt to prompt to avoidance. Guilt, on the other hand, tends to mobilize efforts to repair and make amends.

It is unlikely that the affective and cognitive recognition of Stalin's act as a crime will occur in a Crimean society overshadowed by accusations of treason. In the 2013 fieldwork, Crimean Tatars frequently lamented the absence of anything resembling guilt. On the contrary, informants' statements seemed to re-sacralize⁴⁶ Stalin's authority, perhaps as a way to maintain a dominant position in Crimean society and to reanimate the sense of victory and empowerment that came with his rule. Articulating her response to the picture of Stalin in uniform, a Russian informant stated:

He was, is, and will always be forever a great leader. It's like he is sacred and you can't just erase that from your heart. Millions of people died with his name on their lips. How can you throw that away? It's too late to change anything now [weeping]. I am sorry about the tears but this is the life I lived.⁴⁷

The reverence for Stalin surfacing in certain segments of the population suggested ongoing enchantment with the leader. I asked this respondent if she thought Russian or Ukrainian residents of Crimea who were not deported or were brought in after the war to take Crimean Tatars' places felt a sense of guilt.

Me personally? No! Why would I feel guilty? I understand many Russians and Ukrainians live in Tatars homes. I myself live in a Tatar's home! But it was vacant at the time we came.⁴⁸

What this informant had disassociated from is *why* the home was vacant when she and her mother arrived. As actors on a field of public remembering, these respondents used victory to rationalize the price paid by the Crimean Tatar people.

It is not coincidental that the statements made here were uttered in the Simferopol headquarters of the Russian Society. Respondents spoke under posters of Sergei Aksyonov who was then head of the Russia Unity party, and was elected Prime Minister in March 2014. In other words, these are the sentiments of some of his constituency. What I did not know in 2013 was how accurately they foreshadowed the poor treatment of Crimean Tatars accompanying the annexation. An anthropological approach is valuable here because it reveals the ontological resonance of Crimean Tatars as Other, both past and present. The constructions of Crimean Tatars as traitors demonstrate the ontological resonance of categories established in the Russian colonial period. It also foreshadows the treatment of the Crimean Tatars following annexation. The time period following 2014 annexation was marked by a range of human rights abuses: Crimean Tatars were banned from assembling, and threatened, imprisoned, and exiled when they dared to express dissent. Crimean Tatars were harassed with searches and seizures in their homes, schools and mosques. Even worse, there have been arrests, arbitrary detentions, and disappearances.⁴⁹

Reflecting on this pocket of disavowal and amnesia, I asked Mustafa Cemilev what explains the lack of empathy for Crimean Tatars. His insights suggest links between the official history and popular sentiment, and between denial and fear.

Tatarphobia is understandable given the kind of propaganda that people were stuffed with since the Crimean Tatars were deported. Plus, this propaganda gave them some spiritual

peace considering they were living in our homes. There is also a fear that maybe what happened to the Tatars will happen to them.⁵⁰

The characterization of Crimean Tatars as 'traitors who sold the motherland' has proven impervious to change. It provides an expedient phrase that encapsulates the ontological resonance prefiguring Crimean Tatars as different, as guilty, and as deserving of punishment.

The challenges associated with acknowledging the genocide are not unique to Crimea: we see very similar issues arising in other settings. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer provide important thinking on this topic by suggesting it was a complex defense mechanism against memory that prevented Germans after the Second World War from experiencing feelings of guilt.⁵¹ These scholars saw the disavowal of any complicity, as well as admiration for Adolf Hitler, as the core of a constellation of psychological symptoms including antisemitism. Psychoanalysts have developed this line of thinking to explore how guilt and shame, as well as defenses against them, are passed inter-generationally.⁵² Katharina Rothe suggests that antisemitism should be considered a defense against empathizing with the victims in the Second World War.⁵³

This idea presents rich possibilities for understanding dynamics in Crimea, where local residents' distrust of Tatars often seems based more on fiction than reality,⁵⁴ and where, as Refat Chubarov noted in front of the Crimean Parliament at the time of Consul General Andreev's acerbic remarks, xenophobic statements have become almost fashionable in public discourse.⁵⁵ I suspect a similar defense may be animating ongoing anti-Tatarism in Crimea. For some residents, it may be less painful and, as Cemilev pointed out, more expedient, to valorize Stalin and disavow any benefit from his crimes. It is far more difficult, for us all, to see events from another's perspective. The demonization of Crimean Tatars enables those who make allegations of depravity or treason to elevate Stalin, fear Tatars, and avoid both guilt and shame. While some would argue against a sociocultural use of psychoanalytic concepts, I would contend, with LaCapra, that psychoanalysis is misunderstood as a psychology of the individual. He argues that its basic ideas actually connect individual and society. A strict opposition is artificial—what happens to the individual is bound up with larger social, political, and cultural processes.⁵⁶

Genocide as Social Practice

There are a number of markers we can use to predict the future of the past in Crimea. I have already described how the Crimean Tatars were able to publically commemorate the 1944 deportation when Crimea was a part of Ukraine. If symbolic forms such as these help create and maintain social hierarchies, the billboards announcing the commemorative event in 2013 were particularly significant: the Crimean Tatars leveled, if only temporarily and incrementally, the commemorative field when they publicized their past alongside the Russian one. Russian annexation brought a very different reality to Crimea.

On one hand, Putin assured Crimean Tatar representatives who went to Moscow in May 2014 that Russia will take measures to protect Crimean Tatars and make them feel they are "full fledged masters in their own land."⁵⁷ At the same time, Crimean Prime Minister Sergei Aksyonov issued a decree that banned all mass gatherings in the region, effectively outlawing the 2014 commemoration of the deportation. Aksyonov used a kaleidoscope of shifting reasons, mostly centered on national security, for his decision.⁵⁸ The central square where Crimean Tatars would have gathered was fenced off, guarded by ranks of Russian riot police as well as pro-Russia so called self-defense units, and lined with armored personnel carriers. Avoiding conflict, Crimean Tatars gathered in a field near their mosque in the Ak Mechet district, just outside the capitol city of Simferopol. There, a foreshortened commemoration was carried out under the whirl of helicopter blades.

This attempt to reorganize relations among the living by banning commemoration of the dead was a way to begin the process of reordering community in post-annexation Crimea. Scholars of genocide are increasingly recognizing how technologies of power such as these make genocide not a discrete event with a beginning, middle, and end, but a social process.⁵⁹ Clearly the change in power, and the status of the peninsula as part of the Russian Federation, is reconfiguring more than geopolitics. Leaders like Sergei Aksyonov, the Prime Minister and Head of the Supreme Council,

and Natalia Poklonskaya, the chief prosecutor confirmed by President Putin, are now engaging and intervening in the social process in which the living in Crimea must struggle with the war's legacy: how, when and who to honor?⁶⁰ How, when, and who to mourn?

The current authorities' aims within this emotional substrate are clear in light of the ample space afforded to those wishing to commemorate Victory Day: shortly after the Crimean Tatars were banned from mourning their loss, Putin flew to Crimea to publicly commemorate Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in Sevastopol. Tens of thousands were allowed to flow into the streets, and there was a parade with over 60 military vehicles and 70 aircraft.⁶¹ The contraction of commemorative space accorded to Crimean Tatars relative to Russians (and Russian-Ukrainians) throws into bold relief the very real imbalances of power on the peninsula that are papered over by official pronouncements of equality before the law.

The Crimean Tatar response to being banned from carrying out their usual commemoration brings us back to the link between genocide and historical memory. Genocide can be understood as an act that is directly aimed at destroying ethno-national-religious diversity and altering the social fabric of societies so as to remove unwanted traces of undesired peoples.⁶² This requires removing people from any sites that would physically register social memory. Refat Chubarov described the decree banning commemoration as an inhumane act, pointing out that the Crimean Tatars had essentially been forbidden to mourn their ancestors. A popular TV talk show host, Lilia Budjorova, asked rhetorically whether the authorities fully understood the meaning that the day of sorrow and remembrance has for the Crimean Tatar people. She warned that the ban would be remembered for many years, and can't be compensated for by any amount of government spending on Crimean Tatars.⁶³ Budjurova's comments suggest that if Aksyonov wants Crimean Tatar support to secure his rule, the ban may actually be counterproductive to his aims:

Today, like tens of thousands of my compatriots, I have been banned from coming into the center of my own town to stand next to those who have lost mothers, fathers, and children. I have been banned from sharing their pain. You have taken away my right to make sure that my grandchildren know that this tragedy must never repeat itself.⁶⁴

Budjurova suggested that pain can only be reduced with empathy and understanding. With this, she suggests more empathy would have set a very different tone to relations between the new authorities and the indigenous Tatars. This also jives with what we know about transitional justice. In the repertoire of effective mechanisms, the commemoration of victims is widely considered a crucial part of reconciliation with a repressive past.⁶⁵ In 2014, the new Crimean administration headed by Aksyonov missed an opportunity to be more accepting of all members of the society and move to a less polarized future. If the 2014 commemorations are any indication, Crimeans will again be confined to a single narrative that elides the Crimean Tatar experience.

In spite of assurances on the part of President Vladimir Putin and Aksyonov, what has transpired since annexation hardly amounts to protection of the endangered group. For one thing, there has been a rash of disappearances. In one case, a witness reported seeing two men forced into a mini-van by men in black uniforms before they disappeared. Accounts vary but according to Human Rights Watch there have been at least seven and potentially as many as 18 disappearances.⁶⁶ Officials only acknowledge four. Searches of Crimean Tatar homes became almost routine in during summer 2014. These were carried out in the name of "protecting" the people. There has also been harassment of mass media outlets: self-defense battalions comprised of men in camouflage gear and balaclavas have searched and seized broadcasting equipment at some of Crimea's major television channels. The systematic attempt to weaken the community has included banning Crimean Tatar leaders from residing in Crimea among their people. First came renowned defender of human rights, Ukrainian parliamentarian, and former Head of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Mustafa Cemilev. Then came the elected President or Chairman of the Mejlis, Refat Chubarov. In February 2015, acting Chairman of the Mejlis, Akhtem Chivgoz was arrested and imprisoned. These practices amount to the gradual weakening of this people through discrimination, harassment, and isolation, over time.

Conclusion

As a result of this analysis, I hope to have contributed a deeper understanding of the Crimean Tatar genocide. I have argued that while Crimea was part of Ukraine, it experienced a volatile and yet fertile insurrection of previously subjugated knowledges. Public commemorations became a lightning rod, channeling contestations over the recent and distant past. While previous gaps and omissions were made visible, hegemonic power/knowledge frameworks continued to make one group appear better than another.

These contestations are difficult to fully appreciate without a greater understanding of the historical habitus of individuals in Crimea. Using fresh and now virtually unobtainable data, I provide an ethnographic exploration into the thoughts and feelings of a subset of the non-Crimean Tatar population, showing a durable disposition that informs interpretations of the past. This perspective on the past gains its emotional valence in part from the categorical thinking, the ontological resonance of imagining Crimean Tatars as a threat. Based on the interview data, it seems Crimea lacks the cognitive and affective foundation to formulate an inclusive and civil society. Here, the lack of both guilt and shame with respect to the 1944 deportation are significant.

If we place the Crimean Tatar experience in the framework of critical genocide studies, we see the struggle over the past in Crimea as a technology of power that has an ongoing capacity to restructure relations among the living. I have exposed part of the process through which the aftermath of genocide has become attenuated. More ethnography can clarify if we are witnessing the aftermath of genocide or its prelude. The desecration of graves, the graffiti on historic monuments, hateful discussions on Facebook and other social media, searches of homes, mosques and schools, and the exile and imprisonment of Crimean Tatar leaders beg that question.

The question of what will become of public memory in post-Ukrainian Crimea is an urgent one: will Crimea be obligated to exclusively valorize the Soviet past, or will it “unhide” the human and social costs associated with past victories? In the aftermath of genocide, the contents of Crimean Tatar memory and history continue to be eclipsed, and neostalinism thrives. Any attempt by the new authorities to see only one side of the historic coin will result in a flat and ultimately unsatisfying account of the past.

Endnotes

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- 3 Daniel Feierstein, *Genocide as a Social Practice*, trans. Douglas Andrew Town (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 12. Ebook.
- 4 It is important here to avoid homogenizing or oversimplifying complex identities and loyalties. I use Russian sympathizers here because what united my informants were that they were Russian-speaking, of Russian or mixed Russian and Ukrainian ancestry, and sympathized with Russia.
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- 6 Nanci Adler, “Reconciliation with—or Rehabilitation of—the Soviet Past?” *Memory Studies* 5, 3 (2012), 328.
- 7 Johan Galtung, “After Violence: Reconstruction, Reconciliation, and Resolution,” in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Abu-Nimer, Muhammed (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001), 3-23; L. Kriesberg, “Changing Forms of Coexistence,” in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Muhammed Abu-Nimer (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2001); Barbara Tint, “History, Memory, and Intractable Conflict,” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 27, 3 (2010): 239-256.
- 8 Adler, “Reconciliation,” 328.
- 9 Adler, “Reconciliation,” 336.
- 10 The treatment of the Ukrainian-speaking population of Crimea warrants a separate article of its own. Their relation to both the Crimean Tatars and the pro-Russia Russians is a complex outside the scope of an article focused on the genocide of the Crimean Tatars.
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- 14 Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1995-1996*, eds., Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 1997), 66-76.
- 15 Greta Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Greta Uehling "Squatting, Self-Immolation, and the Repatriation of Crimean Tatars," *Nationalities Papers* 28 (2000): 317-342.
- 16 Interview, Crimean Tatar Mejlis, May 26, 2013.
- 17 Brian Glyn Williams, *A Homeland Lost: Migration, the Diaspora Experience and the Forging of Crimean Tatar National Identity* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin Madison 1999); Greta Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Deportation and Return of the Crimean Tatars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Uehling, "Squatting, Self-Immolation, and the Repatriation of Crimean Tatars," *Nationalities Papers* 28 (2000): 317-342; Greta Uehling, "The Crimean Tatar National Movement: Social Memory and Collective Action," in *Globalizations and Social Movements*, eds., John Guidry, Michael Kennedy, and Mayer N. Zald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2000).
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- 19 Having provided the first full exploration of the Crimean Tatars' narrative accounts in my first ethnography, Uehling 2004.
- 20 Uehling, "Beyond Memory," 2004.
- 21 The mutual contestation that takes place when knowledges characterized by different normative frameworks are pushed up against each other and individuals are compelled to question each other's omissions, exclusions, and hegemonies. Jose Medina, "Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism," *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011): 9-35.
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- 23 Greta Uehling, "The Release of Haytarma and its Aftermath" <http://www.iccrimea.org/reports/kaytarma-review1.html>.
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- 33 Jones, *Myth Memory Trauma*, 261.
- 34 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of the Theory of Practice*, trans., Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 82-83.

- 35 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans., Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 54.
- 36 Pierre Bourdieu and Loic J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 20.
- 37 Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 27.
- 38 My contact at the Russian society drew from the database of members to fill the age and gender quotas I requested. This selection is likely to be biased by her judgments about who would be a willing informant, and also availability in May and June 2013.
- 39 Susan Corbesero, "History, Myth, and Memory: A Biography of a Stalin Portrait," *Russian History* 38 (2011), 58-84.
- 40 May 9 is also known as Victory Day because it celebrates the capitulation of Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union. In the days of the Soviet Union, the holiday was marked throughout the various Soviet Socialist republics and typically a non-working holiday.
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- 44 Interview, 1 June, 2013.
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A Double Dispossession: The Crimean Tatars After Russia's Ukrainian War

Stephen Blank

American Foreign Policy Council

Washington, D.C., USA

Abstract: *Genocide and genocidal political processes have been used by the Russian state for decades—if not centuries—as a technique of self-colonial rule intended to eliminate “dissident” ethnic identities. Within this context, the historical fate of the Crimean Tatars is surely a unique one. Despite Soviet obstructions, the Crimean Tatars eventually returned to their homeland in Crimea after suffering forced deportations and genocide at the hands of the Soviet government. Now, 70 years after their deportation and genocide by Stalin, the Crimean Tatars are still fighting for justice. Defined as an autonomous group in their own land under the Ukrainian government, the Tatars found themselves in an even more precarious position when they were forcibly transplanted back into Putin’s Russia after the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea. In a Russian state that continues to resort to the deportation and the repression of “dissident” or otherwise politically suspect ethnic minorities, Crimean Tatars risk not only new repressions and injustices but a continuation of genocidal political and social repression.*

Keywords: *Crimean Tatars, Crimea, Russia, Ukraine, genocide, foreign policy, Ukrainian War*

*Norman Naimark, “Ethnic Cleansing and even genocide remain a dangerous possibility.”¹
Bertolt Brecht, “and the bitch that bore him is still in heat” –The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*

These two quotations highlight for us the ensuing drama of what can only be called the second or double dispossession of the Crimean Tatars. The Tatars’ historical fate is surely a unique one. Having returned to their homeland in Crimea despite Soviet obstruction, and still fighting for justice, defined by autonomy on their own land under the new Ukrainian government 70 years after their deportation and genocide by Stalin, the Tatars have now found themselves forcibly transplanted back into Putin’s Russia. As the two quotes above suggest, the forces that made for their first deportation and genocide after a century and a half of encroaching Russian dispossession after 1783 are still very alive. Indeed, those forces dominate today’s Russia. Consequently the Crimean Tatars risk not only new repressions and injustices but also a second or double dispossession, as Naimark suggests above. And they are probably not alone in being at risk given the Russian state chauvinism and repression that characterize today’s Russia.

This is not an excessively inflamed assessment. Neither is Naimark the only Western observer who warns that this outcome is again possible. Carol Weaver has also written that, “the Black Sea region is still an area where people are afraid of invasion, ethnic cleansing, and general oppression.”² The forces that made for the first dispossession, Russian autocracy, imperial mythology, greed, xenophobia against Muslims, and national security concerns are still quite alive in Putin’s Russia. Indeed, they are currently thriving. A careful examination of contemporary Russian politics quickly reveals that the Putin regime has decisively opted to restore something akin to Nicholas I’s “official nationality,” an ideological formation that glorifies the Tsar (in this case Putin) and Russian autocracy, the dominant role of the Russian Orthodox Church and the glorification of the Russian nationality and culture, against what is supposed to be a decadent but also encroaching and hostile West.³ Under that kind of regime no ethno-religious minority—especially one where Moscow has an acute consciousness of its previous guilt in the first genocide of 1944, and where the Tatar minority itself continues to assert its demands for historical (and economic) justice—can be said to have favorable opportunities for asserting its consciousness and for redressing historical crimes. Indeed, much evidence already shows that the Tatars’ demands for autonomy—not separatism—are already being repressed along with their other human rights.⁴ Thus they are already being subjected to systematic oppression and disenfranchisement, necessary though not sufficient stages on the road to ethnic cleansing and genocide.⁵ And we have already seen that.⁶ The evidence below shows that it is quite possible that they may not only not get their land back from

Putin's Russia but even lose it again. At the same time, Russian history since the inception of the Russian state up to the present, suggests that deportation and worse still remain options available to the rulers of Russia.

Dispossession, Genocide, and Russian Statecraft

Indeed, throughout Russian history deportation has been a "constant operating factor" in Russian statecraft, beginning with Ivan III's takeover of Novgorod in 1478 after which he promptly deported the entire population. Since then, mass deportations have remained part of Russia's "instrumentarium" of approaches to ethnic or other minorities deemed insufficiently loyal. Scholars such as Norman Naimark have demonstrated clearly that ethnic cleansing—indeed, genocide—has been used as a instrument for consolidating power in the Russian state, through the Tsarist regimes, through Stalin's time, and to the present.⁷ These examples throughout Russia's history reveal similarities in tactics and strategies with later practices, such as mass deportations to Siberia, or into serfdom, or in the case of the Circassians to Turkey in 1863, up through Stalin's genocidal campaigns to the recent Chechen war and beyond.⁸

As the nineteenth century ended and the twentieth century began, the Russian state continued to use mass deportations—which were always accompanied by mass death—as a way of consolidating power in the Russian empire. This process has been termed "self colonialism" by many observers, and created a situation where the ethnic identity of national minorities was interpreted as a form of dissent and a political impediment against state power. This violent repression and removal of national minorities in the Tsarist, and later the Soviet state, was the historical and political context that gave rise to the concept of genocide.⁹ Raphael Lemkin, who was born in Imperial Russia and an expert on Soviet criminal law, coined the word genocide between 1942 and 1943, but he developed much of the theoretical concept of genocide during his work with the League of Nations in the 1930s when he attempted to outlaw state terror that was intended to destroy national minorities physically and culturally and remove them from a given society.¹⁰ As Terry Martin has found, "between 1935 and 1938, at least nine Soviet nationalities—Poles, Germans, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Koreans, Chinese, Kurds, Iranians—were all subjected to ethnic cleansing."¹¹ Indeed, he found that territorial resettlement of suspect socio-political groups began in the 1920s and was then based on Marxist-Leninist categories of social class only to mutate in the 1930s to a form of what amounted to ethnic cleansing.¹² Furthermore, Martin also commented that, "therefore, as with most cases of ethnic cleansing, the Soviet practice included substantial levels of intentional murder."¹³

Lemkin defined genocide as "a coordinated plan ... aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves." Lemkin explicitly referred to genocide as a form of colonial practice with two phases: "One, the destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor."¹⁴ While common definitions of genocide are often very different, this definition of genocide is useful for understanding the long-standing logic of Russian statecraft and the current situation of the Tatar people. Scholars who use Lemkin's definition of genocide not only see genocide as a form of colonization or self-colonization, but a technique of state power intended to destroy ethnic identities and create new ones within a society, to reorganize relationships within a society to fit the political needs of the regime in power—through mass killings, but also through acts such as terror, deportation, severe repression, the abduction of children, and so forth.¹⁵

With this historical understanding of genocide, as a technique of self-colonial rule intended to eliminate "dissent" ethnic identities, it becomes apparent that genocide is a long-standing aspect of the practices and policies of the Russian state. In this context some may also cite as genocide, or genocidal, the huge fall in Chechnya's population since 1994 as either an intended example or unforeseen by-product of the Chechen wars after 1994. Indeed, Naimark suggests on the basis of Russian evidence that the Chechen wars since 1994 led to the official reconsideration of programs of mass deportation for the Chechens:

Serious evidence indicates that the Russian government developed plans to deport the Chechens once again in the mid-1990s if they had lost the war. During the outbreak of the

1999 war, the Chechens seemed unwilling to accept the borders cut out for them after their return (from deportation by Stalin-author) in the 1950s; thus they carried the fighting into Dagestan. But again evidence has turned up indicating that the huge number of Chechen refugees in Ingushetia may be sent off to the Altai region, a solution presumably not of the Chechens' own choosing. There have also been episodic suggestions in the Russian press to disperse the Chechens throughout the Siberian north and east. Ethnic cleansing and even genocide remain a dangerous possibility.¹⁶

In our own time,

In the fall of 2006, Russian officials rounded up more than 2,300 Georgians and deported hundreds of them in cargo planes. The operation, which hit amidst an embargo on Georgian wine, water and fruit and vegetables, was largely seen as retaliation against former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's administration for detaining and deporting four Russian military officers on espionage charges. Georgia filed a complaint against Russia in Europe's senior human-rights court in 2007, but it took nearly seven years for the ECHR to pass a verdict. "The Russian authorities had implemented a coordinated policy of arresting, detaining and expelling Georgians nationals" violating international law that bars the "collective expulsion of aliens" and "inhuman and degrading treatment," the ECHR said in a press release on the July 3 verdict.

The continuing resort to deportation of "dissident" or otherwise politically suspect ethnic minorities underlines the continuity of the present regime with its Tsarist and Soviet predecessors. Thus it is clear that as long as the Russian state remains an updated version of the patrimonial Muscovite Tsarist regime as it is today no ethnic, religious, or other minority of any kind in Russia is safe, and none of them can repose any confidence in Russian guarantees and promises for Ukraine if not earlier examples have shown the value of such guarantees.¹⁸ A regime that can coldly consider and countenance the deportation of masses of its citizens offers no safe harbour to any one of its subjects. Neither can we truly call the subjects of this state genuine citizens in situations where the most basic human rights count for nothing and can be abrogated at a moment's notice on a whim.

Moreover, although war may be the ultimate argument of kings (*ultima ratio regum*); violence as such is seen by some scholars as the alpha and omega of the state. Thus Russia also can be envisioned as what North, Weingast, and Wallis call a "limited access state."¹⁹ Such orders are based on personal or personalized norms of rule are weakly developed in regard to social organizations and cannot therefore rely on third-person enforcement of legal norms or contracts. Long-term economic growth in such states approaches zero meaning that for every period of growth there is one of decline in per capita income. The deficiencies of such orders with respect to forming impersonal and binding institutions also mean that they are much more permeated by violence unless potentially violent elements are bought off by rents. As the authors note,

Systematic rent-creation through limited access [to assets-author] in a natural state is not simply a method of lining the pockets of the dominant coalition; it is the essential means of controlling violence. Rent creation, limits on competition and access to organizations are central to the nature of the state, its institutions, and the society's performance. Limiting the ability to form contractual organizations only to members of the coalition ties the interests of powerful elites directly to the survival of the coalition, thus ensuring their continued cooperation with the coalition.²⁰

Consequently "war is the health of the state." Violence is inherent in the nature of the state. And the desire of Russian elites to possess the assets and lands of Crimea that hold a privileged place in the mythology of Russian imperialism was a powerful motive for the first dispossession of the Crimean Tatars, beginning from Catherine the Great's takeover of the area in 1783. Although the main motives for the current occupation were probably political rather than economic, Moscow's

unseemly haste in trying to annex Crimea and deny those fields to Ukraine indicates the Russian elite's alertness to the seizure of economic assets here, and their denial of those assets to those living in Crimea.²¹

Thus the very nature of the state as such offers another necessary precondition for concern about the Tatars' future. Alternatively one could argue, as do Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, that political decisions determine the nature of any country's economic institutions and that in Russia's case governments have historically decided for extractive rather than inclusive economic and political institutions.²² Further adding to these authors' argument we can bring in the insight, brilliantly expressed by Alexander Etkind, based on Kliuchevsky's observation that Russia's history is one of self- or internal colonization. Russian rulers related and, as Etkind observes, still relate to their subjects as if they were the masters of a colonial government ruling over subjects who were both alien to them and not to be regarded as autonomous human beings. Furthermore, borrowing Hannah Arendt's term of "imperial boomerang," he notes that the practices of colonial administration employed by these rulers in Russia's peripheries were often particularly brutal, corrupt, and then imported back into Russia's heartland, bringing tragic and systematic misrule to Russia's heartlands.²³ The deportation of ethnic minorities practiced by Stalin comes close to the apogee of such brutal colonial practices. But Naimark and Weaver's warning and the nature of the Russian state today suggests that less catastrophic though still brutally repressive measures are still the order of the day in Putin's Russia.

A Return to Fascism and the Consequences for a Tatar Ethnic Minority

At the same time, and equally alarmingly, apart from its resemblances to past Russian autocracies, Putin's Russia increasingly resembles a fascist system like those of Mediterranean fascist regimes from Mussolini, Vichy France, Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal to the Colonels' Greece of 1967-74, all of which were intrinsically notoriously hostile to the claims of minorities. Vichy France's slogan of Travail, Famille, and Patrie could easily apply to authoritarian Russian regimes as Maurice Friedberg did to Brezhnev's Russia and could be quite appropriate to Putin's Russia.²⁴ And this framework is intrinsically hostile to the claims of ethno-religious minorities. Already several years ago Pierre Hassner observed that Putin "had led Russia into a harsh brand of authoritarianism with Fascist features."²⁵ Hassner went on to discern the advent of fascism in the elimination of rival power centers, the cult of Putin, the creation of official youth groups in support of the regime to conduct, among other things the bullying of ethnic minorities, xenophobia, and the cult of Stalin.²⁶

Hassner is not alone in his observations as these phenomena have, if anything, become stronger over time.²⁷ Like other fascist states in history, Russia has lost meaningful parliaments, independent judiciaries, and viable political parties and elections.²⁸ Under Putin, fascist hyper-nationalism has created a second situation that is also common to fascist regimes through history, especially unconsolidated fascist regimes, where ethnic Russian nationals in neighboring countries are called upon as potential fifth columns that appeal to Russia for brotherly assistance and whom Russia calls upon in defense of the motherland.²⁹ Indeed to the extent that the current regime increasingly resembles those of the past, not lest Stalin's, it clearly partakes of similar attributes, like the glorification of Russian culture and of the autocrat. And insightful observers like Joseph Schumpeter already realized that it was converging on fascism already in the 1940s when the initial Stalinist deportations of Crimean Tatars occurred.³⁰

Beginning in the spring of 1944, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs arrested en masse Tatar Muslims in Crimea on the charge of conspiring with Hitler during WWII.³¹ Over 180,000 Crimean Tatars were deported to various parts of the USSR in overcrowded cattle trains, where they died of starvation, disease, and exposure to the cold. They starved to death in labor camps, collective farms, or forced-labor factories. Within two years, just under half of the exiled Tatars were dead, and the Crimean population decimated. The deportations were explicitly intended to remove a national minority from Crimea that was resisting Stalinist rule, in order to bring Crimea territory under the control of Moscow, while spreading the surviving Tatars across the USSR to force their ethnic assimilation and the ensure the destruction of their "troublesome" ethno-national group.³²

Over the last half a century, the Crimean Tatars have slowly begun to demand justice and restitution. This mobilization was aided with the break up of the Soviet Union, when Crimea became part of an independent Ukraine. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, and the annexation of Crimea in March, Putin inherited a Tatar population in Crimea that believed the Russian state had committed war crimes and genocide against them, and had been demanding justice. Beyond these factors of historical Russia autocracy, imperialism, and chauvinism—which are all preconditions of ethnic animosity and regime suspicion over the Tatars' claim for justice—there are at least two other major considerations why the Crimean Tatars and other minorities, like Muslims in the North Caucasus, are again at risk in Putin's neo-Tsarist, if not neo-Soviet, or even Fascist Russia. First, Putin and his team have evidently concluded that Russia can only be governed and secure if it is an empire, a conclusion entailing the destruction of its neighbors' sovereignty and integrity. In such a form, Russia can only survive as a militarizing or militarized fascist-like state, in a condition of permanent conflict with its neighbors and interlocutors. This is because the state of war that Russia is inciting in world affairs is the external manifestation of its governing logic of empire that necessarily implies an equal state of internal war against all forms of dissent, ethnic or otherwise, inside Russia. Under such conditions the existence of a vocal ethnic minority—in a strategically sensitive area, and one that has connections with foreign governments—immediately falls under intensified state suspicion and scrutiny.

Obviously the belief that Russia can only survive as an empire at others' expense means war or at least permanent conflict both at home and abroad, especially given the nature of the Russian state. Apart from being a facsimile of similar Hitler speeches, Putin's speech to the Duma on March 18, 2014, also constituted a landmine against the sovereignty of every state from Poland to Central Asia.³³ Putin here reiterated the right to send the Russian army abroad to defend Russian "citizens," demonstrating conclusively that Russia respects neither these governments' sovereignty nor their territorial integrity and is prepared to destroy both in the name of its great power interests.³⁴ And his subsequent call for self-determination of Russians abroad while repressing self-determination at home reiterated that point.³⁵ Certainly that latter call, especially when Russians believe that Crimea is "predestined" to be part of a revived Russian empire, or has "always been" Russian land, strongly militates against any forbearance for the Crimean Tatars or for other minorities within the Russian Federation. Moreover, the prohibition on domestic calls for self-determination means that any advocacy by the Crimean Tatars for their rights that include even rights short of self-determination stands at risk of being criminalized and subjecting its authors to harsh repression.³⁶

The foregoing autocratic, repressive, even militarized nature of the state are all preconditions for repression of any future Tatar demands for justice, whatever forms they might take. But what adds to the dangers facing the Crimean Tatars is the foreign policy aspect of their situation, living in and around a strategic area that is undergoing conflict if not war, and having foreign contacts in a major state, Turkey. As history, especially in the Balkans and Black Sea area, suggests these factors powerfully reinforce ethnic suspicion by governments towards ethnic or religious minorities, and for state-sponsored or organized violence against them.³⁷ In addition to these points the struggle over regional security issues in "the former Soviet sphere" are among the most intractable conflicts between Russia and the West in contemporary international relations. Thus the prominent Russian analyst, Sergei Karaganov, Director of the prestigious Council on Defense and Foreign Policy (SVOP), reportedly told a conference in Germany in 2009 that the "core of all differences between the West and Russia is the question of whose sphere of influence the Soviet successor states fall into."³⁸

In this context both historians and political scientists have focused on the connection between exogenous geopolitical conditions and rivalries on the one hand, and the internal dynamics of the formation of ethno-religious and nationalist movements throughout the Black Sea region as interactive processes that give rise to ethnic strife and conflict. If one adds to this mix the vicissitudes of post-Soviet state-building in the former Soviet republics, a process that clearly has not run its course, it becomes clear that considerations of security will exercise a profound importance in framing Russian policy and relations towards groups like the Crimean Tatars.³⁹ In the contemporary Black Sea region this interaction is likely to be particularly stressful on all concerned because the region actually functions as a kind of laboratory for the study of the so-called "new wars."⁴⁰ Yet

at the same time it also serves as a laboratory for the tensions between Russia and its Western interlocutors over a vast agenda including the resolution of ethnopolitical conflicts in the former Soviet Union, energy rivalries, the modalities of international intervention, and missile defense. Neither does this list exhaust all the issues at stake in the East-West agenda.

Given the importance of “national security” for many actors in the overall Black Sea region and the close links between ethno-national development, the tensions of state building, and international geopolitical rivalries it is not surprising that some *mélange* of these considerations have figured in past Russian and Turkish examples of ethnic cleansing, deportation, and even genocide. Indeed, as Michael Reynolds and Terry Martin, to name only two scholars, have found, the construction of a multinational state in both Tsarist and Soviet Russia and the Young Turks’ Turkey intimately connected ethnic to foreign policy issues.⁴¹ As Martin observes,

It was the Soviet leadership’s strong commitment to forming a multinational state, rather than any hostility to ethnic identities, that politicized ethnicity by linking it to the formation of administrative territories, land possession, and resettlement. This domestic nationalities policy was then further linked to Soviet foreign policy goals. In order to explore this linkage, I will introduce two further Bolshevik concepts—Soviet xenophobia and the Piedmont Principle and show how they led to the formation of a novel Soviet administrative territory: the border regions. By Soviet xenophobia, I mean simply the exaggerated Soviet fear of foreign influence and foreign contamination. I absolutely do not mean traditional Russian xenophobia. Soviet xenophobia was ideological, not ethnic. It was spurred by an ideological hatred and suspicion of foreign capitalist governments, not the national hatred of non-Russians. Foreign intervention during the civil war did not create Soviet xenophobia. It merely confirmed a pre-existing ideological inclination. Soviet xenophobia was, however, given a national focus by ongoing low-intensity guerrilla warfare and sporadic partisan uprisings along the entire Soviet frontier. Whereas foreign military intervention had been brief and discrete, guerrilla warfare involved ongoing secretive border crossings and relied on an ambiguous combination of foreign and domestic support.⁴²

We can, in fact, point to “lessons learned” from the history of the overall area as its states and people have increasingly become independent political actors in world history or have striven to achieve that status. Historians and political scientists alike have recently re-emphasized the fact that the idea of establishing a congruence between ethnic and political boundaries that is a distinguishing feature of nationalism wherever it occurs came to the Black Sea and Eastern Europe from the West. Therefore the impetus towards ethnic and political homogenization that characterizes regimes across Eastern Europe and not just Russia has a powerful European strategic-political logic behind it.⁴³

In the case of the Crimean Tatars, the special connection between them and Turkey—which many Tatars have fled over the centuries from Russian misrule and oppression—has only enhanced their condition of being regarded as a potentially alien ethno-religious “fifth column” in Crimea. In the Soviet Union and in contemporary Russia where every conceivable issue has been or is being “securitized,” this state of being regarded *ab initio* as a suspect people who oppose the annexation of Crimea puts the Tatars at enhanced risk in conditions of intensified geopolitical rivalry between Russia and Turkey, or between Russia and the West as now appears to be taking shape. This securitization process typifies the Putin regime’s approach to Russian national security issues because it is all-embracing. As Sergei Rogov, Director of the USA and Canada Institute, observed, “Over here, when the Russian Federation’s Security Council was set up, we adopted an all-embracing definition of security that stipulated the security of the individual, society, and state from external and internal threats in all spheres of vital activity.”⁴⁴

And this process, in the absence of democratic reform to establish true democratic controls over the security sector has allowed the military and the government to extend the securitization process and ultimately allowed the military to concern itself with defining non-military as well as military threats. Political actors who first politicize an issue as a threat to security and then securitize it aim to persuade relevant audiences, in this case, the political and military elite, that the

issue in question poses an “existential threat to the country, either to its territory, the integrity of the state, its group identity, its environment, or its economic interests.”⁴⁵

Securitization thus denotes political actors’ efforts, most often, though not exclusively, through speech or discourse, to take an issue out of normal politics and bring it into the realm of security. This process subordinates the issue to the competence of security organs, removes it from the public realm, substitutes secret bureaucratic decisions for open politics, and often contravenes human or civil rights.⁴⁶

The aim of a “securitizing move” is typically to enable “emergency measures” that can secure the survival of a referent object. If and when the content of the security “speech act” is acknowledged as legitimate by a (significant) “audience” the issue in question has become successfully “securitized.” It has been moved out of the sphere of “normal politics” and into the sphere of “emergency politics;” where it can be dealt with in an urgent manner and with fewer formal and informal restraints.⁴⁷

Actors make “securitizing moves” not just to place an item on the agenda, but also to claim that their agency alone has the capability either to define or resolve the problem or to implement the appropriate solution. And as Reynolds and Martin suggest, the Crimean Tatars, among others have been the victim of such an outlook in Soviet times when ethnic minority communities on the border or in strategic areas came under suspicion from Moscow because of their connections abroad or proximity to key foreign areas, in this case the Black Sea.⁴⁸ Indeed, as Naimark points out the deportations in the Crimea of 1944 that caught the Tatars in their dragnet were aimed at deporting every non-Slavic group in the area, perhaps as Reynolds suggests, in anticipation of Stalin’s subsequent geopolitical demands upon Turkey. Indeed, Stalin apparently aimed at obliterating those Crimean nationalities’ living memory, culture, and history.⁴⁹

This confluence of the nature of governance of the Russian state with geostrategic imperatives places the Crimean Tatars at increased risk. Historically and today, especially in the Russian empire where they lived until 1991 and where they are once again forcibly enclosed, the Crimean Tatars may be defined as a “non-core group” (ethno-religious or ethnic minority) that possess an external connection or involvement, particularly with Turkey. Accordingly Harris Mylonas argues that,

I posit that this external involvement, whether clandestine, covert. Or overt, drives not only the mobilization and politicization of the non-core group’s identity, but also the host state’s perception of the non-core group and the state’s nation-building policies toward that group. Hence the foreign policy goals of the host state and its interstate relations with external powers drive a host state’s choices of nation-building policies towards non-core groups.⁵⁰

Mylonas also argues that consolidated democracies can afford to accommodate rather than exclude, repress, or attack non-core groups, e.g. the Crimean Tatars, because they are members of extended alliances that reduce their perception of threat and offer them resources with which to deal with such challenges.⁵¹ Russia lacks such an alliance system and can hardly be called a consolidated democracy as conversely it is more likely to incline towards repressive or even exclusionary policies towards non-core groups. In addition, non-core groups whose homeland lies outside the host state (arguably Crimea is actually part of Ukraine which formally it remains part of) are more likely to become ethnically mobilized against the host state.⁵²

Other factors outlined by Mylonas also argue for the enhanced likelihood of Russian repression or exclusion of the Tatars. First, given the nature of the Russian state, a democratically driven policy of accommodation seems almost inconceivable. Moreover, given the inherently coercive predisposition of the state as suggested by Douglas North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry Weingast in their reflections on the inherent presence of violence in limited access states, even a policy of assimilation primarily utilizing state-driven socioeconomic tools will come to be seen as a coercive forceful, even violent one even if it is not actually coercive. In addition, Mylonas also argues that states pursuing revisionist goals in international affairs like Russia are more likely to pursue exclusionary policies to prevent a “fifth column” at home but these policies are

inherently risky and could even lead to war. Georgia in 2006-08 and Ukraine in 2014 both confirm this insight.⁵³

The New Repression

The forcible return to Russian rule is utterly at odds with the desires of the Crimean Tatars and their leadership expressed in their Majlis (Legislative Council). As the veteran Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilyev has said, they want only autonomy within Ukraine, an insight based on the clear recognition that only in a democratic Ukraine— which has now become possible, especially in the light of planned reforms to decentralize Ukraine’s administration—is there any hope for the Tatars to obtain any redress of their past grievances.⁵⁴ Not surprisingly they therefore opposed the Russian annexation from the start. Indeed, the Tatar leader, Ilmi Umerov, head of the State Administration in Bakhchysarai in the Crimea, even called the March 2014 and annexation illegal (which they plainly are) and threatened an underground partisan movement.⁵⁵

But even if that had not been their consistent position, it is quite unlikely, given current Russian politics, that they would encounter anything but repression from Moscow. First of all, Russia is still unwilling to face up to the truth of the Stalinist period as a whole, let alone the many deportations including that of the Crimean Tatars. Thus the Russian government has blocked release of a film describing the horrors of the Chechen deportation earlier in 1944.⁵⁶ Accordingly it is no surprise that repression and the visible unwillingness to fulfill guarantees and promises made to them came very quickly. For example, before the March 2014 referendum in Crimea the local authorities led by Moscow’s satrap, Sergei Aksyonov, the “Acting Governor,” promised them national quotas in the government only to revoke those promises.⁵⁷ On March 19, 2014 Crimean Deputy Prime Minister Rustam Temirgaliyev told the Russian media that the new Crimean Parliament wanted the Tatars to relocate. He said Moscow was ready to pay and help with the moves.⁵⁸ Two weeks later the Crimean Parliament repudiated the deal on national quotas cited above as well as concurrent promises on the Tatars having the right to national and cultural autonomy.⁵⁹

Originally Russia, during March 2014, made many overtures to the Crimean Tatars:

After Refat Chubarov, chairman of the Crimean Tatar Majlis, called on the Crimean Tatars and other residents of Crimea to boycott the referendum, the Crimean parliament on March 11th adopted a declaration “On guarantees for the restoration of rights of the Crimean Tatar people.” The declaration stated that in a future Crimean constitution, the Crimean Tatar language will be given the status of official language (together with Russian and Ukrainian), that in executive organs of state power in Crimea at least 20 percent of positions will be reserved for Crimean Tatars, that Crimean Tatar self-government organs, the Kurultai and the Majlis, will be officially recognized, and that financial assistance, as well as assistance for the restoration of historical monuments and native language education, will be provided. Mustafa Dzhemilyev, the former head of the Majlis and the informal leader of the Crimean Tatars, was also invited to Russia, officially by the president of Tatarstan. While there, Vladimir Putin spoke with Dzhemilyev on the phone and reportedly promised “to do everything” to protect Crimean Tatars from any possible aggression. Several official delegations from Tatarstan also visited Crimea and offered material assistance to the Crimean Tatars, many of whom still lack adequate housing after returning from places of deportation.⁶⁰

But clearly these were purely tactical gestures and they evoked no support from the Crimean Tatars. By April both local and central indications were clear. The new Crimean constitution proclaimed Crimea “united and indivisible” did not recognize the Crimean Tatars as an “indigenous people” of Crimea and did not give them the right to self-determination or recognize the Majlis or other self-governing bodies. Thus they got no autonomy at all.⁶¹ The Constitution gave the Tatars Russian citizenship entailing the right to own land and recognized their language as one of Crimea’s official languages, but also reduced the total number of Parliamentary seats from 100 to 75, raised the number of single-seat constituencies to 75 percent, and effectively barred the Majlis from fielding party lists because only national, not local or ethnic, parties can compete in Russian elections.⁶²

Moscow also is trying to eliminate the Tatars' pro-Ukrainian Majlis leadership and split the Tatars' religious administration by creating its own pro-Moscow authorities, both of them being long-standing Muscovite, Tsarist, and Soviet tactics.⁶³ At the same time Russia seeks to eradicate any Crimean Tatar Islamist groups and to use its designated strongman in Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, to help control the Tatars.⁶⁴ By late April Moscow and the Crimean authorities exiled Dzhemilyev from Crimea. They threatened him and anyone demonstrating on behalf of Crimean Tatar autonomy in Ukraine with the full weight of repression under Russian law.⁶⁵

Russian repressions did not only occur in this domain. Beyond exiling Tatar leaders, attempting to deprive them of a political voice and to subordinate them wholly to Moscow while breaking earlier pledges, Russian and Crimean authorities also began arresting or worse dissidents, of course not only Tatars. A series of so called "disappearances" began in mid-March finally leading the Crimean Muftiate also known as the Muslim Spiritual Directorate (MSD) to speak out against the authorities.⁶⁶ Moscow, in classic Russian imperialist style, also simultaneously sought to break the ties between the Mufti and the MSD on the one hand and the Majlis on the other. Russian authorities warned that the MSD was "in danger" because of those links to the anti-Russian and anti-Orthodox Majlis.⁶⁷ By the end of June the same official who made this warning, Roman Silantyev a notorious anti-Muslim, warned that the FSB planned to liquidate "radical Islamic organizations in Crimea." Since Silantyev defines as extremist anyone who the authorities do not like and has repeatedly threatened the MSD, this new warning could clearly presage a full-scale offensive on the MSD and the Crimean Tatars.⁶⁸ Finally in early July the Crimean authorities barred Refat Chubarov, leader of the Majlis, from entering "Russian territory" because of his "activities to incite interethnic hatred." In classic Soviet style Crimean authorities said that Chubarov's activities showed he wanted to be exiled from Crimea and deliberately aimed for this outcome.⁶⁹ In the light of Putin's warning that "none of us can allow the Crimean Tatar people to become a bargaining chip in disputes—especially in disputes between Russia and Ukraine," it is clear that they can hope for nothing from either Moscow or the local authorities.⁷⁰ Likewise the UN High Commissioner for human rights, Navi Pillay, stated that "Tatars faced numerous problems including physical harassment, fear of religious persecution and internal displacement."⁷¹ And the UN simultaneously released a report attesting to those risks.

Perhaps most dangerously, it already appears that policies are in train to seize the Tatars' land on which they are living. As Eric Lohr has written,

The Crimean Tatars who have returned from exile in the past 25 years have for the most part not acquired legal title to the properties and land that they have been using. Part of this was a result of the murky status of property after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian authorities failed to resolve the question, and now it stands as a threatening problem for the Tatars. Crimean Deputy Prime Minister Rustam Temirgaliyev recently announced that the government would ask Tatars to vacate "illegally occupied land." This would threaten the status of many of the Tatars, most of whom settled in makeshift homes on unauthorized property when they returned from exile.⁷²

Temirgaliyev essentially offered transfers of the Crimean Tatars to other lands but clearly is not interested in resolving claims to the lands from which they were dispossessed in 1944.⁷³ Neither can anyone place any credence in his "promises" to resettle the Tatars on suitable lands elsewhere in Crimea.

By June Russia's Ministry of Development was preparing legislation allowing Moscow to seize significant amounts of land in Crimea on an accelerated basis ostensibly to promote economic development along the same lines Moscow used to seize lands in and around Sochi before the Winter Olympics. This economic development would likely take the form of casinos to reduce the costs of annexation by effectively imposing a hidden tax through that sector. Whatever Moscow's motives might be,

The use of the government's power of eminent domain to seize land and then "quietly" privatized it can be sued to change the face of Crimea. It is not difficult to imagine that such

new powers will be used for Russians with close ties to Moscow and against groups like the Crimean Tatars which oppose the annexation.⁷⁴

Other analyses confirm that due to the incomplete nature of claims of title to land in Crimea “Russian officials will deal with the law much as the Kremlin did with Ukraine’s sovereign borders – as they choose.”⁷⁵

Since the spring of 2014 repression of Crimean Tatar media has continued through processes whereby Moscow has placed them under political and financial pressure.⁷⁶ Similarly, new arrests of leading Crimean personalities, e.g. Akhtem Chyhoz, Deputy Head of the Mejlis, and expulsions from Crimea of Dzhemilev and Chubarov have taken place.⁷⁷ According to Michael Birnbaum of the *Washington Post*, as of November 2014,

Russian security forces have searched the homes of leaders of the Muslim minority group for banned books. Young Tatar men have been kidnapped off Crimean streets. Tatar activists are sitting in jail. A few have been killed. Some Tatars say they now fear to venture out of their houses. Eight months after Russia annexed the Black Sea resort region of Crimea, the descendants of the group that ruled the peninsula for centuries say they fear a new effort to divide them. Their top leaders are in exile in Kiev. Those who remain say the new Russian authorities in Crimea have spent more time investigating them than the kidnappings. Analysts say Russian security services appear to be employing tactics they have used against Islamist insurgencies within their borders. The difference in Crimea, Tatar leaders say, is that there is no insurgency. But they fear that the tough approach may radicalize the most disaffected members of their community.⁷⁸

Finally, in January 2015, Moscow announced that the trial of Dzhemilev’s imprisoned son, Khaizer Dzhemilev, is about to take place despite this being a violation of the provisions of the European Court of Human Rights.⁷⁹

These repressions, as Birnbaum suggests, are hallmarks of classic Russian repressions of the past and—taken in tandem with the ever more overt participation of the Russian military and government in the invasion of Ukraine, and in the commission of what can only be described as acts of terrorism against the local population there—can only arouse the deepest fears that if Russia can continue to act with impunity, the outcome could follow the sanguinary traditions of Russian history.

Turkey and the Chances for Resistance

Under the circumstances and given the historical connection between the Crimean Tatars and Turkey it is no surprise that the Tatars, increasingly frustrated by this religious, economic, and political repression, as well as the efforts to impose economic and political pressures upon the Tatars’ media, have appealed to Turkey and even Azerbaijan for relief and support.⁸⁰ Turkey’s position on the annexation of Crimea and the overall Ukrainian crisis has been evolving steadily towards greater resistance and opposition to Moscow’s actions and claims. Cemil Cicek, Speaker of Turkey’s Parliament, recently denounced the annexation of Crimea as unacceptable and that Turkey would not recognize it and instead give priority to the support of the Tatars.⁸¹ Similarly when the crisis began Prime Minister Erdogan said he had urged Putin to respect the rights of the Tatars.⁸² In early July Foreign Minister Akhmet Davutoglu received Dzhemilyev and Chubarov, denounced the barriers to their returning to Crimea, and stated that Turkey was not wavering in its support for the Crimean Tatars despite its close economic and political ties with Russia.⁸³ Indeed, Turkey has now banned any ship from its harbors that declares that they have passed through a Crimean port identified as part of the Russian Federation, or that they are from those ports.⁸⁴

Nevertheless, both Ankara and Baku have multiple reasons for caution in defending the Crimean Tatars as more overt representations on their behalf would not only jeopardize their own ties to Moscow but also go far to confirm the visible suspicions of both local and central authorities in Crimea and Russia that the Tatars are a seditious “fifth column” with ties to Turkey and plotting

to embroil Turkey and Azerbaijan in Russia's internal affairs. The many signs of this mentality of suspicion, coupled with the fact that for twenty years Russian nationalism has been systematically directed against Muslims, can only add to the angers facing the Crimean Tatars.⁸⁵

Conclusion

Thus we have, in a sense, returned full circle to the past whereby repression at home begets suspicions not only of disloyalty but of active connivance with foreign powers in anti-Russian (or anti-Soviet) activities that only further add to the motives of imperial greed, concentration of power, and chauvinism to facilitate policies ending in deportation. But it is not only the foreign dimensions of Russian nationality policies that evoke the past. The overall domestic and nationality policies of the Russian regime betray an addiction to the past disasters of Russian history, suggesting that in some sense Russia is what Claude Levi-Strauss called a frozen culture. The return of official nationality and the mounting evidence of officially inspired ethnic hatreds and toleration for locally generated manifestations of these emotions also evoke previous manifestations of these phenomena throughout the entire span of Russian history.

We may fairly say that today no institutional, moral, or legal barriers other than expediency and potential fear of the consequences stand between the Kremlin and the orchestration of another deportation of an ethnic or other minority that is deemed to be a threat to the government. But today, unlike in the past, Muslims are now considered as insurgents all over the world, including the North Caucasus. There are plenty of signs that Russian repression could generate an Islamic or other terrorist movement among Crimean Tatars that could ultimately connect with those in the North Caucasus. And there is no reason to believe that the Kremlin is not concerned that this could come about.⁸⁶ Even before this crisis there was a high potential for violence in Crimea and analysts who studied it worried that the conventional wisdom was that Russia could annex it and was thinking of doing so whenever that decision suited it.⁸⁷ Yet the potential for ethnic violence has been there from 1991 and Russian policies are clearly, just as in the North Caucasus, stimulating that potential outcome. Pace Naimark and Brecht, the forces that made for past deportations could come again, and not only against the Crimean Tatars for it is clear that overall nationality policy is moving towards ever stricter centralization, repression, chauvinism, etc. as in the past. But this time the spirit of resistance pervades the Muslim world and they will fight back. Moscow may believe, as St. Petersburg did a century ago, that it could incite ethnic antagonisms in the Black Sea basin and benefit from doing so even at the cost of war.⁸⁸ But that illusion was brutally shattered in the First World War and an equally delusional drive to restore the empire to save Putinism could trigger one or more new theaters in the global war on terror. Right now Putin seems to resemble Nicholas I in his policies, not least in the return of official nationality.⁸⁹ But as one Russian historian observed afterwards, all that one could say about Nicholas I's reign was that "it all was a mistake." That mistake ended in the Crimean war that set Russia on the path of failed renewals and abortive efforts to coerce and even deport Russia's ethnic minorities, leading to its ultimate destruction under the ill-fated and equally, albeit differently, misguided Nicholas II. If Russia continues as it is going towards the Crimean Tatars and the other ethnic minorities of Russia, Putin might yet come to be seen not as the heir of the "iron Tsar" but of his feckless great-grandson.

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Crimean Tatars From Mass Deportation to Hardships in Occupied Crimea

Karina Korostelina

George Mason University
Arlington, VA, USA

Abstract: *The article begins with a description of the deportation of Crimean Tatars. It provides a brief review of the German Occupation of Crimea, examines the negative images of Crimean Tatars published in Soviet newspapers between 1941-1943 and the explicit rationale given by the Soviet authorities for the deportation of Crimean Tatars, and reviews the mitigation of hostilities against Tatars in the years following the war. The article continues with accounts of the attempts to repatriate Crimean Tatars after 1989 and the discriminative policies against the returning people. The conclusion of the article describes current hardships experienced by Tatars in occupied Crimea.*

Keywords: *Crimean Tatars, Soviet Union, Russia, Stalin, Second World War*

The last seventy years have presented Crimean Tatars with profound challenges and enormous hardship. They suffered greatly at the hands of the Soviet government during their deportation of 1944 and their return in the late 1980s, and they are being discriminated against by the Russian Government following the annexation of Crimea in 2014. After the Soviets recaptured Ukraine from the Wehrmacht in 1944, Crimean Tatars were deported to Central Asia based on accusations of willingly supporting the enemy, killing innocent Ukrainian civilians, and conspiring to establish a Crimean Tatar republic under German rule. The presentation of this group as traitors and enemies of the Soviet people was used as a foundation for discriminative policies during their return to Crimea. Now they are facing oppressive measures implemented by the Russian government in Crimea, which are being justified based on accusations of extremism and radicalism.

In order to understand the structures and dynamics of the current identity-based conflict in Crimea that has led to the brutal oppression of Crimean Tatars after the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, it is necessary to understand the political and social legacies of Stalinist repression, and the impact of that repression on the development of the systems of identity for Crimean Tatars and Russians over the last fifty years. The case study presented in this paper covers a vastly understudied area in the literature of Ukrainian studies, Russian studies, and genocide studies, which has theoretical and practical implications for our understanding of conflict and identity in post-Soviet Russia, and the on-going conflict in Ukraine.

The analysis in this article represents a clear case of categorical violence. Johan Galtung developed the concepts of direct, cultural, and structural violence.¹ While direct violence describes open cases of aggression, structural violence is understood as injustice and exploitation built into a social system of inequalities, and cultural violence is based on the prevailing attitudes and beliefs in the society. This article shows that Crimean Tatars were victims of all three forms of violence described by Galtung. They were deported by the Stalinist regime, were harassed upon their return to Crimea in 1990s and brutally beaten and killed during the current occupation regime in Crimea. The political structures of Soviet Union and current Putin's Russia supported these aggressive policies, while a culture of paternalism and submission to power justified violent actions.

This article states that the prevailing form of violence against Crimean Tatars was categorical violence. This violence is based on the social category (ethnic, religious, regional, national, gender, age, etc) that is ascribed to a particular group. It can be related to existing identities of this group, or it can be created by the authority or group in power. Because of belonging to a specific social category, a particular group can be denied some rights or access to resources and power (economic and political discrimination), to basic needs, including food (famine), territory (deportation), or right to exist (genocide). Members of a particular social group can experience exceptional hardship only because of their membership in this group that is perceived as treacherous, rebellious, or just secondary.

Both social category as a perception of a group by others, and social identity as a membership in a group, are products of a process of boarder formation, drawing distinctions between an “us” and a “them.”² The constitution of social actors is often shaped through the drawing and redrawing of social boundaries, as well as the invention and borrowing of the boundaries, and encounters between previously distinct and competing networks of social actors, which can all lead to the formation of categories of social actors.³ Communities often recognize clear boundaries that represent distinctive ways of life, and may mobilize themselves by perceiving these boundaries as endangered by a threat from outside.⁴ In such a way, the mobilization of conflicting parties often accompanies an increased clarity of group boundaries amongst the individuals in conflict.⁵ These contracted and reconstructed social boundaries help justify categorical violence toward specific groups that are placed outside of the boundary of powerful groups. This article shows how Crimean Tatars were placed outside the boundary of loyal Soviet people during Soviet Union, and outside the boundary of loyal Crimean residents during the current Russian occupation of Crimea. They became victims of categorical violence that targeted this specific ethnic group for decades.

The paper begins with a description of the deportation of Crimean Tatars, and provides a brief review of the German Occupation of Crimea in order to provide the historical context necessary for examining how Soviet propaganda participated in clarifying the group identify of the Crimean Tatars as an other outside the boundaries of Soviet identity. The case study presents an account of the negative images of Crimean Tatars published in Soviet newspapers between 1941-1943, and shows how these portrayals accompanied the explicit rationale given by the Soviet authorities for the deportation of Crimean Tatars.

After outlining the relevant historical context of the Soviet repression of Crimean Tatars and the identity boundaries that were concretized after the Second World War, the paper proceeds to review the mitigation of hostilities against Tatars in the years following the war in order to show how the boundaries between Crimean Tatars’ and Soviet identities were redrawn to present Crimean Tatars as being insiders, or outsiders, depending on changing political and social contexts. The argument, for example, shows that during the German occupation of Crimea, Soviet propaganda presented the Crimean Tatars as little brothers, mobilizing popular support for the Crimean Tatars by positioning Tatar identity with the family of the Soviet nation. However, when the political demands of the Soviet government shifted after the Second World War, Soviet newspapers began presenting the Crimean Tatars as traitors to the USSR, who were a different, dangerous national group and had to be removed.

The terms national, nation, and nationality in English often denote a group of people united by common descent, history, or culture who form a political social body, oftentimes a state. Russian society and Soviet politics, however, has a long history of conceptualizing nations and nationalities in different terms, which has a great deal of overlap with the concept of ethnicity. Beginning around the 1930s, the boundaries of national identities in the USSR were often delineated ideologically. As the socialist regimes collapsed and central authority fragmented after the fall of the Berlin Wall, social categorization based on ideological models became irrelevant. The creation of the new independent states, the development of concepts of national identity, the rise of ethnic autonomies and enlargement of the European Community lead to changes in the system of identity. The movement from totalitarianism to political pluralism after 1989 was connected to the construction of a state and the reshaping of national identities. Most post-Soviet national identities are now political and are defined by the state. In this post-Soviet space, when a country declared itself a “national state,” it led to an ethnic definition of “nationality.”⁶

The paper continues with accounts of the attempts to repatriate Crimean Tatars after 1989 and the discriminative policies against the returning people. The main contention is that the categories of ethno-national social identity that are structuring the current conflict Crimea were concretized by the fall of the USSR. In the 1990s, the population of Crimea was nearly 2.5 million, with 64 percent of the population identifying themselves as ethnic Russians, 23 percent as Ukrainians, 10 percent as Crimean Tatars, and 3 percent as Byelorussians, Armenians, Greeks, Germans, Jews, and others. This meant that Crimea was the only large-scale administrative-territorial district in Ukraine where the ethnic majority consisted of ethnic Russians. At the same time, the people who identified themselves as ethnic Crimean Tatars considered Crimea as the motherland that formed their ethnic group.

Because of the history of Soviet repression against Tatars and Muslims, Crimean Tatars viewed ethnic Russians as threats to their security, despite the fact that the Russians living in Crimea in 1989 were not responsible for committing Soviet atrocities. The Crimea of the 1990s, therefore, had substantial potential for ethnopolitical violence.⁷ It is through this context that the current political discourse of Crimean Tatars as anti-Russian radical extremists, which is being employed by the Russian government in Crimea to justify repression of the Crimean Tatars, was forged. As the case study demonstrates, this dynamic of presenting Crimean Tatars as extremist nationals was firmly established through the context of Soviet policies. It was very common for proponents of the USSR, and for Soviet propaganda, to portray the USSR as a fatherland for all people residing in its territory regardless of their ethnic or national identity. This made the Crimean Tatar desire to return to a designated homeland after their deportation seem like a lack of patriotism, so that the very act of Tatars pursuing repatriation (among other rights) was viewed as the work of extremist nationals.⁸

The conclusion of the article describes current hardships experienced by Tatars in occupied Crimea. These hardships grew out of the resentment amongst ethnic Russians living in Crimea against the resettlement of Crimean Tatars, which produced conflicts over land, property, and citizenship. That Crimean Tatars received state donations to fund their resettlement increased negative attitudes towards Crimean Tatars amongst ethnic Russians, who had experienced economic deprivations following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Crimean Tatars considered it legitimate to reclaim the property, possessions, and national-territorial autonomy that they had been deprived of when they were deported from Crimea by the Soviet authorities. This dynamic legitimized Russian irredentist autonomy claims after 1989, with Russians perceiving themselves as being marginalized by Crimean Tatars even though ethnic Russians had far better access to jobs and education. Crimean Tatar protestations against discrimination in housing, employment, education, and politics provoked ethnic Russians into feeling threatened by a Crimean Tatar minority. Hence, the goals of Russians and Crimean Tatars were incompatible with the formation of a common national identity in post-Soviet Crimea in Ukraine.⁹ But, more importantly for understanding the current repression of Crimean Tatars, this discourse has become the primary discourse through which the repression of ethnic Crimean Tatars is rationalized, legitimized, and perpetrated by the Russian government in Crimea.

The Deportation of Crimean Tatars

During Second World War, Crimea was among the first Soviet territories occupied by the Wehrmacht, the German occupying army. Taking the British colonial rule over India as their model, the German occupying authorities resorted to a divide-and-rule strategy for dominating the occupied population.¹⁰ However, because they lacked sufficient manpower for complete control, the German army sought support from certain segments of the local population, recruiting them to serve in the local police force or in lower levels of government.¹¹ Historians have pointed out that the German attempt to divide and conquer occupied regions of the USSR aligned with the interest of Crimean Tatar nationalists who wanted an independent Tatar nation-state.¹² Crimean Tatar nationalist leaders worked with German authorities in Berlin, even though they frequently complained that the Germany authorities were attempting to exploit and curtail Crimean Tatar nationalist ambitions to fit German interests.¹³ Regardless, the German attempts to divide and conquer relied on tactics of ethnic division, whereby the Wehrmacht carefully exploited ethnic tensions and favored Crimean Tatars over other groups.¹⁴

Crimean Tatars are a Turkic-speaking people. They represent a mixture of the ancient Gothic and Alan populations who settled in Eastern Europe in the 7th century. The name Tatars first emerged in the 13th century, when the Mongol Golden Horde occupied the peninsula. As the non-Turkic population became assimilated with other Crimeans via shared religion, language, and culture, Tatars formed an independent state known as the Crimean Khanate—a political entity ruled by a khan, on the model of the invading Mongols. This state remained independent until the Russian Empire began to expand in the 17th century.

Upon Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula in the 18th century, the Crimean Khanate lost its autonomy. The relationships between Crimean Tatars and the Russian empire periodically

intensified, culminating in the Crimean War in 1854. The mutual mistrust between the imperial Russian and Crimean Khanate governments further strained relations in the peninsula, forcing many Tatars to leave for the Ottoman Empire for fear of retaliation and possible resettlement within the Russian heartland. Though many Tatars remained in Crimea, by 1917 Tatars made up only a quarter of the population there.¹⁵

In its early years of power following the Russian Revolution, the Soviet regime followed a policy created by Lenin to support the national autonomy of minority national groups throughout the Soviet Union. The Russian empire had been a multi-national empire, and the new Soviet government had to find a way to rein in the nationalist ambitions of the various national groups—such as Ukrainians, Kazaks, Belarusians, Tatars, and many more—who spoke their own languages, held their own particular religious traditions, and demanded the right to national self-determination.¹⁶ In order to convince these groups to support the Bolshevik revolution, Lenin initially promised to support national self-determination within the USSR, and promote the autonomy of national minorities. By the early 1930s, however, the Soviet regime found this policy untenable, and turned to policies intended to coerce nationalist groups into submission to the authority of Moscow. The political ambitions of various national groups were handled on an individual basis through policies that ranged from banning national languages, to state-orchestrated famines, massacres, forced resettlements, interment in gulags, and the imprisonment or extrajudicial executions of members of the intelligentsia of the various national groups.

In 1934, in an attempt to assert Soviet control over Crimea, Crimea was divided into zoning districts, where the territories with a predominance of a certain national or ethnic group were transformed into independent administrative units. 177 regional self-regulatory bodies, the majority of them Crimean Tatars, were created, including units in the Alushta, Balaklavsky, Bakhchisaray, Karasubazarsky, Kuibyshev, Sudak, and Yalta regions. Moreover, a number of ethnic schools were established, where Crimean Tatars could teach their own language and their own curriculum. Newspapers and magazines were published in the Crimean Tatar language.

During his leadership of the Soviet government, Stalin changed many of the policies regarding the rights of national and ethnic groups. Historians have termed these policies of the late 1920s and early 1930s to be indicative of an “Affirmative Action Empire,” where Stalin believed that sanctioning nationalist autonomy for minority groups allowed Moscow to dictate the contents of their national culture and thereby circumscribe the political ambitions of these groups.¹⁷ This contradiction between promoting national autonomy while crushing the political ambitions of national groups was common throughout the USSR. Lenin and Stalin had both used the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1921 as a propaganda tool to demonstrate that Soviet power was just and fair, offering political and cultural autonomy to the nations who respected Soviet authority.¹⁸ The establishment of the republic was followed by famine that some have considered to be a state-orchestrated famine, which killed over 100,000 Crimeans, most of whom were Tatar. By 1928, the nationalist leaders who Lenin and Stalin supported in 1921 were shot to death, and the USSR sought to eliminate the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia—all while proclaiming Crimean Tatar cultural autonomy.¹⁹

These policies across the USSR did not quell nationalist resistance to the Soviet program of collectivizing land and property. In Crimea, as elsewhere in the USSR, this brief period of regained autonomy was not to last. Stalin, by the mid 1930s, adopted a policy of destroying national identity across the USSR and creating a new Soviet national identity for the Soviet state. In this campaign to create a single Soviet nation, aspirations for the distinct identity of minorities were brutally suppressed. These repressions led to mass arrests and the destruction of hundreds of religious buildings (mosques, temples, synagogues, etc.) in Crimea. The independent ethnic administrative units were terminated and Crimean Tatars—among others—lost their religious freedoms and their right to send their children to ethnic schools, where they could be educated in their native language.

During the German occupation of the Ukraine in the Second World War, the situation changed yet again. The German occupying authorities enticed Crimean Tatars with special privileges, and invited Tatar nationalist leaders to Berlin.²⁰ They distributed gardens to the Tatars, which was a highly symbolic act given that the Soviet Union had abolished private property and collectivized all the land. The German occupying authorities released Crimean Tatar prisoners of war, and excused

Tatars from labor duty. In addition, Crimean Tatars were relieved of heavy tax duties, allowed to practice their religion openly, and offered education in the Tatar language. A Moslem Committee was created in Simferopol, and Crimean Tatars were appointed to administrative positions within it. Such policies garnered strong support for the occupying force from many Crimean Tatars, particularly among older residents whose suffering under Stalin's brutal collectivization policies was not forgotten. In exchange for such privileges, some Tatars did in fact collaborate with the German occupation by revealing key strategic information, such as the positions of partisan troops as well as Soviet army plans.

Yet, most Tatars refused to work for the Wehrmacht, in part because of German brutality against inhabitants of Tatar villages. Furthermore, during this time ten percent of the Crimean Tatar population was mobilized and forced to fight on the front lines for Hitler;²¹ almost every family had a close relative serving. In addition, a majority of Crimean Tatars retained their loyalty to the Soviet government, based in part on their consumption of Soviet propaganda urging them to resist the German occupiers.²²

At the beginning of the war, Soviet newspapers recounted acts of courage and heroism by Tatar soldiers. These accounts fostered patriotism in Crimean Tatars, and intensified hatred toward the Germans. Every issue of these newspapers published accounts of atrocities committed by the German troops, the progress of the Soviet army, and the courage of Crimean Tatar soldiers and guerillas fighting alongside and with the Soviet army. The leading Crimean newspaper, *Krasnyi Krym*, generally portrayed the Tatar people as coexisting peacefully for centuries with their "older brother—the great Russian nation." In these accounts, all nationalities in the Soviet Union were acting in unison against their common, and evil, adversary.²³ One such article recounts the brutality of the German army:

Brother- Tatars! You are in the occupied territory among the enemy. You see and feel the horrors of the Fascist occupation. The Germans send your sons to the frontline. They rape your daughters; they turn you into powerless slaves. They condemned you to starvation and death.²⁴

As Crimean Tatars were positioned in unity with other nationalities in the "Soviet family," the boundary divisions between Crimean Tatars (as "brothers") and Germans (as the "vicious enemy") intensified.

The newspapers repeatedly cast the Germans as colonizers seeking to destroy the cultural heritage of the people: "The Germans try to sow discord among people of the Crimea. They set Russians against Jews, Tatars against Russians. This is an old trick of colonizers."²⁵ The proclamation made by German occupying forces that they would bring freedom to Tatars was unmasked in these narratives as part of a devious campaign of colonization, linked to their true mission to destroy the nation's honor and pride, and to plunder the rich Crimean soil.²⁶ But the Soviet army—it was promised—would soon reenter the peninsula and dispel the Wehrmacht, according to the newspaper accounts.

Some of the articles at this time do mention the collaboration of Crimean Tatars with the German army, but the reports state that such collaboration occurred only after German deception, provocation, and coercion. Even so, the collaborators were viewed as traitors to the nation. According to one article,

[The Germans] created the so-called Tatar Committee, but it is clear to everyone that this committee is the slave of the German-colonizers, it works for Fascists and helps rob and deceive the Tatar people.²⁷

The articles referred to an old Russian proverb that there is no village without a dog, implying that every community has its own degenerates (*urody obshestva*) and there are some traitors within any community—but such cases were presented as rare. In general, the Crimean Tatar population remained loyal to Soviet rule and was viewed as such.

The Soviet authorities drew upon cultural images of tight-knit Crimean Tatar communities, which emphasized family security and respect for elders, to show that the willingness of some

Crimean Tatars to join the German army was like an act of youthful rebellion against the wider family. By casting enemy collaboration in familial terms, forgiveness for such transgressions and re-unification of the greater Soviet family could result, presumably, from acts of repentance on the part of the rebellious child.

As the war progressed, Soviet propaganda sought to intensify national pride by promoting images of the heroism of the multicultural Soviet army. Acts of enemy collaboration by a few individuals were presented as cases of character flaws, likened to the betrayal of selling one's ancestral land. Newspaper stories stressed that the Soviet army included soldiers of all racial and ethnic groups, in stark contrast to the racist policies of the Wehrmacht, which followed the National Socialist racial policies, and considered all non-Arians as Untermenschen and prohibited people of inferior races from fighting in its ranks.²⁸ Many articles offered personalized accounts of the hardships of Crimean Tatar troops and featured the life stories of those who demonstrated outstanding courage.²⁹

As the Soviet army recovered its territory from the Wehrmacht in the later stages of the war, the number of articles glorifying the heroic deeds of Tatars rapidly decreased. The Soviet propaganda machine shifted from publishing inspiring stories in pursuit of national unity to narrative tactics that served the need to return a sense of normalcy to the reoccupied territory. Following a new government campaign, the newspapers abandoned their earlier characterization of Crimean Tatars as rebellious younger brothers and portrayed them, among other ethnic groups, as enemy accomplices. These portrayals castigated these groups as traitors who deserved severe punishment. Moreover, based on this characterization future generations of Crimean Tatars should be condemned for the actions committed by their ancestors during the war. Dehumanizing images of Tatars were spread throughout the general population, representing a stark contrast to the glorification of those who had served in the Red Army.

The official decision to deport all Tatars from Crimea between 1942 and 1943 required careful planning and forethought at the highest levels of government. In his secret correspondence to Stalin months prior to the decision to deport Tatars, Levrentii Beria, the head of NKVD (the organization preceding the KGB), characterized all Crimean Tatars as traitors. In one transmission Beria writes:

The devastating situation in the occupied territories of Crimea can be explained by the diversion group. 1178 people who helped the German army were arrested. The Tatar national committee, which had branches in various regions in Crimea, mobilized volunteers into the Nazi Tatar division and sent the non-Tatar population to the labor camps in Germany.³⁰

In another letter, Beria states that during the Second World War, Crimean Tatars acted as accomplices to German occupiers:

Many Crimean Tatars betrayed their Motherland, deserted from the army and joined the army of the enemy, participated in the voluntary Nazi divisions, [and] participated in the barbaric and cruel killings of the Soviet people.³¹

As such correspondence was taking place, the People Commissar on Internal Affairs and the People Commissar on State Security imposed a law (Ukase) in April 1944 designed to punish all anti-Soviet elements operating in areas previously occupied by the Wehrmacht. According to this law, the Crimean peninsula was to be cleared of "agents of German and Romanian intelligence, traitors, collaborators, members of crime organizations." The law's intent is conveyed as follows:

To clear the territory of the Crimean region from the agents of foreign intelligence agencies and contra-intelligence groups, of those who betrayed their country and traitors, who actively helped Nazi-German occupation forces and their agents, of participants of anti-Soviet organizations, bandit groups and other anti-Soviet elements that helped occupations forces (13 April, 1944).

Interestingly, the law lacked particular reference to any specific ethnic affiliation of the enemy elements.

In a secret wire to Stalin, Molotov, and Malenkov two weeks later, Beria reported on the number of members of each nationality living in Crimea who were killed, taken to labor camps by the German army, or evacuated by the Soviets:

On Crimea. The population of the Crimea before the war—1,126,000 people, including 218,000 Tatars. Killed 67 thousands of Jews, Karaimov, Krymchakov, taken to Germany—50,000 people, evacuated 5,000 people.³²

Beria explained that the high number of casualties in Crimea resulted from the work of saboteurs and anti-Soviet elements among the Crimean Tatars. The Tatar National Committee was cited as working closely with voluntary German divisions, supplying intelligence on Soviet operations, and sending non-Tatar natives to the German labor camps. The document stated:

The Tatar National Committee, having its own branches in every Tatar district in Crimea, recruited intelligence agents to work in the occupied territories, enlisted volunteers to the created German Tatar division, [and] sent the local non-Tatar population for work in Germany.

Crimean Tatar families, women, and elders were identified as traitors aiding those hiding from the Soviet army. These accusations had the effect of intensifying prevailing divisions between those who were considered loyal Soviet peoples and the supposedly treasonous Crimean Tatars.

In a later telegram to Stalin, Beria established for the first time an ethnic designation to anti-Soviet elements operating during the war.³³ He wrote that more than twenty thousand Crimean Tatar soldiers deserted the Soviet army and joined German forces.

Considering treacherous action of the Crimean Tatars against the Soviet people and considering unfeasibility of the further residency of Crimean Tatars on the border of the Soviet Union, NKVD asks for your consideration of deportation of all Crimean Tatars from the territory of Crimea.³⁴

In this communiqué, Beria recommended to Stalin that the entire Crimean Tatar population be deported to the Uzbek Soviet Republic. Before writing this memo, Beria had already informed the head of the Central Committee of Uzbekistan about this impending deportation, anticipating no obstacles to his proposal of this state-sponsored brutality. He stated that the operation would start on May 21 and last for about ten days. In the letter to Stalin, Beria wrote, “the issue of settling the Tatars in Uzbek SSR is arranged with the Secretary of the Central Committee of Uzbekistan, comrade Usupov.”³⁵

The day after receiving this correspondence, Stalin signed the deportation decree. A top-secret document dated May 11, 1944 recounts that the Soviet State Defense Committee set the decree in motion, ordering the deportation of the entire Crimean Tatar nationality from the Crimean peninsula. Many Crimean Tatars were accused of treason, deserting their military units, embracing the enemy’s goal of conquest, and serving in *Schutzmannschaftsbataillonen* (police battalions). The document additionally asserted that Crimean Tatars acted inhumanely against the Soviet guerrillas, actively engaged in transporting Soviet people to German labor camps, gathered intelligence for the enemy, and sabotaged Soviet military operations. Instead of being cheered as war heroes or scolded as younger brothers, the Crimean Tatars were now repositioned as a monolithic unit, a dangerous enemy bloc whose recent campaign of mass treachery necessitated the deportation of the entire population to Uzbek Soviet Republic by June 1, 1944. These drastic measures were allegedly required to prevent any additional collaboration of Crimean Tatars with potential sympathizers to the retreating German army.

Moreover, although the Germans were in retreat and certainly losing the war by this time, the idea that they could have used Crimean Tatars to establish alliances with Turkey and with segments of the Muslim population prompted concern among the Soviet officials that the Tatars could take up the banner and threaten the cohesion of the Soviet Union by fostering Muslim solidarity across the

region. Despite such frenzied accusations, the few documented cases of collaboration by Crimean Tatars were wildly exaggerated by propagandists.³⁶

The Soviet fear of losing Crimea to the Wehrmacht army even after their departure prompted the authority to deport so-called unreliable elements of the population into Central Asia. But even in possession of totalitarian controls, the Soviet leaders still required a public justification for such widespread actions launched against this ethnic group. With vitriolic hatred of Germans still deeply ingrained in the collective psyche, the positioning practices began to shift, and a new enemy group emerged.³⁷ But unlike Germans, who, as invaders, were never in close proximity to the majority of the Soviet population, Tatars inhabited the land for centuries and lived freely among the Soviet people. Their perceived betrayal felt personal, close to home, and fratricidal. Many segments of the general population found in the Tatars convenient scapegoats.³⁸ to explain the source of their current misery. Tatars were blamed for the miserable conditions of service in the Soviet army, and the lack of basic necessities for survival for many members of the general population. The positioning tactics of the propaganda campaign established a normative order that exiled the outgroup not only physically but socially, forever tainting them with the stain of treason.

The Soviet political elite skillfully exploited the emotional trauma among the population. In May 1944, with little forewarning, Tatar women, children, and the elderly were loaded into freight trains and transported to Central Asia, primarily to Uzbekistan. Lacking food, water or adequate sanitation, many Tatars died in transit. Those who survived the journey were confined to special zones for their residency. The vigilance of lower Party officials to meet pre-established quotas resulted in many Tatars abandoning their property and personal possessions. The settlements of Crimean Tatars in Uzbekistan turned into permanent residences. Tremendous economic, political, and social hardships ensued. Beria's plea to Stalin to implement a "cleaning [cleansing] process of Crimean population from the anti-Soviet elements" resulted in thinking clinically about the whole operation. Almost every day for four months preceding the final arrests and deportations, Stalin received progress reports which reduced the tragic events for thousands of families to numerical measurements—the number of people deported, the number of arrests, and the number of appropriated houses, cattle, and other domestic animals.

The secrecy of Soviet institutions kept the general population ignorant of the numerous atrocities committed by the Soviet government against its people. Those who expressed disapproval of inhumane treatment of minority groups were denounced as enemies of the people. Nevertheless, stories about mass deportation and arrests began to circulate unofficially throughout the country. Many segments of the general population learned about the deportation of Crimean Tatars to Uzbekistan, as well as the dispersion of Chechens, Koreans, and Volga Germans to Kazakhstan. Other small ethnic minorities, such as the Karachay, Ingush, Balkar, and Kalmyk, were also scattered across vast Soviet territories. But few realized the scale of the tragedy, or the full extent of demonization campaign against the Tatars and other minorities.

During post-war reconstruction in the Soviet Union, a large number of deportees sought to return to their homeland. Yet the need to control the interactions of multiple nationalities could not warrant such mobility. The Supreme Committee of the Soviet Union passed an Ukas (decree) imposing severe punishment to anyone attempting to repatriate, citing that returning Crimean Tatars would serve as agents for foreign governments. The law demanded that each ethnic group be assigned a particular place of residence. Like so many of the edicts of the Soviet government, this law was established in secret.³⁹

Repatriation—Exoneration of the Crimean Tatars

Over time, the cause for Crimean Tatar repatriation became widely recognized. Beginning in 1989, the liberal policies associated with Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika allowed more than a quarter of a million of Crimean Tatars to return to their historic homeland, predominantly from Uzbekistan.⁴⁰ These policies were driven by the need to redress gross injustices of the past and the brutal mistreatment of this Turko-Muslim ethnic group. As might be expected, many Crimean residents objected to Tatar repatriation. Their allegedly treasonous deeds during the war were not forgotten or forgiven. The Tatars were stigmatized as a danger to the Soviet people, citing alleged Tatar degeneracy. In the half-century absence of Crimean Tatars from their homeland,

Tatar history and culture heritage were largely expunged from the population of Crimea as they were castigated as invaders whose presence represents a threat to the legitimate residents of the peninsula.

As an extended arm of the reigning political institutions, the mass media actively embraced government policies for the repatriation of exiled ethnic groups; however, their simultaneous coverage of public demonstrations and conflicts among the local population in Crimea perpetuated strong negative images of returning Crimean Tatars. Letters to the Editor of the large newspaper *Argumenty i fakti* (*Arguments and Facts*) denounced attempts by Crimean Tatars to return to Crimea. Their claims to return to their historic homeland were dismissed as groundless. Most returnees were accused of never having lived in Crimea. Tatars were accused of marrying outside of their ethnic group and thus relinquishing their right to return. Because the USSR was viewed as a fatherland for all people residing in its territory regardless of their ethnic identity (or nationality in Soviet policy), the desire to return to a designated homeland represented a lack of patriotism. Once again, the practices of identity positioning returned to the idea of the greater Soviet family to suit the needs of the dominant group. The very act of Tatars pursuing repatriation (among other rights) was viewed as the work of extremist nationalists.⁴¹

As the number of Crimean Tatars returning to the peninsula increased, ethnic hostilities intensified in Crimea. After extended political debate in the late 1980s over the rights of Crimean Tatars, representatives of the Central Committee of Communist Party of Ukraine held dialogues between Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups, seeking to decrease social tensions and prevent extremist tendencies toward repatriation in the population. Some Committee officials were sent to Uzbekistan, the major source of repatriates, to discourage the migration of large numbers of people. Moreover, the Committee recommended that the Soviet Ministers of Ukraine revisit the history of the peninsula, particularly the period of Second World War, to install a monument in commemoration of the Crimean Tatars soldiers who died during the war.⁴² These positioning tactics embraced a policy of “keep them where they are.” The Department of Information and Popularization of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Ukraine advised the Ukrainian media to promote peaceful coexistence among the diverse ethnic group of the Crimean peninsula.⁴³ The Ukrainian newspapers called for harmonious ethnic relations and stressed long traditions of respectful and peaceful coexistence between Tatars and the Ukrainian population. They condemned attempts to sow seeds of discord among the citizens of the Ukraine.⁴⁴ According to some articles, Crimea had sufficient resources to meet the needs of all returning ex-patriots.⁴⁵

And yet, economic challenges contributed to escalating tensions between current residents and the newcomers to Crimea. To aggravate tensions, the government could not provide all returnees with affordable housing, equal educational opportunities, or adequate medical services. The newspapers repeatedly raised the following rhetorical question: “Where does one get various resources?”⁴⁶ The dissolution of the Soviet Union increased economic burdens on the local government. Lacking governmental support, many returning Crimean Tatars settled in locations that were prohibited by government authorities. The formation of unauthorized self-seized settlements, known as *samozahvat*, enraged the local population. Newspapers reported that *samozahvat* destroyed 238 hectares of fertile land.⁴⁷ Hundreds of houses built by the newly arrived Crimean Tatars were bulldozed; hundreds were denied registration, jobs, and education. The rights for housing and settlement became a point of contention between the government of Ukraine and the Tatar *mejelice*, a local elected governing office.

Public officials and the media eventually recognized the scarcity of resources to meet the basic needs of the general population. The voices that encouraged resettlement were met with disdain from most members of the population. Some of these critics saw the fount of troubles as coming “from the top” by government authorities.⁴⁸ Old labels, stories, and prejudices reflecting well-worn patterns of ethnic hostility resurfaced. Many articles cast Crimean Tatars as traitors for serving in the German army.⁴⁹ The economic prosperity of some Crimean Tatar families was attributed to their inherent criminal character, as evident in practices such as money laundering and government corruption, rather than to their hard work.⁵⁰ Many members of the general public even positioned Tatars as barbarians.⁵¹ Tatars were denigrated as culturally backwards, lacking adequate language skills, and unsuited for modern life.⁵²

In general, economic hardships often force people to blame an ethnic or minority group that differs from the predominant population. The citizens of Crimea during the 1980s argued that the peninsula was being invaded by traitors who sought to transform Crimea to Tatarland (*otatarivshiy*).⁵³ Despite certain official proclamations regarding the need to exonerate Tatars from past allegations, returning Tatars accused by some officials of engaging in a sinister campaign of conquest over the rightful residents of Crimea. These officials went as far as to argue that Crimean Tatars lost all their rights as a result of their deportation to the Central Asia.⁵⁴

As they began to repatriate, some Crimean Tatars responded to their continued provocation with aggressive statements, political challenges, and in some cases violence. Attempts to reclaim lost property led to numerous attacks against the local population. Crimean Tatar officials threatened that, once in power, they would deny residency for all non-Tatar populations in Crimea.⁵⁵ Such rhetoric further incited animosity and escalated the struggle to a state that approached civil war.

Crimean Tatars in Occupied Crimea

In February 2014 Russia took control of Crimea and occupied the peninsula. On March 16, 2014 the Crimean Government held a referendum on the status of Crimea. The aim of the referendum was for the Crimean people to decide whether Crimean would join Russia as a federal subject, or if they wanted to restore the 1992 Crimean constitution and Crimea's status as a part of Ukraine. According to Crimean authorities, 96.77 per cent of voters in Crimea supported joining Russia. Many Crimeans loyal to Kiev, including Crimean Tatars, boycotted the referendum, and the EU and US condemned it as illegal. The Joint Statement on Crimea issued by the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso stated: "The referendum is illegal and illegitimate and its outcome will not be recognized ... We reiterate the strong condemnation of the unprovoked violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and call on Russia to withdraw its armed forces to their pre-crisis numbers and the areas of their permanent stationing, in accordance with relevant agreements."⁵⁶

Crimean Tatars together with other residents of the peninsula were forced to give up their Ukrainian citizenship for Russian citizenship. All Ukrainian citizens became foreigners in their own land and had to acquire a "residence permit."⁵⁷ Facing an illegal Russian Government, many Crimean Tatars decided to leave Crimea. According to Amnesty International, "up to 7,000 Tatars have fled Crimea already. Those who have stayed face the unenviable choice of having to give up their Ukrainian citizenship and accept a Russian one or become 'foreigners' in their homeland."⁵⁸

The highest executive body of Crimean Tatars, the Mejlis, has openly criticized Russia's occupation of Crimea. Members of Mejlis recommended that all Crimean Tatars boycott both the March referendum on Crimea's status and the September local elections. Most Crimean Tatars boycotted the March 16 illegal referendum on the status of Crimea, fully supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity. They also boycotted Russian local elections held on September 14.

Mejlis also appealed to the Crimean authorities to disarm and make illegal the self-defense units in Crimea. These self-defense units were formed as armed paramilitary groups in late February with the aim of precluding any opposition to the referendum on Crimea's status. Since then they have been involved in "unlawful detention, abduction, ill-treatment including torture, and harassment of pro-Ukraine activists and other residents with complete impunity."⁵⁹ The self-defense units have also been a part of illegitimate searches of persons, properties, and vehicles, violent dispersals of meetings and public gatherings, and numerous attacks on representatives of the mass media. Crimean authorities did not launch any investigations regarding unlawful actions of self-defense units. Instead, in June 2014, the parliament of Crimea passed the law On People's Uprising that makes the self-defense units legal on the peninsula. The law authorized self-defense units to check identity documents and assist police in temporarily detaining people.⁶⁰ Many units are operating without the presence of police. They regularly harass, interrogate, and sometimes beat people because they choose to do.

Mejlis became the target of coercive actions by the Crimean Government. The prosecutor issued several statements describing the Mejlis actions as extremist activities, including a boycott of the September 14 local elections.⁶¹ In September, the de facto prime minister of Crimea stated publicly that the Mejlis was not a "legal organization" and that it had "very little authority" among the Crimean Tatar population.⁶²

The leaders of Mejlis were forced to live outside Crimea. On April 22, 2014 an informal leader of the Crimean Tatars, Mustafa Jemiliev, was informed by the Russian Federal Migration Service that he was a *persona non grata* in Crimea, and on May 2, 2014 he was refused entry to Moscow to board his flight to Crimea. The following day, he was stopped at the checkpoint between Crimea and mainland Ukraine. Several thousands Crimean Tatars created a human corridor welcoming Jemiliev into Crimea but he was refused entry. On May 4, 2014, the Chair of Mejlis, Refat Chubarov, received a written warning from the Prosecutor of Crimea stating that his activities and the activities of the Mejlis were in violation of Russian law on extremism.⁶³ On July 5, 2014, on his return from the neighboring Ukrainian region of Kherson, Chubarov was stopped at a checkpoint by the Russian military and received notice of his five-year ban on entering the territory of Russia.⁶⁴

The houses of other Mejlis members were routinely searched by Crimean authorities. For example, on the night of May 14, a day before planned public gatherings to commemorate the anniversary of the mass deportation of Crimean Tatars, the authorities searched dozens of homes, including the home of Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Mejlis' press secretary, Ali Khamzin. The authorities searched for weapons and explosives at the home of Mejlis member Edem Mustafaev.⁶⁵ The authorities also searched dozens of private residences of Crimean Tatars and conducted invasive, and some times illegal, searches of mosques and Islamic schools to look for drugs, weapons, and prohibited literature.

Crimean authorities also denied Crimean Tatars' right to freedom of expression, assembly and potentially association. For example, the ban imposed on all mass meetings in Crimea until June 6 impeded the events planned for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the mass deportation on May 18. Crimean Tatars were allowed only to hold a common prayer on the outskirts of the Crimean capital, Simferopol.

Unlawful detention, abductions, and the beating of Crimean Tatars also became a common feature in Crimea. In October, authorities arrested and charged three Crimean Tatars with violating the law during the protests of May 3. Human Rights Watch previously documented at least 15 cases in which Crimean Tatars or pro-Ukraine activists were forcibly disappeared, abducted, or went missing in Crimea since March 2014. Six of them were later released but two of them were subsequently found dead.⁶⁶ For example, on March 3, 39-year old Reshat Ametov had held a one-man protest in front of the Crimean Council of Ministers building in Simferopol. Three men from the self-defense forces led him away and put him into their car. Two weeks later his body was found showing signs of torture. A criminal case that has been opened but has, as of yet, not result in any arrests.⁶⁷ Edem Asanov, a Crimean Tatar who was not politically active but had posted information about the treatment of Crimean Tatars on his social network VKontakte, disappeared on September 29 in Evpatoria. Six days later, police found Asanov's body hanged in an abandoned building.

Crimean Tatars' media also became a target of Crimean authorities and self-defense units. Russia's Federal Security Service and the Crimea prosecutor's office have issued warnings to leading Crimean Tatar media outlets not to publish extremist materials and threatened editors that the outlets would not be allowed to re-register unless they changed their anti-Russian editorial line. The self-defense units publicly referred to ATR, the main Crimean Tatar channel that broadcasts in three languages: Crimean Tatar, Ukrainian, and Russian, as the enemy channel and since March attacked and beat several ATR journalists.⁶⁸ On May 16, the Crimea prosecutor's office issued an official warning to ATR's leadership about its coverage of the mass gathering on May 3, stating that the channel had reported on the gathering's participants making calls "of an extremist nature."⁶⁹ According to Amnesty international, "ATR has received informal instructions from the authorities not to broadcast reports which included members of the Mejlis or leaders of the Crimean Tatar community, unless they were loyal to the Crimean authorities and Russia."⁷⁰ Several journalists and media workers have been detained and in some cases harassed and beaten. For example, on May 18, self-defense units detained Crimean Tatar journalist Osman Pashayev and his crew while they were filming a meeting in Simferopol. The self-defense units forced him and his colleagues to stand facing a wall and interrogated them, beating and harassing them for several hour. The journalists' equipment was confiscated and never returned to them.⁷¹

All Ukrainian media was gradually removed from translating in Crimea. According to the OSCE, "Broadcasts from the six main Ukrainian television channels in Crimea have been blocked

and replaced with broadcasts from Russian channels. Since the end of June, cable television providers also stopped airing most leading Ukrainian-language channels in Crimea, including Inter, Channel 5, 1+1, and several others, significantly reducing the amount of televised Ukrainian-language content.⁷² Police seized the equipment and computers that belonged to Chernomorska (Black Sea) Television Company and the Center for Journalistic Investigation, a nonprofit group specializing in investigative journalism that had an office in the same building.⁷³

Conclusion

Categorical violence against Crimean Tatars is rooted in the redefinition of social boundary and ascription of treacherous and rebellious attitudes to the entire ethnic group. During the Second World War, the Soviet authorities orchestrated a campaign to collectively reclassify certain ethnic minorities as a prelude to their deportation from their homelands. Such negative categorization soon became an instrument of terror. The demonization of Germans as Nazis by the Soviet propaganda machine intensified hatred toward their (perceived and actual) collaborators. Working in secrecy, Soviet propagandists exploited information about a few cases of Crimean Tatar collaboration with the German occupation to generate nationalistic hatreds that lasted for half a century.

Significant reduction of the level of hostility toward the Crimean Tatar population began with perestroika and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The repatriation of Crimean Tatars in the beginning of the 1990s aimed to redress previous injustices and to compensate them for the hardships they experienced at the hands of the Soviet government. However, Crimean Tatars were ill-treated by local Crimean authorities and experienced discrimination from the Crimean population. They were denied access to land, work, and affordable housing. After Ukrainian independence they gradually acquired many rights but some issues remained unresolved.

The illegal occupation of Crimea by Russia has again reignited hardship suffered by Crimean Tatars. They refused to acknowledge the new authority by boycotting the referendum on the status of Crimea and the local elections. In response, local government and militant self-defense forces targeted Mejlis leadership, activists and mass media representatives. Harassment, arrests, abductions, and beatings once again became a part of the everyday life for Crimean Tatars. Two Mejlis leaders were prohibited to live in Crimea and Mejlis actions were portrayed as extremist.

The demonization of Crimean Tatars that started during the Second World War by the communist regime continues to play a definitive role in their positioning in society today. It provided the justification needed by the Crimean Government in the late 1980s to create impediments to the return of Crimean Tatars to their Motherland. Similar definitions of treason and extremism were employed by the authorities of illegally occupied Crimea in 2014. In all three situations, categorical violence based on the negative portrayal of Crimean Tatars has led to a denial of their rights, and the prosecution and harassment of leadership and ordinary citizens.

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“Liberat[ing] Mankind from such an Odious Scourge”: The Genocide Convention and the Continued Failure to Prevent or Halt Genocide in the Twenty-First Century

Kelly Maddox

Lancaster University
Lancaster, United Kingdom

Abstract: Since it came into force in 1951, the United Nations’ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, a document created with the explicit purpose of “liberat[ing] mankind from such an odious scourge,” has largely failed to deliver on the promises it enshrined. The twentieth century bore witness to an increasing frequency of genocides, a pattern which is continuing into the twenty-first century with the outbreak of arguably genocidal violence in Darfur in 2003, and more recently, the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2014. This article analyzes the failure of the Genocide Convention by exploring its deficiencies alongside issues of state sovereignty and levels of political interest, and particularly, the relationship between these issues, in the context of the specific cases of Cambodia, Rwanda, and Darfur. Understanding the lessons of these past failures is crucial as the UN attempts to address genocidal violence in the CAR today.

Keywords: definition, genocide, Genocide Convention, prevention, state sovereignty

The creation of the United Nations’ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide¹ (Genocide Convention) in 1948 was, as Mr. Evatt, then-President of the General Assembly observed, an “epoch-making” event for “a significant advance had been made in the development of international criminal law.”² Certainly, it was a landmark document being one of the first of its kind to address human rights issues. More importantly, with its moral obligation for signatories to prevent genocide, it was unique in its scope and in its potential as a tool that could be utilized by the UN, and the international community, when faced with cases of potential, or unfolding, genocide. Thus, it went much further than any other international criminal law document at that time. Nevertheless, the Genocide Convention was not without its flaws. Debates over several controversial yet significant aspects continued over the two years of drafting resulting in an ambiguously worded, loop-hole ridden diplomatic compromise. This was a necessity for, as the Australian delegate Mr. Dignam noted, waiting to satisfy the arguments of all fifty-eight member states “would be tantamount to postponing the completion of the instrument indefinitely.”³ From the outset, the Convention was seen by its own creators as an incomplete compromise, a starting point which they hoped, “in spite of its imperfections...could not fail to have a preventive effect.”⁴

The record of the Genocide Convention since it came into force in 1951 would seem to suggest otherwise.⁵ In fact, as the Cold War began to dominate the international arena, it went through a “lengthy hibernation.”⁶ Unfortunately, the same could not be said of genocide itself. Instances of genocidal violence occurred unimpeded throughout the period. The most well-known case is that which took place in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979, where the calculated slaughter and starvation of up to twenty percent of the population went largely unacknowledged, and definitely unrestrained, until the controversial Vietnamese invasion of 1978 thrust it to the forefront of world affairs.⁷ With the end of the Cold War came increased optimism as a “new world order” was to be established hopefully bringing greater success for the UN. On 13 January 1992, British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd suggested that “now the Cold War is over, the UN, and particularly the Security Council, is working as the founding fathers intended.”⁸ If the founding fathers had intended for the UN to stand idle as the perpetration of brutal atrocities shattered the lives of hundreds of thousands of victims around the world, then it certainly was. For the end of the Cold War had also “lifted the lid” on “simmering tensions” around the world.⁹ Horrific genocidal violence erupted first in the former Yugoslavia in 1992 and then Rwanda in 1994. These cases emphasize that despite early optimism, the Convention still remained mostly impotent in regards to prevention. Indeed, the *odious scourge* has continued into the twenty-first century where, in spite of initiatives such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the creation of the Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG), genocidal violence has continued on and off in Darfur, Sudan since 2003.

More recently, UN spokespeople have been warning of looming genocide in the Central African Republic (CAR). Sectarian violence, largely between Christian and Muslim groups, broke out in 2013 following the overthrow of President François Bozizé by Michel Djotodia, leader of Muslim rebel group, Séléka, on 24 March.¹⁰ Despite the official disbandment of Séléka and the eventual resignation of Djotodia on 11 January 2014, horrific violence continued to engulf the country following the rise of the Christian militia group, anti-balaka.¹¹ Amnesty International reported massacres that had caused Muslims to begin fleeing the country¹² and in the same month, John Ging, director of operations for the UN Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, warned that, “it has all the elements that we have seen elsewhere, in places like Rwanda and Bosnia...the seeds are there, for a genocide. There’s no question about that.”¹³ Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, also raised the specter of genocide, when in April he cautioned that, having failed the people of Rwanda twenty years before “we are at risk of not doing enough for the people of the CAR today.”¹⁴ In July 2014, a ceasefire agreement was rejected by Séléka rebels and October saw a resurgence of violence that has continued into 2015.¹⁵

The threat of genocide in the CAR is very real. However, after almost two years of violence, the Genocide Convention appears to remain as impotent as ever, while the international response echoes past failures. In this article, I revisit the responses to past cases exploring, in particular, the failure to prevent or halt genocide in Cambodia, Rwanda and Darfur. Since the constraints of this article preclude in-depth analysis of a vast array of cases, I have selected these instances as representative of failures from the Cold War period, the more humanitarian oriented 1990s and the post-Rwanda years in order to highlight how the Convention has been used, or more often not used, in preventing and halting genocide. By focusing on individual cases from these different periods, I contextualize these responses within their individual political climates. I argue that the failure of the Genocide Convention is the result of complex, inter-related factors, including those related to state sovereignty and levels of political interest which impact on, and are in turn influenced by, the Convention’s own deficiencies in a somewhat trilateral relationship. Understanding past failures in terms of this relationship is crucial as the international community grapples with the challenges of potential genocide in the CAR today.

Pawns on a Chessboard: Cambodia

The Cold War era has aptly been described as a period in which no more than “lip-service” was paid to human rights which generally took a backseat as bipolar politics dominated international concerns.¹⁶ Nowhere is this more evident than in one of the most infamous cases of human rights abuses of this period, abuses that have largely been acknowledged as genocide. Between 1975 and 1979, the communist Khmer Rouge (KR), under the leadership of Saloth Sar, more commonly known by the pseudonym Pol Pot, staged a revolution in Cambodia which “turned back Cambodian clocks to year zero.”¹⁷ Over the next few years, Cambodians were systematically slaughtered and starved to death under a ruthless regime which aimed to transform the country into a utopian, agrarian society and which would target for elimination any “undesirable elements.”¹⁸ Following a series of border skirmishes which had begun in early 1977 and had escalated to war by the end of the year, Vietnamese troops invaded Democratic Kampuchea (DK) on 25 December 1978. Over a course of two weeks, they had secured the capital Phnom Penh and installed a Vietnamese-supported government as the KR fled across the border into Thailand.¹⁹ The invasion catapulted the previously neglected situation in Cambodia to the forefront of world affairs and became the subject of heated debate within the UN’s Security Council. The Vietnamese Government justified their response as self-defense in the face of KR and Chinese aggression which they claimed threatened their survival and, as the true extent of atrocities was revealed, began to emphasize the humanitarian outcome as further validation for the invasion.²⁰ DK, represented by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, described the regime as victim to the “flagrant aggression” of Vietnam who had used “Hitlerite” methods in their “colonial conquest” of Cambodia.²¹

The position of the major powers in these debates was largely motivated by the political circumstances in Southeast Asia and their corresponding *realpolitik* interests. From the 1960s, Indochina had become a battlefield for influence between China and the Soviet Union. Vietnam had grown closer to the Soviet Union during its war with the US and China responded to this

by attempting to increase its influence in Laos and Cambodia, aiding the communists in both countries.²² The survival of DK in the late 1970s was in large part due to aid provided by the Chinese and similarly, by 1978, Vietnam had come to depend on the Soviet Union.²³ The debates reflected these divisions and alliances. The Soviet Union took up the humanitarian arguments of the Vietnamese, referring to atrocities as a “policy of open genocide.”²⁴ On the opposite side, China simply avoided discussion of human rights abuses focusing instead on condemnation of the invasion arguing that with the “powerful support” of the Soviet Union, Vietnam had barbarously breached Cambodian sovereignty in their first steps at creating a colonial empire.²⁵ The stance of the US was similarly influenced by political context. Following their defeat in the Vietnam War in 1975, they had mostly withdrawn from the region and had been against any involvement that may have led to another conflict.²⁶ Nevertheless, they had discreetly supported the KR. In a meeting with Thai Foreign Minister, Chatichai Choonhavan, in November 1975, Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, acknowledged that the KR were “murderous thugs” but noted that the US would “be friends with them” as they were needed as a barrier against Vietnam.²⁷ Furthermore, in the 1970s, they had been attempting to develop friendly relations with the Chinese government, and were naturally inclined against their ideological, and former, enemies, the Soviet Union and Vietnam, respectively. Thus, alongside China, they supported the genocidal regime.²⁸

However, the US, along with others that continued to support the KR, could not completely ignore discussion of atrocities as they had submitted reports and condemned DK for human rights abuses through 1978. Indeed, the Soviet Union had directly quoted from a statement circulated by President Carter on 21 April, in which he stated that “America cannot shirk its duty to condemn the Cambodian Government...Thousands of refugees from Cambodia accuse their own Government of destroying hundreds of thousands of inhabitants as a result of the policy of genocide.”²⁹ The US was forced to acknowledge that human rights abuses had occurred but also argued that such abuses did not justify the breach of Cambodian sovereignty.³⁰ This was to be the stance of the majority of delegates. The debates centered predominantly on Cambodian sovereignty with no discussion of the genocidal violence that, in spite of underlying motives, was halted by the Vietnamese invasion. Essentially, the bipolar political circumstances of the time meant that Cambodia was a pawn on the superpower’s chessboard more than a legitimate human rights concern.³¹ As Michael Reisman has argued, most states were “more concerned with protecting Cambodian sovereignty than with preventing that sovereignty from being used to murder over a million human beings.”³²

It was this kind of situation that had led Raphael Lemkin, who had coined the term “genocide” in 1944 and was a key figure in the creation of the Genocide Convention, to direct his crusade for international legislation against the crime. The concept of state sovereignty, which allows states to conduct their internal affairs free of external interference permitting leaders to exercise power within their own borders unimpeded and with impunity, evolved and became entrenched after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.³³ Lemkin argued against the idea of absolute sovereignty stating that it could not be “conceived as the right to kill millions of innocent people.”³⁴ Due largely to his efforts, the end of the Second World War saw an erosion of this notion as the Nuremberg trials became the first to successfully punish perpetrators under international law. The Genocide Convention was created within this context and with its obligation to prevent and punish genocide offered a direct challenge to state sovereignty. However, it is a concept that continues to be a cornerstone principle of the UN and therefore, there are inherent complications with the role of the UN as both a defender of sovereignty and an organization committed to preventing and halting genocide. Article 2(7) of its Charter stipulates that it is not authorized to intervene “in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state”³⁵ while Articles I and VIII of the Genocide Convention oblige the UN and the international community to become involved in the domestic affairs of others when faced with genocide, implying the necessity of intervention. The complications that arise from this inherent contradiction are exacerbated by the failure to clarify what constitutes appropriate prevention as required by the Convention, with further difficulties arising in determining when and if taking action to prevent or halt genocide is legitimate. Ultimately, the problem of sovereignty in relation to prevention and intervention, as Bruce Cronin has argued, lies in having to navigate this tension.³⁶

In the case of Cambodia, the tension was avoided as the Genocide Convention lay forgotten in favor of the Charter of the UN which was cited extensively in the debates. Even if the Convention had been discussed, responses from delegates suggest that the ambiguities of Articles I and VIII would have been manipulated to allow DK sovereignty to have remained sacrosanct. Certainly, the delegate from Portugal made this clear when he stated that, "there are no nor can there be any socio-political considerations that would justify the invasion of the territory of a sovereign State by the forces of another State."³⁷ Moreover, despite the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) March 1979 judgment that the situation in DK had "constituted nothing less than autogenocide" and "the most serious [events] that had occurred anywhere in the world since Nazism,"³⁸ in its thirty-fourth session in November that same year, the General Assembly issued a resolution which ignored any mention of genocide but "deeply regret[ed] the armed intervention by outside forces in the internal affairs of Kampuchea," reiterating, "that all States shall refrain...from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or independence of any State, and strictly adhere to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States."³⁹ As Leo Kuper argued, despite evidence of genocide, the UN remained a champion of state sovereignty,⁴⁰ a response in line with its role in maintaining international peace, but at odds with the promises, both preventive and punitive, of the Genocide Convention.⁴¹ However, though they had mentioned genocide, neither Vietnam nor the Soviet Union drew on the Convention to legitimize or justify the invasion and their arguments were further weakened since the doors of DK between 1975 and 1979 had restricted the flow of information coming out of the country.

On coming to power in April 1975, the KR immediately expelled all foreign nationals. The borders remained closed until March 1978 when three Western journalists were permitted a guided visit.⁴² Consequently, the only information coming out of the country was from the KR controlled radio station *Voice of Democratic Kampuchea* and from refugees that escaped into Thailand.⁴³ The situation was viewed through a narrow lens and it was difficult for the international community to fully comprehend the true nature of the regime. Indeed, those involved in the anti-war movement, such as Noam Chomsky, questioned the validity of reports of atrocities, claiming that they had been exaggerated to justify another war in Southeast Asia.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, reports and stories of atrocities increased over the years and as mentioned, President Carter began speaking of genocide in early 1978. In March that year, the CHR invited comments and observations "relating to the human rights situation" in DK and several states submitted extensive reports, the submission from Canada explicitly referring to genocide.⁴⁵ These documents were then passed to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to further analyze in preparation for their next annual meeting.⁴⁶ The KR, having been invited to comment, rejected the investigation as "impudent interference" in their internal affairs and warned that it would "not tolerate any affront" to its sovereignty.⁴⁷ By the time it was back on the CHR's agenda in March 1979, they had been overthrown. In January 1979, only Vietnamese and Soviet officials had visited Cambodia and witnessed the devastation wrought there.⁴⁸ As it was, the majority of delegates were less inclined to take them at their word, the delegate from Portugal lamenting that, "had Kampuchea been an open society, all the claims now made of invasion would have been instantly verified. The Pol Pot government certainly had good reasons not to allow the outside world to know what was happening in its own country, and the price for this is always heavy."⁴⁹ The CHR report, curiously ignoring the documents it had collected in the previous year, also claimed that "there was no proof [of atrocities]...since there had been no investigation by the United Nations."⁵⁰

State sovereignty became a hindrance then, allowing the KR to obstruct access to the country and impede the collection of accurate information which delayed discussions and meant that intervention and not prevention was required. The political context was not one conducive to intervention and the Vietnamese invasion forced tensions between state sovereignty and humanitarian intervention to the surface. In the subsequent debates sovereignty, as defined and rooted in the principles of the UN Charter, was used as a tool by those who opposed Vietnam, while those that supported the invasion failed to mobilize the Genocide Convention and its potential for legitimizing the overthrow of a genocidal regime. In the context of the Cold War, the main concern lay with keeping the peace in an unstable region between smaller states that had more powerful allies. As such, primacy was afforded to state sovereignty even when there

was substantial evidence of genocidal acts. This suggests that the primary obstruction in this case was the political context and resulting interests of the main powers involved who were able to manipulate and use state sovereignty to their advantage. However, as Paul Bartrop has pointed out, the concept of sovereignty is a central underlying feature of *realpolitik* and national interest.⁵¹ The ideals and principles behind state sovereignty inform and shape politicians' understanding and definition of what lies within their national interests, and thus, the two cannot be separated. The Genocide Convention was intended to mitigate the absolute nature of this relationship to ensure that sovereignty as a natural right and interest of states could not be used to justify or impede the prevention or halting of genocide. However, its effectiveness lies in the balance between the UN as an international organization for the defense of sovereignty and the UN as committed to the promise of "never again." In the political context surrounding genocide in Cambodia, the former took precedence and consequently, the Convention lay forgotten.

A New World Order?: Rwanda

The end of the Cold War saw a redefinition of the UN's role in ensuring peace and security, moving away from a focus on keeping the peace between states, to keeping the peace within states.⁵² This ushered in a new era of optimism in terms of the UN's effectiveness in its humanitarian endeavors and, to an extent, eroded the concept of state sovereignty. In this environment, responses to genocide in Rwanda should have been more amenable to prevention or intervention. As a smaller, poorer country, it was less "sovereign" than powers that were stronger militarily and economically.⁵³ It was not a pawn on a "superpower chessboard" and, except for France, none of the other permanent five members of the Security Council had any direct interest in Rwanda. This lack of interest was to prove equally disastrous for prevention for most scholars agree that, when faced with perhaps the clearest case of genocide since the Holocaust, the international community could simply not muster the will to act. What perhaps makes this particularly shameful is that, while the impact of state sovereignty, in terms of limiting available information and obstructing access to the country, meant that Cambodia was always going to be a case of intervention, Rwanda has since been acknowledged as a genocide "both foreseen and flagged" and thus, entirely preventable.⁵⁴

Indeed, though the initial trigger for the genocide was the death of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana when his plane was shot down on 6 April 1994, the tensions that underscored the brutal slaughter that followed this incident had been a consistent problem since the country became independent in 1962.⁵⁵ Frictions between different groups in Rwanda became entrenched and exacerbated by colonial rule in the early twentieth century which had established a hierarchal style society based on, what they perceived to be, "scientific" understandings of ethnicity placing the Tutsi as politically superior to the Hutu and Twa groups.⁵⁶ The "Hutu Revolution" between 1959 and 1961 overturned this system, leading to an eruption of violence during which the Hutu majority came to power and many Tutsi fled the country. Following this, Michael Barnett argues, ethnic violence became a central facet of Rwandan politics.⁵⁷ Through the 1960s, Tutsi refugees unsuccessfully attempted to force their way back into Rwanda and the Hutu government responded viciously leaving over 20,000 Tutsi dead and 300,000 in exile.⁵⁸ Violence flared up again in 1990 after the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) invaded the country to further its primary goals of repatriating Tutsi refugees and establishing a power-sharing government. After thirteen months of negotiation, the Arusha Accords were signed in August 1993 and the UN established the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), consisting of a force of 2,548 peacekeepers, to monitor the ceasefire agreement.⁵⁹ Despite an apparent end to the dispute, a UN commissioned report investigating the human rights situation submitted in August 1993 by Bacre Waly Ndiaye warned of genocide based on massacres and human rights violations that had occurred throughout the year. Ndiaye suggested that "genocide" might be applicable because of a pattern of systematic attacks that had been directed against "Tutsis in the overwhelming majority of cases."⁶⁰ The recruitment and training of the *Interahamwe* militias, the distribution of arms, and propaganda inciting discrimination and extermination of Tutsi, were further indications of impending violence, if not genocide.⁶¹ Perhaps the clearest warning, however, was given in January 1994 when commander of UNAMIR, General Roméo Dallaire, received insider information that Hutu extremists were planning an extermination campaign. In response, Dallaire requested authority to seize caches of machetes and other weapons

but was denied on the basis that such action was beyond UNAMIR's Chapter VI mandate.⁶² Despite early warning and opportunities for prevention, the genocide began on 7 April and over a period of one hundred days, over 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutus were systematically targeted and killed.⁶³

Having failed to prevent genocide prior to the outbreak of violence, the international community maintained a policy of inaction delaying intervention until the genocide was already over. This response is largely seen to be a result of a general indifference or a lack of political will to intervene. Jared Cohen, for example, describes the US response as one of "one hundred days of silence," a description that Linda Melvern would probably agree applies to Britain as well.⁶⁴ Undoubtedly, in the midst of a series of crises in Bosnia, Haiti, and North Korea, and with elections in South Africa, Rwanda was seen as a low priority. Furthermore, UN resources were stretched thin as they were engaged in peacekeeping missions throughout the world with over 71,000 troops committed in seventeen problem areas.⁶⁵ Added to this were the repercussions of a disastrous peacekeeping mission in Somalia the year before. A UN-led mission to establish peace in Somalia resulted in the deaths of twenty-four Pakistani peacekeepers on 5 June 1993 and subsequent attempts to apprehend those responsible ended with the deaths of eighteen American rangers.⁶⁶ The domestic fallout from events in Somalia saw a dramatic shift in US policy away from a broad definition of national interest and expansion of the US' role in peacekeeping as outlined in Presidential Review Decision 13, to a more restricted and selective policy of intervention described in Presidential Directive Decision 25.⁶⁷ Somalia similarly influenced the UN's approach with Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali advising African leaders in October 1993 that the role of the UN was to maintain peace, not to impose it.⁶⁸ The legacy and risks of another Somalia hung over Rwanda and despite the shift towards humanitarian intervention after the end of the Cold War, the global context in April 1994 was not one that produced a strong will to intervene.

Moreover, as Frank Chalk and others suggest, politicians assessed their response on the basis of national interest and whether intervention would result in domestic political opposition.⁶⁹ The Clinton Administration did not want a repeat of Somalia and the British government's reluctance was influenced, according to an off-the-record interview with a foreign office insider, by a lack of interest from the British press and public.⁷⁰ It was not just indifference, but a national interest that went against intervention that caused the US and the UK to lead the Security Council in its avoidance of intervention. The policy was not one of complete inaction though, for after the death of ten Belgian peacekeepers on 7 April, a concerning reminder of events in Somalia, they were able to efficiently and effectively secure the resources and supplies for the safe evacuation of all foreign nationals.⁷¹ Both the US and the UK then successfully lobbied for the withdrawal of UNAMIR and on 21 April the Security Council adopted Resolution 912 reducing forces on the ground to an ineffective 270 peacekeepers.⁷² It was not until after 6 May, a month into the genocide, that the Security Council was finally willing to reconsider its stance and provide "urgent and effective means of action." Boutros-Ghali recommended a force of 5,500 troops, the same number that Dallaire had consistently requested in order to halt the genocide in early April.⁷³ Discussions, debates and delay tactics continued, however, until 17 May when Resolution 918, agreeing to an increase of the UNAMIR force, was adopted.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, the UN relied on states donations which were not forthcoming and continued delays over supplying troops and equipment meant that the force did not arrive in Rwanda until the genocide had come to an end in July, through the efforts of the RPF.⁷⁵

The deliberate inaction of the international community was a response defended and rationalized by the avoidance of the term genocide which many believed would have invoked the Convention and its perceived obligations to prevent.⁷⁶ Though some officials might argue that they could not have predicted genocide and that they had no idea what was happening, evidence suggests that violence in Rwanda was recognized as genocide early on and that, despite this, many politicians refrained from using the word publicly.⁷⁷ Instead, the situation was distorted in the media through its representation as an African civil war and a product of "ancient tribal rivalries."⁷⁸ The failure of the media to convey the magnitude of the situation allowed politicians to continue to downplay the genocide and in fact, the perception of the situation in Rwanda as a civil war aided the US and the UK in their arguments for pulling peacekeeping troops out of a place where, they reasoned, there was no peace to keep.⁷⁹ Discussions over the use of the term genocide did not take place in the Security Council until the end of April. Some in the Council supported its use and the

President drew up a statement that explicitly described the situation as genocide, however; this reference was later removed due to the opposition of some states, namely the US and the UK.⁸⁰ The US argued that “events in Rwanda clearly seem to meet the definition of genocide” but noted that “if the council acknowledges that, it may be forced to ‘take such action’ as provided for in Article VIII.”⁸¹ The British ambassador, David Hannay, further emphasized that if the Council used genocide and did not act it would be seen as ridiculous and would become a “laughing stock.”⁸² As Barnett has argued, “the UN was caught between the force of moral obligation and the reality that it was not going to deliver a rescue operation.”⁸³ It was embarrassment by the continued use of genocide by other world leaders and human rights organizations, such as Oxfam and Human Rights Watch that eventually led the Security Council to consider taking action on 6 May, although it took until 10 June for US officials to be allowed to fully use the term “genocide.”⁸⁴

The reluctance to use the rhetoric of genocide was due to a perception that invoking the Convention would oblige states to intervene. However, this obligation is actually more moral than legal. The response of the international community would seem to suggest that the ambiguous wording of the preventive provisions of the Convention were interpreted as requiring full military intervention when actually that obligation could entail the use of “soft options.” For example, Helen Fein suggests that the suppression of *Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines* would have been a cheap and effective method of preventing “direct and public incitement to commit genocide.”⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the international community favored an all or nothing interpretation of the Convention’s obligations which impeded action as states were unwilling to entertain the idea of military intervention.⁸⁶ Furthermore, definitional ambiguities in the wording of the Convention, a problem to be discussed later in this article, enabled those that wished to avoid saying genocide to do so. US State Department spokesperson, Christine Shelly, dodged direct reference to genocide stating that it “has a very precise legal meaning...Before we begin to use [the] term, we have to know as much as possible about the facts of the situation, particularly about the intentions of those who are committing the crimes” She further reasoned that “the intentions, the precise intentions, and whether or not these are directed episodically or with the intention of actually eliminating groups in whole or in part, is a more complicated issue to address...It’s something that requires a very careful study before we can make a final determination.”⁸⁷ Shelly clearly exploited the Convention’s ambiguities to the advantage of those who did not wish to invoke it, making the determination of genocide seem like a legitimately more complicated and long drawn-out process than it reasonably should be.

Thus, even in the more humanitarian oriented 1990s, the *realpolitik*, national interests of states hindered the prevention and halting of genocide. Whereas Cambodia had been a pawn between major powers that had significant involvement in the region, Rwanda suffered from the opposite. Of the permanent five, only France had any direct interest there and in a context where the UN was engaged in multiple missions throughout the world, one of which, a year before had gone disastrously wrong, politicians in the US and the UK were unwilling to risk the domestic backlash should they commit to another peacekeeping mission that may go awry. For very different reasons, political interest was a hindrance to the effectiveness of the Genocide Convention. In this case, the Convention was not forgotten, though not formally invoked, and its deficiencies played into the hands of those attempting to avoid what they considered to be an obligation to “do something.” While a lack of political interest as influenced by *realpolitik* can impede the effectiveness of the Genocide Convention as states are reluctant to act unless prevention or intervention is within their national interest, the deficiencies of the Convention intensify this problem by allowing and enabling politicians to manipulate and exploit the very tool that should encourage action.⁸⁸ Furthermore, the failure to clarify the nature of the obligation to prevent and to give an idea of the ways in which preventing or halting genocide might be enacted outside of military intervention exacerbated the lack of will to intervene as politicians deliberately sought to avoid the perceived obligation to commit militarily in Rwanda.

“Never Again,” Again: Darfur

After the failure in Rwanda, as well as Bosnia, in the 1990s, the UN and the international community reaffirmed their commitment to the promise of “never again” and small steps were

taken to overcome some of the issues of preventing and halting genocide. In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, established by the Canadian government in 2000, issued its report which promoted the R2P concept. This framed the underlying principle of state sovereignty not as control over one's people but as a responsibility to one's people. More importantly for prevention, however, R2P acknowledged that, should a state fail in its responsibility, by being unwilling, unable or the perpetrator, then that responsibility would fall to the international community as a whole.⁸⁹ This was aimed at easing issues of sovereignty by giving priority to the state to prevent atrocity crimes within its borders and by justifying the involvement of the international community in its internal affairs if it failed to do so. These principles were reaffirmed at the 2005 World Summit and the Secretary-General has since been working towards further clarifying and developing an understanding of the obligations and actions required by the international community as entailed by R2P.⁹⁰ In addition, in 2004, the Secretary-General created the OSAPG, which became a fulltime position in 2007, to address previous limitations in efforts to prevent genocide.⁹¹ The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide's (SAPG) mandate was, according to Juan Méndez, the first to act in this role, to focus on how to prevent genocide by "gathering information, providing early warning and presenting appropriate recommendations to prevent a situation from degenerating into genocide."⁹² It has also created an extensive and flexible framework for analyzing and identifying potential cases based on the definition offered in the Convention, has monitored and provided recommendations on situations in various countries and, in doing so, has had some successes.⁹³ Nonetheless, although promising, it is within the context of these initiatives that genocide in Darfur, Sudan has continued unimpeded since 2003. While analysis of Cambodia and Rwanda have emphasized the role of particular factors, namely state sovereignty and level of political interest, Darfur is the first case in which the Convention was officially invoked and directly applied to an on-going genocide and is thus, an excellent example of its inherent deficiencies.⁹⁴

Violence in Darfur broke out in early 2003 following attacks on government military forces by rebels of the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The Government of Sudan (GoS) responded with a devastating counter-insurgency campaign, supporting Janjaweed militias in their desolation of Darfur.⁹⁵ These militias have systematically targeted Black African Darfuris, predominantly from the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa tribes, razing villages, killing large numbers of civilians and engaging in mass rape of women and girls.⁹⁶ Though violence was triggered by the armed rebellion of SLA/M and JEM in early 2003, like Rwanda, it has complex, more long-term, and varied origins.⁹⁷ Since the 1980s, ethnic tensions have been exacerbated by a changing climate which saw drought, famine and desertification push what, superficially, can be categorized as Arab, nomadic herders and Black African, sedentary farmers into competition for increasingly scarce resources.⁹⁸ Attempted mediation by the GoS often saw the Arab-dominated government typically favor Arab herders over Black Africans and, as conflict has continued, the government has supplied weapons and provided assistance to Arabs in the region.⁹⁹ Conflict within Sudan, as well as in neighboring regions, has also aggravated the situation and hindered early preventive action. An Arab supremacist ideology imported from Chad and Libya has intensified government favoritism toward the Arab groups and the involvement of Chad in the rebellion, in terms of supplying arms and assistance, has increased factionalism within the rebel groups which has obstructed attempts to establish and maintain peace.¹⁰⁰ Civil war between North and South Sudan has also intensified frictions as both the GoS and Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) have provided supplies and financial assistance to groups in Darfur in order to enhance their respective causes. When, in 2001, the government and SPLA/M entered into peace talks in Naivasha, at which Darfur was not represented, rebel groups became concerned over being left out of decisions that would shape the future Sudan and staged an uprising in response.¹⁰¹ As René Lemarchand suggests, the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005 officially ending the civil war, and paving the way for independence for South Sudan, may also have impeded peace efforts as rebels attempt to force a similar agreement.¹⁰²

The civil war has also overshadowed violence in Darfur as media reportage focused on the peace talks.¹⁰³ It was not until March-April 2004 that Darfur began to capture media attention after a speech by UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Mukesh Kapila, on 19 March 2004, associated the

violence with the Rwandan genocide.¹⁰⁴ Public awareness dramatically increased and, during the following months, responding to domestic activism and pressure, US politicians gradually began to discuss Darfur in relation to genocide.¹⁰⁵ An investigation was launched which, after interviewing 1,136 Darfuri refugees in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Chad, found a “consistent pattern of atrocities” directed against the non-Arab ethnic groups in Darfur.¹⁰⁶ Based on these findings, Secretary of State Colin Powell declared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on 9 September that, “genocide had been committed...and may still be occurring.” Accordingly, under Article VIII of the Genocide Convention, he called on the UN to launch “a full-blown and unfettered investigation.”¹⁰⁷ On 18 September, the UN, responding to these recommendations issued Security Council Resolution 1564 which established a Commission of Inquiry (COI) to investigate atrocities in Darfur.¹⁰⁸ The COI conducted its investigation in Sudan between November 2004 and January 2005 and, contrary to the US finding, declared that the “Government of Sudan had not pursued a policy of genocide,” although recognized that “gross violations of human rights” had been perpetrated, including crimes against humanity and war crimes.¹⁰⁹

The fact that the US and UN arrived at such divergent conclusions, while possibly influenced by differences in methodology, rigor, and thoroughness in their respective investigations,¹¹⁰ is also a result of the definitional ambiguities in the Genocide Convention. Article II of the Convention offers a list of acts that might be considered genocide if “committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such.” It offers no further clarification for how such intent might be determined, whether “in whole or in part” should refer to the intent to destroy or to the actual destruction of a group, or how “in part” might be either quantified or qualified. Consequently, the Convention’s ambiguous wording proved problematic when invoked in relation to Darfur. The wording “in whole or in part” was found to be straightforward when applied to actual, physical destruction and both investigations concluded that atrocities were sufficiently “widespread,” “systematic,” and “large scale.”¹¹¹ However, “in whole or in part” as it pertained to the “intent to destroy” proved to be a point of contention. The US investigation found that “evidence corroborates the specific intent of the perpetrators to destroy a group ‘in whole or in part’” and that “intent may be inferred from their deliberate conduct.”¹¹² In contrast, the COI found that “the crucial element of genocidal intent appears to be missing” This was argued on the basis of “several indicators” such as “the fact that...attackers refrained from exterminating the whole population...but instead selectively killed groups of young men”¹¹³ The COI focused predominantly on killing as opposed to other methods of genocide and imposed a higher threshold of interpretation than the US investigation had, understanding genocidal intent as meaning the intent to destroy the group “in whole” rather than “in part,” an interpretation at odds with the jurisprudence of international law.¹¹⁴ In his analysis of the UN’s investigation, Samuel Totten suggests that the COI may have been biased towards a finding against genocide from the start.¹¹⁵ If this was the case, then the ambiguities of the Convention certainly assisted its manipulation of the definition of genocide so as to arrive at the desirable conclusion.

In addition to its ambiguous wording, limiting protected groups to just national, ethnic, racial, or religious groups has created difficulties. Aside from the obvious problem of excluding certain groups from protection, which Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn argue meant that prior to the 1990s the UN had not denounced any genocidal killings as genocide,¹¹⁶ this limitation means that for a finding of genocide, it must be ascertained whether the victims constitute one of the protected groups and whether they were targeted with the intent to destroy them as part of that group. This is exacerbated by the Convention’s failure to provide definitions for terms which have complex and mutable identities. As Chalk and Jonassohn have emphasized, the terms national, ethnic, racial, and religious are historically and culturally dependent and have fluid meanings that can differ over time and across cultures.¹¹⁷ There are inherent complications involved in identifying groups that rarely meet neat, objective definitions. Moreover, there are questions over who should define the group identity. Should this be an objective party such as the UN, scholars, or politicians, or should it be a subjective one such as the victim group or the perpetrators themselves? More importantly, what happens when the definitions of the subjective approach do not meet those of the objective approach?

These issues are highlighted by Darfur where the identification of victim and perpetrator groups proved difficult since to an outsider there seemed to be little to no difference between

them.¹¹⁸ The US investigation had offered a broad interpretation defining victims simply as “non-Arab” ethnic groups.¹¹⁹ However, the COI considered the issue in more depth noting that victims objectively do not appear to make up ethnic groups distinct from the perpetrators.¹²⁰ Indeed, they shared a number of cultural characteristics.¹²¹ The COI took into account the perspective of both the perpetrator and victim group and found that individuals “have come to perceive themselves as either ‘African’ or ‘Arab’” and consequently, victims “subjectively make up a protected group.”¹²² This reasoning is based on jurisprudence established by the International Criminal Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda.¹²³ Though they concluded that the group element was sufficient to find genocide, the COI’s lengthy discussion of the topic is suggestive of the complex and time-consuming difficulties inherent in identifying groups involved in genocidal violence, especially since, in most cases, these groups are likely to be subjective social constructions as opposed to objectively distinguishable categories. This obviously has potential to impact preventive efforts as a genocide determination is delayed while questions over the identification of a group and whether victims were targeted based on that membership are answered.

Definitional issues in the Convention create, as Scott Straus suggests, “debilitating debates” over whether a situation can accurately be described as genocide which prolongs and hinders preventive responses. Such debates typically distract from difficult, but more important, questions over what could and should be done to prevent or halt genocide.¹²⁴ Furthermore, as Beth Van Schaack observes, the investigation and determination of genocide as a precursor to either prevention or intervention can be used as a delay tactic by those reluctant to act.¹²⁵ By the time the US called on the UN, for example, genocide was already underway and, despite having already investigated the situation itself, asked the UN to investigate further and not to intervene. The apparent requirement of a determination of genocide prior to action by the international community is also potentially detrimental. Of course, Jerry Fowler is correct in his assertion that a determination of genocide does not result in direct action.¹²⁶ However, the rhetorical power of “genocide,” a power that other terms have failed to develop, has potential in terms of outraging, raising awareness and mobilizing support for action.¹²⁷ Furthermore, the use of genocide can morally embarrass, and to an extent oblige, politicians who might otherwise seek to avoid efforts to prevent or halt genocide. Indeed, it was the memory of Rwanda that prompted George W. Bush to declare “not on my watch” in relation to Darfur.¹²⁸ However, the characterization of violence as crimes against humanity and not genocide by the COI let the international community “off the hook” so to speak as it appears to have stymied media attention and public interest that had been gathering increased momentum through 2004. David Luban observes that media coverage largely misunderstood the findings leading to headlines such as “Murder – But No Genocide,” and “Sudan: U.N. clears Government of Genocide” that contributed to a perception that crimes against humanity were not as bad, and also a belief that the UN had vindicated the GoS.¹²⁹ Despite such increased activism after first declarations of genocide, the failure to legitimize those claims seems to have led to a general apathy that enabled the US to weaken its initial Darfur Accountability Act which had been established to bring in tough legislation against the GoS.¹³⁰ It is impossible to determine the extent to which the COI’s findings did impact action in Darfur. However, the implication is that at the very least it altered the perception of Darfur as an urgent crisis allowing politicians to remain reluctant to intervene and violence to continue unabated, fading into the background, described recently as a “forgotten genocidal war.”¹³¹

In addition to definitional issues, the lack of clarification over what the obligation to prevent in Article I of the Convention entails also impedes its effectiveness in prompting successful prevention. This is emphasized by the responses of the US and UN to their respective investigations in Darfur. The US simply deferred the matter to the UN and Powell even made the point that other than this referral “no new action is dictated by this determination.”¹³² This response has been criticized by scholars, including Eric Reeves who suggested that Powell undermined the Convention by interpreting the obligation to prevent as entailing so little.¹³³ Nonetheless, the ambiguous wording and failure to clarify the obligation to prevent means that the US interpretation, however distasteful, was valid within the terms of the Convention. The UN response was similarly disappointing. The COI seemingly noted the importance of action stating that “the international community cannot stand idle by, while human life and human dignity are attacked daily and on so large a scale in

Darfur.” One might have thought that such reasoning would conclude with recommendations for intervention. Incredibly, it did not. Instead, the COI recommended that the situation be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for prosecution.¹³⁴ This response reflects the punitive focus of the Genocide Convention and highlights the negative effect this can have on prevention and intervention. By approaching their investigation as a legal case, focusing on justice as if the genocide had concluded, the COI bypassed prevention, or rather by 2004, intervention, which gave the impression of constructive action, and may have contributed to a lack of forceful action that has allowed genocide in Darfur to continue relatively unobstructed. In July 2008, the ICC’s chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo did eventually petition the Court to issue an arrest warrant, including counts of genocide, for President Omar al-Bashir arguing that “his alibi was ‘counterinsurgency’. His intent was genocide.”¹³⁵ A warrant was issued in 2009, though the charge of genocide was conspicuously absent, however, al-Bashir dismissed the warrant as worthless.¹³⁶ In 2010, a second arrest warrant was issued, this time including genocide.¹³⁷ However, since Sudan is not a signatory to the Rome Statute, the ICC can do little while he remains within Sudanese borders and under the protection of state sovereignty.

The specter of state sovereignty has also haunted efforts to bring genocide to an end in Darfur as the GoS continues to obstruct intervention. Since 2004, the GoS has attempted to force the removal of the African Union’s Mission in Sudan (AMIS),¹³⁸ has objected to a UN peacekeeping force, although Security Council Resolution 1769 establishing a hybrid UN-AU force (UNAMID), albeit with a watered-down mandate, was agreed in July 2007,¹³⁹ has delayed deployment of peacekeepers and has frequently restricted peacekeepers’ freedom of movement within the country.¹⁴⁰ Since the issuance of the arrest warrant, it has further clamped down on movement and access in Darfur in order to prevent investigation of atrocities. More importantly, in 2009, the GoS expelled all foreign NGOs and has since used its sovereignty to block aid and access to IDP camps where food shortages and malnutrition have become increasingly worse.¹⁴¹ Despite R2P and a gradual erosion of the notion of absolute sovereignty then, the concept continues to allow al-Bashir to act with impunity, remains an impediment to efforts to halt violence in Darfur and is actually contributing to genocide by attrition.

That the GoS’ sovereignty remains intact in spite of R2P and evidence of genocide is largely due to an international community that for all its rhetoric has expressed a lack of will to take a more robust approach. Indeed, though it led the way in first discussions of genocide and has implemented sanctions against GoS, the US response has been weak. This is largely due to the political context which saw Sudan become an ally in the US’ war on terror after the attacks in September 2001.¹⁴² Furthermore, the context of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 caused some countries to be cautious of US motives in declaring genocide in Darfur and as Eric Heinze observed, any involvement in another Arab nation’s internal affairs without UN support was unlikely to have been well-received. In fact, the US was accused of using the rhetoric of genocide in relation to Darfur as a “pretext to invade another oil-rich and predominantly Arab and Muslim state.”¹⁴³ Securing UN support has been problematic since China and Russia, both of whom have vested interests in Sudan, have often abstained from votes and threatened the use of the veto on issues related to Darfur. Indeed, China has invested heavily in oil and other commercial developments importing two-thirds of Sudan’s oil supply and, along with Russia, is one of the main suppliers of weapons to the government.¹⁴⁴ In addition to their diplomatic maneuvering, both countries continue to defy a UN arms embargo by supplying weapons and munitions that fuel the conflict.¹⁴⁵ Such a context has given tacit support for the GoS allowing for the continuation of genocide under the protection of state sovereignty which is used to block the diluted measures that have been undertaken to bring violence to a halt. State sovereignty becomes quite the formidable barrier when the *realpolitik* interests of states create a lack of will to intervene.

Thus, while the Genocide Convention was invoked, its deficiencies have contributed to failures to halt genocide in Darfur. The lack of clarification over what the obligation to prevent entails has meant that US politicians could appear to act, easing domestic pressure, through referring the situation to the UN without actually taking action itself. Similarly, the punitive focus of the Convention has enabled the UN to ‘act’ by referring the situation to the ICC for punishment. Definitional ambiguities have enabled a dubious negative finding of genocide which stymied a

rising activism and was again used as a delay tactic by those who wished to avoid action. Obviously, these failures cannot be viewed in isolation. State sovereignty has been an impediment to efforts to halt genocide as the GoS has maintained ultimate control over access to the country. This is a situation that is intensified by a general lack of will to intervene due to *realpolitik* interests of states that implicitly lie with supporting the GoS and not with halting genocide.

Conclusion

Writing in 1981, Kuper remarked that the Genocide Convention was a “dead letter.”¹⁴⁶ Over thirty years and a number of genocides later, his comment remains largely accurate. The Convention was created in the aftermath of Second World War to mitigate the absolute nature of a fundamental principle of the nation-state system; namely, state sovereignty, which Lemkin argued could no longer allow states to act with impunity. With its moral obligation and unanimous promise to “liberate mankind” from the “odious scourge” of genocide it also attempts to address *realpolitik* decision making. In both endeavors it has been disappointing. Far from being a tool for the prevention and halting of genocide, it appears to have become more useful to those who wish to avoid action.¹⁴⁷ At the time of writing, genocide is ongoing in Darfur and has been used to describe violence in the CAR, as well as Syria and Iraq.

The analysis of this article has shown that the Genocide Convention certainly has its flaws and is an impediment to the prevention and halting of genocide in terms of its failure to clarify what the obligation to prevent entails, including what actions might be required and legitimate, its definitional ambiguities which cause debilitating debates over whether a situation is in fact genocide, and its punitive focus which draws attention away from prevention and intervention.¹⁴⁸ However, its utility is essentially bound up with the concept of state sovereignty and problems related to levels of political interest in a complex, intersecting relationship. State sovereignty can obstruct the flow of information crucial to a genocide determination, brings up tricky questions over what and when preventive action is legitimate, and more importantly, how the UN should balance its often contradictory roles of, on the one hand, a defender of sovereignty and, on the other, an organization committed to the prevention of genocide. Underlying both the Convention’s deficiencies and state sovereignty are the problems of levels of political interests. A low level of political interest or a high level of differing *realpolitik* interests can both be disastrous for prevention and intervention as politicians manipulate state sovereignty and the deficiencies of the Genocide Convention in order to ensure that their national interests are met which, based on the three cases discussed, usually includes avoiding action in the face of genocide.

Understanding the relationship between the factors that contributed to past failures to prevent genocide is crucial as the twenty-first century is rapidly becoming another “century of genocide.” Though steps have been taken to improve the possibility of prevention outside of the problematic framework of the Genocide Convention through the creation of the OSAPG and R2P, these initiatives, like the Convention, are similarly bound up with state sovereignty and political interest which will ultimately impact their effectiveness. The current crisis in the CAR is already suggestive of this. In a joint statement in October 2013, the SAPG, Adama Dieng, and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, Jennifer Welsh, invoked R2P in relation to the CAR.¹⁴⁹ Echoing Darfur, in December 2013, the Security Council issued Resolution 2127, which called for the creation of a commission of inquiry to investigate human rights violations in the CAR, and for the creation of the International Support Mission for the Central African Republic (MISCA) formed from African soldiers that would bolster French troops already on the ground.¹⁵⁰ In April 2014, the Security Council voted to send a UN peacekeeping force which would increase the joint force to 12,000, although only 1,800 troops had arrived in September with the remainder not expected to arrive until early 2015.¹⁵¹ In June 2014, the COI for the CAR, issued a report, which, echoing the Darfur Report, stated that “it was too early to speak of genocide or ethnic cleansing” though did acknowledge that crimes against humanity and war crimes had taken place.¹⁵² This finding was in spite of concluding that “widespread attacks were directed against the civilian population... driven, at least in part, by a desire to kill as many Muslims as possible...and efforts were made to kill even those who were seeking to flee the country.”¹⁵³ The report has been utilized in the media more as a confirmation of the absence of genocide, rather than as a confirmation of the urgency

to act.¹⁵⁴ As such, the title of a Huffington Post article, “A Country is on the Brink of Genocide and Very Few Know About It,” accurately summarizes the present situation.¹⁵⁵ In a political context in which a number of crises have been described in terms of genocide, including Syria and Iraq, like Rwanda, the CAR is a low priority. Thus, over a year later, very little progress has been made in halting its escalation and although condemning a resurgence of violence in January 2015, UN investigators are now calling for the establishment of an international tribunal.¹⁵⁶ Only time will tell whether the international community can rise to the challenge and make “never again” a reality in respect to the CAR.

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The Thesis of Norm Transformation in the Theory of Mass Atrocity

Paul Morrow

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA, USA

Abstract: *Theoretical accounts of genocide and mass atrocity commonly embrace the thesis of norm transformation. This thesis holds, first, that individual and institutional participation in such crimes is at least partially explained by transformations in basic norms that structure social and political life. It holds, second, that preventing future occurrences of such crimes requires changing norms that currently guide the actions of particular individual and institutional actors. This paper clarifies, defends, and extends the thesis of norm transformation. It clarifies this thesis by providing a general account of the nature and dynamics of norms. It defends this thesis against charges of circularity and against the claim that norms are not, in fact, fundamental guides to action. Finally, it extends this thesis by arguing that changes in norms before, during, and after mass atrocities count among the considerations that ought to be included in assessments of legal and moral accountability for such crimes.*

Keywords: *norm inversion, mass atrocity, genocide prevention, legal accountability, moral accountability, extremely violent societies*

Theoretical accounts of genocide and mass atrocity commonly embrace some version of the thesis of norm transformation. This thesis holds, first, that individual and institutional participation in such crimes is at least partially explained by transformations in basic norms that structure social and political life. It holds, second, that preventing future occurrences of such crimes requires changing norms that currently guide the actions of particular individual and institutional actors. Taken together, these two claims put the thesis of norm transformation at the center of ongoing efforts to explain and prevent genocide and mass atrocity.

Despite widespread acceptance of the thesis of norm transformation, there is no scholarly consensus concerning the nature or dynamics of norms. Political scientists and historians, sociologists and legal scholars all operate with distinct conceptions of norms, rarely considering whether those conceptions meet the needs of researchers approaching genocide and mass atrocity from alternative disciplinary perspectives. This conceptual variation has impeded critical reflection on the thesis of norm transformation, and has allowed important challenges to this thesis to go unaddressed.

This paper clarifies, defends, and extends the thesis of norm transformation. It clarifies this thesis by offering a general account of norms and norm dynamics, and by showing how this account can enrich existing explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. It defends this thesis against a number of theoretical and practical challenges—including challenges to the power of this thesis to help explain historical mass atrocities, and challenges to the efficacy of proposed preventive changes in norms. Finally, it extends this thesis by arguing for a third, evaluative claim, namely, that changes in norms before, during, and after mass atrocities count among the considerations that ought to be included in assessments of legal and moral accountability for such crimes.

In proposing this extension of the thesis of norm transformation, this paper posits a fundamental continuity between explanatory, preventive, and evaluative applications of this thesis. The paper thus breaks with much recent scholarship on genocide and mass atrocity, within which these different aims appear either unrelated or at odds.¹ At the same time, the paper acknowledges key criticisms of existing modes of assessing legal accountability for mass violence. Those criticisms help structure the discussion of the evaluative implications of the thesis of norm transformation.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section One uses a case drawn from the annals of National Socialist medical practice as the starting point for a general discussion of norms and norm dynamics. Norms are defined in terms of three features: their acceptance, their particularity, and their action-

guiding power. Different types of norm transformations are then distinguished, including norm inversion, norm breakdown, and norm emergence.

Section Two examines in more detail existing explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. Applications of both types, it is argued, rely on three basic theoretical assumptions. The first assumption is that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. The second assumption is that norms have a fundamental, or non-reducible, power to guide the actions of individuals and thereby pattern the conduct of groups. The third assumption is that it is possible to pinpoint specific mechanisms by which particular changes in norms have been, or might be, achieved.

Section Three addresses two significant challenges to current explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. These challenges – termed the circularity challenge and the norm-reducibility challenge – target the first two theoretical assumptions about norm dynamics mentioned above. In response to these challenges, the paper first argues that testimony, broadly construed, offers a source of non-circular evidence concerning historical norm transformations. The paper then distinguishes between identity-instituting and identity-vindicating norm transformations, and uses this distinction to defuse the second, norm-reducibility challenge.

Section Four turns, finally, to the evaluative extension of the thesis of norm transformation. The section frames this extension in terms of the localization of moral and legal responsibility for transformations in norms that contribute to mass atrocity. The section first argues that it is legitimate to localize – i.e. restrict to some subset of a larger set of qualified parties – attributions of moral responsibility for norm transformation in cases where specific mechanisms for transforming norms can be identified, and where those changes in norms have had a demonstrable effect on the precipitation or prolongation of large-scale wrongs. The section then argues that in cases of society-wide norm breakdown, as may be found in so-called “extremely violent societies,” localization of legal responsibility for mass violence faces a higher justificatory burden, for both historiographical and properly juridical reasons.

Norms: Definition and Dynamics

On 11 September 1940, Dr. Leonardo Conti of the Reich Interior Ministry addressed a letter to his former medical school teacher, Professor Gottfried Ewald. Conti’s letter was occasioned by Ewald’s critical evaluation and rejection of the secret Nazi euthanasia program, *Aktion T4*.² The text of Conti’s letter reads as follows:

Dear Professor Ewald,

With the deepest gratitude I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 21 August. I still remember with great pleasure your lectures in Erlangen.

Your analysis contains much that is right, I’m sure. Nevertheless, I take a different view, although I cannot and will not set it down in writing at this time. I would only like to say, that I am fully convinced that the opinions of the entire German *Volk* concerning these things are undergoing a transformation, and I can very easily imagine that things which in one period are considered objectionable [*verwerflich*] can in the next period come to be regarded as the only right choice. This is something we have experienced countless times in the course of history. As the most recent example I would gently point to the sterilization law: here the process of a transformation in thought [*Umformung des Denkens*] is today already quite far advanced.³

Conti’s letter has commonly been cited as evidence of professional complicity in the Holocaust.⁴ The letter is of interest here because of the remarkable historical articulation it offers of the thesis of norm transformation. Conti’s letter contemplates transformations in two long-standing prohibitions within the medical profession: a prohibition on intentional medical killing and a prohibition on involuntary sterilization. In order to better understand these claims, we must first clarify the definition of norms.

Defining Norms

This paper proposes the following general definition of norms:

Norms are practical prescriptions, permissions, or prohibitions, accepted by members of particular groups, organizations, or societies, and capable of guiding the actions of those individuals.

Several features of this definition demand elaboration. First, it is necessary to explain what “acceptance” of a norm entails. Second, it is necessary to explain the significance of the particularity, or domain-limitedness, of norms. Third, it is necessary to explain what it means for norms to guide actions, and in what ways this can occur.

In the first place, norms are *accepted* by individuals. This is the basis of the socio-empirical quality of norms—i.e. their status as social facts that can be studied via standard procedures of historical and social scientific inquiry.⁵ Philosophical accounts of norm acceptance vary considerably; this paper will not seek to defend any single one of them.⁶ What is crucial is that any adequate account must accommodate a range of different types of norm acceptance, extending from relatively formal and explicit acts of acceptance (as in the case of professional oaths, university honor codes, and so on) to relatively informal or implicit forms of norm acceptance (as in the case of norms governing fair dealing in monetary transactions or gift giving).⁷ This paper is committed, furthermore, to two specific claims about norm acceptance. First, there is a substantive difference between following a norm merely in order to avoid sanctions imposed on infractions, and following a norm in order to sustain or satisfy properly normative attitudes (such as obligation; felt-bindingness, and so on). That difference may constitute, and at least tracks, the difference between merely conforming with and actually accepting a norm.⁸ Second, although it may be the case that all norms are, in principle, linguistically expressible, it is not necessarily the case that every individual who accepts a certain norm must be able to give a clear verbal account of that norm’s requirements.⁹

In the second place, norms are *domain-limited*. They circulate within particular groups, organizations, and societies. This feature of norms explains the significant role that norms play in sustaining shared identities within particular groups, organizations, or societies.¹⁰ It is also crucial to efforts by historians and social scientists to use norms to explain patterns of collective, rather than merely individual, behavior.¹¹ To be sure, the bounds of the collectivities within which particular norms circulate are rarely static. The discussion of norm dynamics below aims to account for some of the many ways in which those bounds can change.

Finally, norms have the power to *guide actions*. Exactly how norms perform this central, action-guiding function is contested. One problem is to understand the cognitive and conative conditions under which norms dispose individuals to pursue particular courses of conduct. A second problem is to establish distinctions among the different types of actions—ranging from compliant to defiant—that can rightly be said to be guided by a given norm.¹² While these difficulties should not be discounted, the action-guiding power of norms is clearly central to both explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation.¹³ Importantly, this paper assumes what I call the priority of the practical point of view. Put simply, this assumption holds that properly characterizing the contributions of particular norms to the prevention, or precipitation, of mass atrocities requires considering how those norms contribute to individuals’ first-personal deliberations over plans and courses of conduct.

How, then, does the definition of norms offered here enrich our understanding of Conti’s claims concerning the prohibitions on intentional medical killing and involuntary sterilization? It does so in three ways. First, Conti is asking Ewald to believe that, despite continuing widespread acceptance of the prohibition on euthanasia within German society, this norm is likely soon to change substantially. This claim, in turn, rests on an implicit distinction between the norms accepted by medical professionals such as Conti and by members of society at large. Finally, Conti appears to be suggesting that his former teacher ought not only to accept the change in the norms concerning euthanasia, but to act upon it—either in his role as a professor, or as a hospital administrator, or both.¹⁴

Ultimately, the claims set out in Conti’s letter are not just claims about norms, but claims about transformations in norms. In order to fully understand these claims, it is necessary to turn from the definition to the dynamics of norms.

Norm Dynamics

The topic of norm dynamics can be divided into two broad classes of questions. First, there are questions about the categorization of different types of transformations in norms. Second, there are questions about the empirical conditions under which norms are more or less likely to undergo transformations of these several types. The analysis offered in this section focuses on questions of the first kind. Specifically, it seeks to distinguish between norm inversion, norm breakdown, and norm emergence.

Norm Inversion

Norm inversions occur when individuals who previously accepted prohibitions on certain actions come to regard those same actions as required, or vice versa. It is possible, in principle for lone individuals to experience such radical transformations in normative attitudes and commitments, without thereby participating in broader group- or society-level inversions. Nevertheless, historical and social scientific claims about norm inversion typically refer to changes in norms accepted in the aggregate by members of particular groups, organizations, or societies.¹⁵

Conti's letter to Ewald offers a remarkably apt description of the dynamics of norm inversion. As Conti writes with respect to the existing prohibition on intentional medical killing: "things which in one period are considered objectionable can in the next period come to be regarded as the only right choice." The last part of this claim makes clear that Conti has in mind not merely the erosion of a prohibition, but rather a shift from a prohibition to a prescription, or normative requirement. It is also evident from Conti's letter that he anticipates not just individual, but group-level inversions of norms: first among members of the medical profession, ultimately among "the entire German *Volk*."

Norm Breakdown

Norm breakdowns occur when previously accepted norms cease to guide actions in fact, and cease to be available as guides to action in principle. These two types of transformation are logically distinct, but in practice they often occur together.¹⁶ When previously prevailing norms cease to be reflected in the publically observable actions of large numbers of individuals within a particular group, those norms tend to become less useful as guides to action for other members of that group. In the accounts of norm breakdown among German professionals under National Socialism offered by Konrad Jarausch and Berel Lang, just this dynamic is described.¹⁷

Like other kinds of norm transformations, breakdowns in norms are generally identified at the level of groups or populations. However, they cannot be fully understood without considering the beliefs and actions of individual actors. When norms break down, they lose their power to guide the decisions and actions of individual actors. This can occur for one of a number of reasons. Sometimes requisite motivational factors, such as empathy or a sense of fairness, fade. Other times norms, and the systems of norms to which they belong, become too complicated or convoluted to guide action. Wartime brutalization offers a reason of the first kind for norm breakdown.¹⁸ The existence of secret or contradictory laws within a repressive state offers a reason of the second kind.¹⁹

Norm Emergence

Norm emergence refers to a range of pathways and processes by which new norms arise and gain acceptance within particular populations. In this way, norm emergence contrasts with both norm inversion and norm breakdown – each of which starts from a condition in which a particular norm is already accepted by individuals belonging to a particular group, organization, or society.

Conceptual distinctions among different modes of norm emergence have only recently begun to receive sustained attention from scholars. Political scientists have described cases of *grafting* of new norms onto already existing norms, and have emphasized the importance of the work that *norm entrepreneurs* do in facilitating norm emergence.²⁰ Philosophers have analyzed phenomena such as the *tendentious* introduction of norms, and have modeled non-coercive paths of emergence for particular cooperation- and coordination-facilitating norms.²¹

Perhaps the most interesting trend in the study of norm emergence has been the rapid increase, over the past decades, in case studies of the development of particular norms in international law and politics.²² Unlike more general discussions of norm dynamics, many of these case studies aim to show how the development of specific norms has helped, or might help, to prevent mass violence. In order to better assess such claims we should turn now to examine in more detail the thesis of norm transformation.

The Thesis of Norm Transformation

The thesis of norm transformation combines claims about the explanation and the prevention of large-scale crimes. It holds, first, that individual and institutional participation in such crimes is at least partially explained by transformations in basic norms that structure social and political life. It holds, second, that preventing future occurrences of such crimes requires changing norms that currently guide the actions of particular individual and institutional actors.

Efforts by scholars and policymakers to use the thesis of norm transformation to explain, or prevent, particular instances of genocide and mass atrocity will be referred to here as *applications* of this thesis. This section will analyze several representative explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. One aim of this analysis is to show how the general account of norms and norm dynamics offered above can enrich existing applications of this thesis. Another aim is to identify the basic theoretical assumptions underlying such applications.

Explanatory Applications

Reflecting on the Rwandan genocide in a 2004 article, political scientist Lee Ann Fujii directly invokes the thesis of norm transformation. “Put simply,” she writes, “genocidal leaders had to transform the normative environment [in Rwanda] such that actions that were once considered verboten (such as killing thy neighbor) could be viewed as not only legitimate but imperative.”²³ Fujii offers a social psychological explanation for why such a transformation in norms should accompany genocide. “Norms,” she avers, “become *more* important when reality is confusing, contradictory, or changing. The more ambiguous the situation, the more likely people are to rely on norms as guides for behavior; and the clearer the prescription of a given norm, the more likely people will follow that norm and not others.”²⁴ Throughout her paper, Fujii scans historical records and first-person accounts for clues to the particular mechanisms by which “genocide became normalized.”²⁵

Fujii’s invocation of the thesis of norm transformation calls attention to three theoretical assumptions that underlie explanatory applications of this thesis. The first assumption is that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. The second assumption is that norms have a fundamental, or non-reducible, power to guide the actions of individuals, and consequently to pattern the conduct of groups. The third assumption is that it is possible to pinpoint specific mechanisms by which particular changes in norms have been, or might be, attained.

These three assumptions are not restricted to Fujii’s application of the thesis of norm transformation. The letter from Dr. Conti discussed above manifests these assumptions. Turning to a more contemporary, and scholarly, literature, Christopher Browning’s influential analysis of participation by “ordinary men” in mass killings on the Eastern Front during the Second World War embodies these assumptions.²⁶

Consider the first assumption identified above. Browning’s study of the members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, and his reasons for rejecting the idea that racist ideology or wartime brutalization might help to explain their participation in mass atrocity, are too familiar to require recapitulation here. What is worth noting is that Browning identifies not one, but two inversions in norms accepted by members of this particular unit at different moments in time. Browning first posits an inversion in norms regarding killing prior to participation by members of the Police Battalion in mass shootings in German-controlled territory in Eastern Europe. He then posits a second inversion, in fact a reversion, in the decades following WWII. Browning writes:

to concede that the morally inverted world of National Socialism — so at odds with the political culture and accepted norms of the 1960s — had made perfect sense to them at the time, would

be to admit that they were political and moral eunuchs who simply accommodate to each successive regime. That was a truth with which few [former members of Reserve Police Battalion 101] either wanted or were able to come to grips.²⁷

In order to see how the second assumption about norms is implicit in explanatory applications of the thesis of norm transformation, it is helpful to consider cases of apparent norm breakdown. Argentinean legal scholar Carlos Santiago Nino offers a helpful example in his discussion of “institutional anomie” during the Dirty War in his home country. Nino suggests that “judicial recognition of the legitimacy of coups d’état and the regime’s ensuing laws is perhaps the clearest example” of such anomie.²⁸ In helping to legitimate such practices, Nino argues, Argentinean courts allowed the erosion of crucial rule of law norms such as publicity and consistency in the law.²⁹ Similar claims about breakdowns in norms governing the conduct of legal actors have been made by scholars of legal institutions under National Socialism.³⁰ In each of these cases, the assumption is that relevant norms, had they not broken down, could have guided the implicated actors towards substantially different courses of conduct.

Consider, finally, the assumption that it is possible for scholars to pinpoint specific mechanisms by which particular changes norms have been, or might be, attained. Here it is appropriate to return to Fujii’s 2004 analysis of the Rwandan genocide. Fujii identifies three distinct stages in the emergence of what she calls a “genocidal norm.”³¹ Each stage is associated with different mechanisms for provoking norm transformation. First there was a stage of spreading a message of social division and threats to the Hutu population from Tutsis. Second was a stage of producing objective evidence of those threats, through staged attacks, killings, and so on. Third was a stage of making the threats appear imminent, so as to require immediate action.³²

Several of the specific mechanisms for norm transformation that Fujii singles out in these several stages have clear analogues in other historical cases of genocide. These include disseminating hate propaganda³³ and staging “enemy” attacks. Exactly how strong the causal connections between such acts and subsequent episodes of mass violence are is contested.³⁴ Even where scholars point to different events as contributing to the inversion, emergence, or breakdown of norms, however, they share the assumption that it is possible to pinpoint specific mechanisms or processes that contribute to such transformations.

Preventive Applications

Preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation rest on the same three theoretical assumptions about norm dynamics as explanatory applications. A representative example comes from legal scholar Mark Osiel’s 2009 book, *Making Sense of Mass Atrocity*. After asking how changes in the law might “help created and cultivate within modern armies the institutional characteristics enabling them to steer clear of mass atrocity,” Osiel suggests that one strategy might be to introduce laws imposing civil liabilities on officers whose subordinates take part in atrocities. The imposition of civil liabilities, Osiel suggests, avoids the problems of procedural justice that comparable criminal liabilities would encounter.³⁵ At the same time, this change in the law directly counters existing social norms against “snitching” on fellow members of one’s military unit.³⁶

Osiel’s proposal clearly depends upon the theoretical assumption that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. In this way this preventive application of the thesis of norm transformation parallels the explanatory applications discussed above. What is different in this and other preventive cases is that the first of these two periods of time is defined as the present, and the second as some point in the future.³⁷

The new norm Osiel advances is aimed primarily at individuals, and is closely tied to concrete sanctions (in the form of fines) for violations. Neither of these features is essential to preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. To see this, it is useful to turn to the emerging norm of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), and consider its claims to guide actions.

Unlike Osiel’s proposed legal norm, R2P aims chiefly to guide the actions of states, rather than single individuals. And unlike Osiel’s proposed norm, R2P aspires to guide actions even in the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms. Further clarity comes from distinguishing

between primary and secondary bearers of responsibilities under R2P. Primary bearers of such responsibilities are individual states and state leaders. Secondary bearers are the various state and non-state actors composing the international community, who are tasked with taking up protective responsibilities when and where primary bearers fail to uphold them.

Crucially, scholars of R2P avoid describing protective actions by secondary bearers as *punishments* for failures by primary bearers to fulfill their responsibilities.³⁸ Furthermore, as Luke Glanville has pointed out, there are currently no legal penalties prescribed for failures by secondary bearers to act in cases of malfeasance by primary bearers of responsibility.³⁹ What this example shows is that, while preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation depend on the assumption that norms have the power to guide actions, both the status of the actors guided by such norms and the schemes of accountability supporting such guidance can vary substantially.

Preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation commonly give special attention to the mechanisms by which desired transformations are to be achieved. In political science, as noted above, scholars have offered numerous studies of the efforts of norm entrepreneurs to change norms in order to prevent war and civil conflict.⁴⁰ In addition to highlighting the accomplishments of heroic individuals, such studies suggest that particular events in the domestic or international sphere may serve as catalysts for preventive norm transformations. In each of these cases, authors assume that it is possible to pinpoint specific mechanisms that have caused, or might in the future contribute to, preventive transformations in norms.

Two Challenges to the Thesis of Norm Transformation

The previous section surveyed some representative explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation, and identified three basic theoretical assumptions underlying such applications. This section will consider challenges to two of those assumptions. The first challenge, called here the circularity challenge, targets the assumption that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. The second challenge, called here the norm-reducibility challenge, targets the assumption that norms have a fundamental, or non-reducible, power to guide the actions of individuals, and thereby pattern the conduct of groups.

The Circularity Challenge

Explanatory applications of the thesis of norm transformation rest in part on the assumption that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. The circularity challenge casts doubt on this assumption. It raises questions about the verifiability of claims about the existence of particular at any given moment in time. Although charges of circularity can be leveled at claims about the existence of norms in the present day, such charges are strongest when applied to historical claims about norms or changes in norms. For this reason, it will here be treated as an historiographical challenge to the thesis of norm transformation.

Claims about the existence of norms are susceptible to charges of circularity because of the evidentiary gap that separates the observed conduct of actors – i.e. the actions that individuals undertake – from the unobservable cognitive and conative states of actors – i.e. the beliefs and attitudes with which they undertake them. In everyday life it is common to infer information about relevant beliefs and attitudes from the actions of individuals. But in the case of purportedly norm-guided conduct, such inferences threaten to produce a circular course of reasoning, in the following manner. First, observed patterns of behavior are taken as evidence of the existence of norms (and, by extension, the acceptance of those norms by individuals). Second, these same inferred norms are relied on to explain, or account for, those observed patterns of behavior.⁴¹

Some of the most promising strategies for confirming the existence of norms in present-day contexts are not available in cases of norms supposed to have existed in the past. Cristina Bicchieri, a leading theorist of social norms, has pioneered experimental methods for identifying, and measuring the strength of, such norms in present-day political societies.⁴² These methods depend on the experimenters' ability to control the beliefs subjects have about the types of interactions they

are involved in, as well as the experimenters' ability to change the material incentives that subjects have for certain kinds of behavior. So, in experiments designed to analyze norms of fairness, subjects may be selectively fed information about the past behavior of their experimental partners; or they may be told that the experiment has been designed in such a way as to prevent partners from detecting unfair divisions of monetary rewards.⁴³

Experiments of this kind are clearly not feasible when it comes to the study of norms supposed to have existed in historical contexts.⁴⁴ There are, however, other sources, besides the actions of historical individuals themselves, which can provide evidence of the existence of norms that might help to explain those actions. Two of the most important of these sources, already much discussed in the literature on genocide and mass atrocity, are documents and testimony.⁴⁵

Holocaust scholars have extensively debated the relative merits of documents and testimony as sources of historical knowledge about this genocide. Leading figures such as Raul Hilberg and Robert Wolfe have insisted on the primacy of documents created by the National Socialists themselves as sources of information concerning the plan and execution of their genocidal policies.⁴⁶ Such documents do indeed provide evidence of norms, and changes in norms. One important example concerns the language rules developed by various parties within the military and political hierarchies to conceal the truth about the policies of deportation and mass killing, both from the targets of such policies and from third parties. The existence of letters and memos in which particular officials were reprimanded for failing to conform to such language rules seems to provide non-circular evidence for the existence of such rules, which, as I have argued elsewhere, may have taken on the status of social norms.⁴⁷

For Hilberg, the evidentiary advantage of documents over testimony was decisive. As Yehuda Bauer has argued, however, prioritizing documents produced by the authors of the plan of destruction threatens to distort the historical record in another way, by leaving out large segments of the experience of the groups and communities occupied or terrorized by the National Socialists and their allies. Treating testimony as a source of historical knowledge is not unproblematic, Bauer admits, but it is a mistake to think that historiographical quality is unequivocally improved by excluding it.⁴⁸

If testimony is admitted as a source of historical knowledge, then it provides a second route to overcoming the circularity challenge to claims about the existence of norms in historical contexts.⁴⁹ It's important to be clear as to the bounds, and limits, of this resource. As Bauer points out, testimony will be most reliable when multiple individuals provide consistent testimony concerning the existence or influence of a particular fact or event.⁵⁰ In the context of discussions of norms, numbers are important in part because it is always possible for single individuals to be mistaken about what norms are accepted by other individuals in a particular context. An example may help to illustrate this point. Consider a case reported by the German Jewish academic Victor Klemperer in his important diaries of daily life in Dresden under National Socialism. In his diary entry for June 13, 1934, Klemperer shares an anecdote concerning the consequences of boycotts of Jewish-owned business in three neighboring towns outside Dresden:

In Falkenstein one is not allowed to buy from the "Jew." And so the people in Falkenstein travel to the Jew in Auerbach. And the Auerbachers in turn buy from the Falkenstein Jew. However, on bigger shopping expeditions the people from the one-horse towns travel to Plauen, where there's a larger Jewish department store. If you run into someone from the same town, no one has seen anyone. Tacit convention.⁵¹

Do Klemperer's observations count as evidence of the existence of an emerging rule of behavior in this region at this period, and if so, what is the strength that evidence? Because this is a diary entry, rather than a piece of courtroom testimony or an oral reminiscence from well after the fact, certain kinds of criticisms do not apply. Klemperer's report could hardly be motivated by a desire to exculpate himself for some wrongdoing (as courtroom testimony might); nor can this report be distorted by the clouding effects of time. Nevertheless, it is a genuine question whether Klemperer was correct in his claims about both the actions, and the intentions, of non-Jewish residents of these towns, and the evidentiary quality of his claim would be heightened if it were joined by

testimony from other individuals from the area confirming this point. To gain fully dispositive evidence of a norm governing this specific practice, it might also be necessary to acquire testimony regarding certain counter-factual claims, such as the claim that at least some of the shoppers in this region would have acted in this way even if the instrumental reasons for doing so (i.e. fear of stigmatization or criticism) were removed.⁵² To my knowledge, such supplementary testimony does not exist concerning this particular, highly localized convention. It should, however, be possible to find multiple testimonies to the existence of other kinds of norms during the Holocaust and other episodes of genocide and mass atrocity.⁵³ In this way, then, it seems possible to overcome the circularity challenge to explanatory applications of the thesis of norm transformation using documents and testimony.

The Norm-Reducibility Challenge

Whereas the circularity challenge targets the assumption that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time, the norm-reducibility challenge targets the assumption that norms have a fundamental, or non-reducible, power to guide the actions of individuals, and consequently to pattern the conduct of groups. Here I will focus on the argument for norm reduction recently set forth by political scientist Kristen Renwick Monroe.

In her 2012 book, *Ethics in an Age of Terror and Genocide*, Monroe aims to show how individuals' identities, worked out in the context of specific social relationships, constrain the range of choices available during moral decision-making.⁵⁴ Three concepts are crucial to Monroe's model of moral choice. First is the concept of *identity*. Drawing on the findings of social identity theory within social psychology, Monroe suggests that differences in identity do much to explain the different actions of perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers in contexts of genocide and mass atrocity. One of the key claims here is that individuals who conceive of their identity as more extensive, i.e. as bearing broader connections with other individuals across space and time, are more likely to perceive threats to the well-being of those others as morally salient, and thus as presenting an opportunity for moral choice.⁵⁵

While identity constrains determinations of moral salience, the determinations themselves are reached through the cognitive process of *categorization*. Monroe defines this second key concept as "the process by which ideas and objects are recognized, differentiated, or distinguished from one another and then understood."⁵⁶ Her model construes cognitive categorization as operating in several distinct stages. First, out of the manifold data of experience, cognitive categorization settles the particular ways in which particular situations will be framed for particular actors. Particular modes of framing, in turn, lead to the activation, or suppression, of particular scripts for behavior. These scripts, finally, count as the proximate causes of observed conduct.⁵⁷

The third major concept in Monroe's model of moral choice is that of *cognitive stretching*. This concept seeks to capture the fact that patterns of categorization can change over time, in response to a variety of environmental or social factors. Put differently, cognitive stretching seeks to explain how situations or events that at one time seem to be morally salient for particular individuals can subsequently cease to be categorized in this way, or vice-versa.⁵⁸

Monroe clearly believes that it is possible to reliably identify differences in the norms accepted by particularly situated individuals across two or more moments in time. She also clearly believes it is possible to pinpoint mechanisms by which transformations in norms are brought about—citing for example Christopher Browning's account of the effects of isolation, propaganda, and manipulation on German police officers recruited for mass killings.⁵⁹ Monroe thus accepts two of the three theoretical assumptions behind the thesis of norm transformation. Her empirically grounded model of moral choice challenges the remaining assumption, however, by suggesting that norms are not fundamental as guides to action.

To the extent that Monroe's model explicitly addresses the ability of norms to guide decisions and actions, it suggests that they do so non-reflectively. Her entire account is designed to call into question moral theories that focus on deliberation and rational reflection on right and wrong action. Indeed, the central framing device for her study is the idea that both bystanders and resisters of genocide tend to claim that they had "no choice" in acting or failing to act.⁶⁰

A second, and more consequential, feature of Monroe's model is the claim that the acceptance of norms often occurs unreflectively, and may be difficult to raise to the level of conscious awareness or reflection. Monroe argues that an individual's identity, or self-conception, largely determines both which facts about the world that individual recognizes as morally salient, and which choices seem available to that individual in the face of such facts.⁶¹

Both of these claims are, in principle, compatible with the thesis of norm transformation, though they provide a very different picture of both the acceptance of norms and the way in which norms guide action than has been presented so far in this paper. There is, however, a case to be made that, on Monroe's model, norms themselves are not decisive for understanding moral choice in the context of mass atrocity. Norms are not fundamental to the *explanation* of individual and group conduct during large-scale crimes, since both cognitive processes of categorization and, before this, social processes of identity formation seem to be doing most of the explanatory work. And norms are not fundamental to the prevention of large-scale crimes, since what really seems to be important is changing individuals' self-conceptions, and in this way altering the categories they deploy and the facts or events that they take to be legally or morally salient.⁶² This, in my view, is the strongest statement of the challenge that Monroe's theory offers to the thesis of norm transformation.

In responding to this challenge, I will argue that the acceptance of norms is not merely a consequence of, but also often constitutive of, individual and group identities.⁶³ That is to say, changes in the set of practical prescriptions, permissions, or prohibitions that one accepts can serve as conditions for claiming, or maintaining a claim upon, particular identities. Two particular types of changes in norms are worth distinguishing here. First are identity-instituting norm transformations. These are changes in norms that serve as conditions for the adoption of new identities. Second are identity-vindicating norm transformations. These are changes in norms that serve as conditions for preserving, in the face of some significant threat, existing identities.

How do identity-instituting norm transformations bear on theories of genocide and mass atrocity? Here again the National Socialist euthanasia program, *Aktion T4*, is instructive. As Henry Friedlander has shown, the ideas and ideologies that stood behind the euthanasia program had existed in Germany (and indeed, in countries outside of Germany, including the United States) well before the rise of the Nazi movement.⁶⁴ In terms of changing norms, particularly legal norms, to reflect these ideas and ideologies, however, it was specifically the political takeover of power by Hitler that "made the implementation of the race hygiene utopia possible."⁶⁵ It is this utopian aspect of the Nazi policy towards the disabled, emphasized by historian Eric Weitz, that makes it appropriate to consider the relevant changes in laws regarding so-called "life unworthy of life" as a form of identity-instituting norm transformation: a change in norms coinciding with, and regarded at the time as a condition for, the development of a new *Völkisch* identity.⁶⁶ Claudia Koonz has perhaps gone furthest in suggesting that it was identity-instituting changes in norms, rather than the broader racist or ableist ideologies with which those changes were connected, that distinguished National Socialist political culture from that of other contemporary political societies.⁶⁷

Shifting to identity-vindicating norm transformations, it is useful to consider the Nuremberg Code of medical ethics, promulgated in the first so-called "Successor Trial" at Nuremberg. While chief prosecutor Telford Taylor considered it possible to "pass very briefly over matters of medical ethics" in his opening statement at this Doctors' Trial, retrospective accounts have called the Nuremberg Code "the most important document in the history of the ethics of medical research."⁶⁸ Chiefly at issue in the Nuremberg Code is the requirement that doctors obtain voluntary and adequately informed consent from prospective research subjects. As historian Paul Weindling has pointed out, a major aim of the scientists and physicians who assisted Taylor in developing his prosecutorial strategy was to avoid "too strong a denunciation of Nazi medicine [which] might jeopardize their own position," and to articulate "conditions under which risky experimentation was ethically permissible."⁶⁹

The development of the principle of informed consent, on this reading, is an example of an identity-vindicating norm transformation. It is a norm that had not been clearly articulated, or broadly accepted, prior to WWII, but which became part of the basis of the continuing legitimacy of the medical profession after that conflict. Importantly, this change in norms was not so radical as to

completely disrupt or destroy the existing identity of medical professionals; it allowed physicians to continue drawing on a tradition of medical experimentation designed to improve future care, even while suggesting that certain past methods of research were no longer permissible.⁷⁰

The discussion of identity-instituting and identity-vindicating norm transformations offered above has shown that norms, and changes in norms, cannot be eliminated from an identity-based account of moral choice on the basis of the non-fundamentality objection. This finding is significant for both explanatory and preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. It also helps to establish the legitimacy of evaluative applications of the thesis of norm transformation, to which I now turn.

Extending the Thesis of Norm Transformation

Scholars of genocide and mass atrocity regularly register tensions between efforts to explain, prevent, and pursue accountability for participation in large-scale crimes.⁷¹ Some go further, and suggest that questions of accountability, or moral and legal responsibility for large-scale crimes, necessarily conflict with efforts to understand and prevent such crimes, and consequently ought to be deferred.⁷²

While recognizing the reasons behind these calls for caution, this paper takes a different view. The thesis of norm transformation establishes a fundamental continuity between explanatory, preventive, and evaluative approaches to genocide and mass atrocity. If the three basic assumptions underlying the explanatory and preventive applications of this thesis are indeed tenable—if it is possible to non-circularly identify changes in norms, if norms play a non-reducible role in guiding action, and if it is possible to identify specific processes through which norms have been, or might be, transformed—then it is important to consider the implications for efforts to hold individuals and groups accountable for participation in large-scale crimes. This section briefly discusses two such implications. The first concerns strategies for localizing moral responsibility for mass atrocity. The second concerns obstacles to localizing legal responsibility for such wrongs.

Localization of Moral Responsibility

To *localize* responsibility for wrongdoing is to restrict attributions of responsibility to some subset of a larger set of qualified parties. Some ways of localizing responsibility—such as holding executives responsible for the success or failure of corporations and other institutions—typically strike us as legitimate. Other ways of localizing responsibility—such as scapegoating in its various guises—are by definition illegitimate. A key factor in assessing the legitimacy of any proposal to localize responsibility consists in the degree of effective control that particular individuals exercised, or were capable of exercising, over the decisions and actions of other individuals.⁷³

This paper proposes the following principle for localizing moral responsibility for mass atrocities. Where specific mechanisms for transforming norms can be identified, and where those transformations in norms have had a demonstrable effect on the precipitation or prolongation of large-scale wrongs, then it may be appropriate to hold individuals involved in designing or implementing such mechanisms morally responsible for doing so.

Two examples will clarify the range and limits of this principle. The first, already referred to above, is the development of a coded language for describing the torture and killing of the disabled, Jews, political prisoners, and other persecuted groups under National Socialism. The second is the profusion of hate propaganda that commonly accompanies large-scale wrongs.

Each of these mechanisms has been identified as contributing to what James Waller calls “a culture of cruelty that helps [perpetrators] initiate, sustain, and cope with their extraordinary evil.”⁷⁴ If such assessments are accurate, then it seems appropriate to hold individuals responsible for developing and deploying such mechanisms. Localizing responsibility for changes in norms in this way does not absolve other individuals of responsibility from particular wrongful acts, such as killing, torture, or theft. Instead, it introduces a new layer of responsibility specifically aimed at addressing the specific wrong of transforming the normative landscape. In assessing responsibility for such norm transformations, standard criteria for moral responsibility, including intent, knowledge, and ability to actually accomplish the transformations contemplated, will need to be considered. But there is no reason to think that these criteria pose greater barriers to attributions of

moral responsibility for instigating norm transformations than they do for assessing responsibility for other kinds of contributions to mass atrocities.⁷⁵

Importantly, this principle pushes for the localization of moral, rather than legal, responsibility for norm transformations. It is unlikely that international courts or tribunals would ever countenance a crime of transforming the normative landscape as such – though certain mechanisms for doing so (such as the spread of hate propaganda) have been criminalized in international law.⁷⁶ In part, this is because of the different epistemologies, or ways of knowing and proving, employed by law and by other moral and historical discourses.⁷⁷ In part, this is because courts and justice systems simply are not designed to deal with the problem of assigning responsibility in cases where infractions are normal, rather than exceptional, as the next section will suggest.

Rethinking Localization of Legal Responsibility

A second evaluative implication of the thesis of norm transformation can be framed in the form of a critique of current practices of localizing legal responsibility for mass atrocity. This critique builds on historian Christian Gerlach's doubts about the explanatory value of the concept of genocide.⁷⁸ Gerlach contends that thinking about mass violence in terms of genocide undermines, rather than enriches, historical understanding. More specifically, he argues that "genocide is an action-oriented model designed for moral condemnation, prevention, intervention, or punishment," which unduly "restricts the analysis" of large-scale violence.⁷⁹ Gerlach's positive project is to show that mass violence is more pluralistic in its targets and perpetrators, more complex in its planning and execution, than genocide-oriented studies acknowledge.⁸⁰

Gerlach's analysis of the complex causes of mass violence embraces the thesis of norm transformation. In extremely violent societies, he observes, "ethical norms and values are devaluated not only among persecutors or profiteers, but also among the vulnerable groups. This leads to atomization, betrayal, corruption, opportunism, ignorance, and cruelty."⁸¹ What is novel is Gerlach's emphasis on cross-cutting breakdowns in norms governing social, political, and religious life.

This way of understanding mass violence, with its emphasis on "social processes that can only partially be controlled by any government," runs counter to efforts to localize legal responsibility within a relatively small group of governmental actors.⁸² As explained above, one criterion for the legitimacy of any effort to localize responsibility is the vesting of control over events in particular individuals. This is just what the notion of extremely violent societies denies.

Gerlach suggests that the concept of genocide itself localizes legal responsibility for large-scale crimes in ways that may be justified on instrumental, though not historiographical, grounds. "Punishment has to be limited," he writes. "To admit that all sorts of groups, organizations and individuals participated in mass violence runs counter to the attempt to restore social peace and to find values based on which society may live together in [the] future."⁸³

If the general analytical framework of this paper is correct, then Gerlach's perspective on the relationship between of historical analysis and policies aimed at prevention or punishment seems too pessimistic. These different undertakings can and should inform each other; challenges encountered in the course of the one endeavor should prompt revisions in approaches to the other. Legal scholar Mark Drumbl argues to this effect in his book *Atrocity, Punishment, and International Law*.⁸⁴ There, Drumbl suggests that the model of individual criminal responsibility, grounded in assumptions about the prosecution of socially deviant action, is ill fitted to cases of mass atrocity characterized by widespread societal participation and support. He proposes a more pluralist approach to attributions of legal responsibility, one that accommodates a variety of democratically responsive forms of criminal and civil proceedings.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to assess Drumbl's specific policy suggestions. One takeaway from his analysis, however, is that localization of legal responsibility for mass atrocities in a small group of leading actors can be as problematic from a legal perspective as it is distortive from a historiographical point of view. That is a finding that coincides with this paper's basic claim that explanatory, preventive, and evaluative applications of the thesis of norm transformation are, in principle, compatible.

Conclusion

The thesis of norm transformation is powerful and provocative. It provokes by asking us to acknowledge the mutability of the basic norms that structure political societies—including our own societies. In return, it offers a powerful framework for making sense of crimes that strain comprehension and defy censure.

The thesis of norm transformation does not compel a choice between explanatory, preventive, and evaluative priorities in the face of mass atrocity. Instead, it posits a fundamental continuity between these different aims. It suggests that they are not just compatible, but may even be complementary.

Important questions remain about how the thesis of norm transformation should be applied with respect to particular episodes of genocide and mass atrocity. Some of these questions are historiographical. Others concern institutional design. Still others are legal or moral. Rather than seeking to settle these questions, this paper has clarified, defended, and extended the set of concepts on which scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds can draw when pursuing answers. Ultimately, Raphael Lemkin's observation concerning genocide applies to large-scale crimes more generally: "the examination of the problem is not limited to one branch of science, but claims the support of many."⁸⁵

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Endnotes

- 1 See for example Christopher Powell, *Barbaric Civilization: A Critical Sociology of Genocide* (Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 59; Christian Gerlach, "Extremely Violent Societies: An Alternative to the Concept of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, 4 (2006): 455-471; Richard Ashby Wilson, *Writing History in International Criminal Trials* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- 2 Under this program, physically and mentally disabled German children and adults were selected by physicians for killing in state-regulated hospitals and medical establishments. See Dick de Mildt, *In the Name of the People: Perpetrators of Genocide in the Reflection of their Post-War Prosecution in West Germany* (London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996); also Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).
- 3 For the German text of this letter, see Thorsten Sueße and Heinrich Meyer, *Abtransport der 'Lebensunwerten,'* (Hannover: Verlag Clemens Koechert, 1988), 103-104. Cited in Robert Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in Nazi Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 161-163. The translation offered here is my own.
- 4 Ericksen, *Complicity*, 161-163; see also Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 82-87.
- 5 In focusing on accepted norms, I follow Robert Goodin et al in distinguishing between accepted norms, on the one hand, and the possible category of objective norms, whose existence does not depend on acceptance, on the other. See Robert Goodin, Geoffrey Brennan, Nicholas Southwood, and Lina Eriksson, *Explaining Norms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2-3.
- 6 Within the philosophical literature on norms, different theorists offer different accounts of norm acceptance. On one line of thinking, what is crucial is that norms be "internalized" — i.e. incorporated into individuals' identity, rather than merely regarded as external features of the social world. Another prominent view considers individuals' intentions, rather than their identity, to be the criterion for norm acceptance. On this view what matters is for actors to form and maintain the right sort of intentions with regard to the various norms they accept. See H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 165-176; Margaret Gilbert, *A Theory of Political Obligation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 197-204; Goodin et al, *Explaining Norms*, 3-4.
- 7 Cristina Bicchieri, Erte Xiao, and Ryan Muldoon. "Trustworthiness is a Social Norm, but Trusting is Not," *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 10, 2 (2011): 170-187. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1470594X10387260>.
- 8 Goodin et al draw a similar distinction between *following* norms and merely (instrumentally) *conforming* with norms. I prefer to use the phrase "following a norm" to describe behavior that matches substantially

- the prescriptions, prohibitions, or permissions offered by a norm, whether or not that behavior is motivated in part by attitudes constitutive of acceptance of that norm. On my view, then, it makes sense to talk about norm following with and without acceptance, just as it makes sense to talk about norm violating with or without norm acceptance. See Goodin et al, *Explaining Norms*, 218.
- 9 Philosopher Allan Gibbard argues that norms must be, at least in principle, linguistically expressible. See Gibbard, *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 70.
 - 10 This paper does not investigate differences in kinds of norms, such as legal, moral, and social norms, which might seem connected with this particularity requirement. Some suggest, for example, that moral norms are not domain limited, but rather universal in scope. Modifying this claim slightly, it might be thought that part of what it is to accept a moral norm is to form a belief that that norm ought to guide the actions of all human, or rational, or morally competent individuals. For the purposes of this paper, it will suffice to say that the particularity feature of norms does not rule out the possibility that some norms could win acceptance among all human, or rational, or morally competent individuals.
 - 11 Goodin et al, *Explaining Norms*, 162-175; also Edna Ullmann-Margalit, *The Emergence of Norms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). Like these authors, I adopt a form of methodological individualism, according to which explanations of the power of norms to pattern the conduct of groups must be rooted in claims about the influence of norms upon the decisions and actions of the individuals composing those groups.
 - 12 Goodin et al distinguish between conforming and complying with norms, on the one hand, and between avoiding and acting opposite to norms, on the other. Arguably each of these types of action can be considered “norm-guided,” where this means that the action in question would not be performed, or would not be performed in the same way, in the absence of a given norm. See Goodin et al, *Explaining Norms*, 195-196; 237-238.
 - 13 A more explicit treatment of this point will be offered in Section 2.
 - 14 For further contextualization of this point, see Ericksen, *Complicity*, 161-163.
 - 15 Writing about perpetrators of mass atrocity, for example, James Waller suggests that such individuals occupy “an inverted moral universe, shaped by a process of brutalization, in which right has become wrong; healing has become killing; and life has become death.” See James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 203.
 - 16 On my view, the connection between breakdowns of norms in practice and in principle differs according to the type of norm in question: so that in the case of social norms, which I consider to be necessarily practice grounded, a change in real or perceived practices may in fact be sufficient to destroy a norm in principle, whereas in the case of properly moral norms, which are not grounded in real or perceived practices, this is not sufficient. The norms that make up codes of professional ethics, like the norms that compose legal codes, stand in a less clear connection with actual practices. For discussion of the practice-grounded character of social norms, see Paul Morrow, “Mass Atrocity and Manipulation of Social Norms,” *Social Theory and Practice* 40, 2 (April 2014): 257.
 - 17 Konrad Jarausch, *The Unfree Professions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Berel Lang, “The Third Reich and the Breakdown of Professional Ethics,” in *The Future of the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 92-104.
 - 18 Waller 2002, 203.
 - 19 This was the contention of Lon Fuller, the mid-century American legal scholar. See Lon Fuller, *The Morality of Law* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 65-70.
 - 20 For “grafting,” see David Lanz, “Why Darfur? The Responsibility to Protect as a Rallying Cry for Transnational Advocacy Groups,” *Global Responsibility to Protect* Vol. 3 (2011), 243-244. There is a large literature on norm entrepreneurs; a good introduction can be found in Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” *International Organization* 52, 4 (1998): 887-917.
 - 21 For the tendentious introduction of norms, see Gilbert, *A Theory of Political Obligation*, 199. For philosophical accounts of the emergence of norms, see Ullmann-Margalit, *The Emergence of Norms*; Brian Skyrms, *The Evolution of the Social Contract* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); J. McKenzie Alexander, *The Structural Evolution of Morality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
 - 22 See e.g. Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries: The History of a Norm in International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Kathryn Sikkink, *The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics* (New York: Norton, 2011); Tuba Inal, *Looting and Rape in Wartime: Law and Change in International Relations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Alex Bellamy, *Massacres and Morality: Mass Atrocities in an Age of Civilian Immunity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

- 23 Lee Ann Fujii, "Transforming the Normative Landscape: The Diffusion of a Genocidal Norm in Rwanda," *Journal of Genocide Research* 6, 1 (2004): 99-100. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1462352042000194737>. The parallel between Fujii's phrasing and the description of norm inversion offered by Dr. Conti in his letter to Dr. Ewald is striking.
- 24 Fujii, "Transforming the Normative Landscape," 100.
- 25 Fujii, "Transforming the Normative Landscape," 113. In her more recent book, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda*, Fujii disavows part of the analysis contained in this article. In particular, she notes that "while leaders and politicians can frame any conflict in ethnic terms," the reasons for which individuals within local communities participate in conflict may differ substantially, reflecting distinctively local social and political configurations. This change in Fujii's analysis does not diminish the fact that her 2004 article provides a particularly direct statement of the thesis of norm transformation. Since my ultimate aim in this paper is to address challenges to the various assumptions underlying that thesis, I believe it is appropriate to cite Fujii's 2004 article here. See Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 180.
- 26 Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993).
- 27 Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 150.
- 28 Carlos Santiago Nino, *Radical Evil on Trial* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 47.
- 29 Nino, *Radical Evil*, 48.
- 30 There is a large literature on this topic. For a good recent introduction, see Kenneth Ledford, "Judging German Judges in the Third Reich: Excusing and Confronting the Past," in *The Law in Nazi Germany*, eds. Alan Steinweis and Robert Rachlin (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 161-189.
- 31 It might be objected that Fujii's account was described above as giving an example of norm inversion. Norm inversion, however, itself entails the emergence of a new norm – and the mechanisms for promoting the emergence of an inverted norm are, in general, the same as the mechanisms for promoting the emergence of an entirely unprecedented norm.
- 32 Fujii, "Transforming the Normative Landscape," 112.
- 33 See Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2006).
- 34 Richard Ashby Wilson, "Inciting Genocide with Words," Forthcoming in *Michigan Journal of International Law* Vol. 36, N. 1 (2015). Accessed online at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2439325.
- 35 Mark Osiel, *Making Sense of Mass Atrocity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 203-217. I previously used this example from Osiel's book to illustrate a possible morally permissible instance of manipulation of social norms; here, I invoke this same proposal as one of a broader set of preventive applications of the thesis of norm transformation. See Morrow, "Mass Atrocity and Manipulation of Social Norms," 279.
- 36 Osiel, *Making Sense*, 210-213.
- 37 This should not be taken to discount the importance of *historical* accounts of preventive changes in norms.
- 38 Some opponents of R2P have seen such actions precisely as punishment. Venezuela's delegate to the 2005 UN World Summit remarked that R2P would lead to "States of the [global] South" being "stigmatized as systematic violators of collective human rights and punished through 'humanitarian intervention'." See U.N. GAOR, 59th Sess., 89th plen. mtg. at 24, U.N. Doc. A/59/PV.89 (Apr. 8, 2005). Cited in Jonah Eaton, "An Emerging Norm? Determining the Meaning and Legal Status of the Responsibility to Protect," *Michigan Journal of International Law* Vol. 32 (2010), 788-9.
- 39 There may, however, be certain reputational consequences of such failures. See Luke Glanville, "The Meaning of 'Responsibility' in the Responsibility to Protect," *Griffith Law Review* Vol. 20, N. 2 (2011), 492-493. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10383441.2011.10854706>.
- 40 Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change"; Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).
- 41 Cristina Bicchieri, "Norms in the Wild," *Descartes Lectures*, University of Tilburg, Forthcoming. Used by permission.
- 42 Cristina Bicchieri, *The Grammar of Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- 43 Bicchieri, *Grammar of Society*.
- 44 At best, experiments might try to replicate the situations faced by particular historical actors; but even then such experiments only provide insights into norms that might have been accepted by historical individuals, rather than providing evidence of the actual acceptance of such norms. The famous experiments of psychologists Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo are explanatory in just this sense.

- 45 Philosophers associate testimony principally with general questions in epistemology about the justificatory power of third-person claims. My focus here is not on testimony in this broad sense, but rather on testimony as a source of historical knowledge, as it is currently debated within the historiography of mass atrocity.
- 46 Raul Hilberg, *Sources of Holocaust Research: An Analysis* (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 2001); Robert Wolfe, "Nazi Paperwork for the Final Solution," in James Pacy and Alan Wertheimer (eds.), *Perspectives on the Holocaust: Essays in Honor of Raul Hilberg* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), 5-6.
- 47 Some might object that such language rules are different in kind from norms, insofar as the only possible reasons the relevant historical individuals could have had for following them would be instrumental reasons, e.g. fear of sanctions for infractions. I see no in principle reason for supposing that properly normative attitudes (such as internalization, felt-bindingness, etc.) could not develop towards such language rules, however—in which case, according to the argument of this paper, it would be appropriate to classify them as a kind of norm. For a more extended investigation of such language rules, and of historical and conceptual reasons for regarding them as social norms, see Morrow, "Mass Atrocity and Manipulation of Social Norms," 268-278.
- 48 Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 23-24. For a more recent, and highly instructive, discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the increasing use of testimony as a source of historical knowledge amongst Holocaust scholars, see Henry Greenspan, Sara Horowitz, Éva Kovács, Berel Lang, Dori Laub, Kenneth Waltzer, and Annette Wieviorka, "Engaging Survivors: Assessing 'Testimony' and 'Trauma' as Foundational Concepts," *Dapim* 28, 3 (2014): 190-226.
- 49 See Zoë Waxman, "Transcending History? Methodological Problems in Holocaust Testimony," in *The Holocaust and Historical Methodology*, ed. Dan Stone (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 143-157. To be clear, I am using testimony here not in its narrow, juridical or quasi-juridical sense, but rather in the broader sense that includes diaries, memoirs, and other types of text and speech as well.
- 50 Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, 25.
- 51 Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness, 1933-1941*, trans. Martin Chalmers (New York: Modern Library, 1998), 67-68. Although norms and conventions are not synonymous, for historiographical purposes the same evidentiary problems arise.
- 52 I thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this paper for this point.
- 53 In order to keep the evidentiary bar from being pushed prohibitively high, it's important to note that some of the difficulties in gathering testimonial evidence concerning norms are not restricted to historical contexts, but rather arise from the very nature of what it is to inhabit the practical point of view. Within this point of view, real and apparent norms of many different kinds protrude, and it can be difficult to sort out exactly what normative beliefs and attitudes other individuals hold, and which of those normative beliefs and attitudes, if any, help to explain particular actions those individuals undertake. I take it that the proper historiographical response to this fact is to try to preserve the defeasibility of everyday claims about norms when reconstructing the role of norms in guiding the decisions and actions of historical individuals and groups.
- 54 Kristen Renwick Monroe, *Ethics in an Age of Terror and Genocide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- 55 Monroe, *Ethics*, 21.
- 56 Monroe, *Ethics*, 347.
- 57 Monroe, *Ethics*, 255-260.
- 58 Monroe, *Ethics*, 23-24.
- 59 Monroe, *Ethics*, 22.
- 60 Monroe, *Ethics*, 8. Goodin et al cite Monroe as advocating the view that norms can sometimes prohibit even deliberation over certain kinds of actions. See Goodin et al, *Explaining Norms*, 252.
- 61 Monroe, *Ethics*, 306-7
- 62 An important caveat to this claim about Monroe's theory is that the extended theoretical background she provides in Chapter 9 of her book contains references to many different views in which norms *do* play a central role, e.g. her discussion of the theory that humans have an innate moral grammar that makes the cognition of norms both possible and pervasive. See Monroe, *Ethics*, 295-7.
- 63 At times Monroe acknowledges this point, for example in her interview with the Dutch rescuer Tony and his transformation from a fairly conservative, parochial self-conception to a much more liberal and holistic self-image. See Monroe, *Ethics*, 66-68; 317-8.
- 64 Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide*, 1-9.

- 65 Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide*, 17.
- 66 Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).
- 67 Koonz describes this distinguishing feature as a “concept of ethnic virtue” capable of grounding a “comprehensive ethical revolution.” Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 13; 16. I do not have space to consider here whether Koonz shares the particular picture of the nature and dynamics of norms that I offer in this paper.
- 68 Telford Taylor, “Opening Statement of the Prosecution, December 9, 1946,” in George J. Annas and Michael A. Grodin (eds.), *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 88; Evelyne Shuster, “Fifty Years Later: The Significance of the Nuremberg Code,” *The New England Journal of Medicine* 337, 20 (1997): 1436-1440.
- 69 Paul Weindling, “The Origins of Informed Consent: the International Scientific Commission on Medical War Crimes, and the Nuremberg Code,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75, 1 (2001): 55, 58.
- 70 Weindling, “Origins of Informed Consent,” 66-67.
- 71 See Waller, *Becoming Evil*, 15-17; Wilson, *Writing History*.
- 72 See for example Powell, *Barbaric Civilization*, 59.
- 73 The Charter of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg famously curtailed one traditional approach to localizing responsibility when it rejected superior orders as a legitimate defense against charges of war crimes or crimes against humanity. While members of military units cannot absolve themselves from legal responsibility for participation in mass atrocities by pointing to superior orders, large-scale crimes such as genocide and mass atrocity are not typically perpetrated solely by soldiers serving in ordinarily constituted military units. The Nuremberg Charter does not, therefore, establish definitively the limits of appropriate localization of responsibility for large-scale crimes. Furthermore, the Nuremberg Charter deals exclusively with legal, rather than moral, responsibility. For both of these reasons, it is appropriate to consider whether there are other forms of localization of legal or moral responsibility that might be justified on the basis of the thesis of norm transformation.
- 74 Waller, *Becoming Evil*, 203
- 75 For a helpful discussion of criteria for assessments of moral responsibility for bystanding behavior during mass atrocities, and of the challenges of incorporating intentions as an element in such assessments, see Ernesto Verdeja, “Moral Bystanders and Mass Violence,” in *New Directions in Genocide Research*, ed. Adam Jones (New York: Routledge, 2012), 153-168.
- 76 Michael Kearney, *The Prohibition of Propaganda for War in International Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- 77 Wilson, *Writing History*.
- 78 See Gerlach, “Extremely Violent Societies”; also Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511781254>
- 79 Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies*, 6.
- 80 Gerlach, “Extremely Violent Societies,” 448-449.
- 81 Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies*, 284.
- 82 Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies*, 284.
- 83 Gerlach, “Extremely Violent Societies,” 453-454.
- 84 Mark Drumbl, *Atrocity, Punishment, and International Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- 85 Raphael Lemkin, “Introduction to Genocide,” in *Lemkin on Genocide*, ed. Steve Jacobs (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 4.

“Toxification” as a More Precise Early Warning Sign for Genocide Than Dehumanization? An Emerging Research Agenda

Rhiannon S. Neilsen

University of Queensland

Brisbane, Australia

Abstract: *In genocide scholarship, dehumanization is often considered to be an alarming early warning sign for mass systematic killing. Yet, within broader research, dehumanization is found to exist in a variety of instances that do not lead to aggression or violence. This disparity suggests that while dehumanization is an important part of the genocidal process, it is too imprecise as a salient early warning sign. Genocide scholars have acknowledged such a conjecture in the past. This article initiates an embryonic research agenda that offers “toxification” as a more precise early warning sign for genocide than dehumanization. It contends that while dehumanization signals that killing members of a particular group may be regarded as permissible, a more indicative early warning is one that flags when extermination is considered a necessity. Following a literature review of dehumanization, the purpose of this article is to introduce the idea of “toxification”, and to illustrate how the concept can work in practice, using two twentieth century genocides as examples.*

Keywords: *peace and conflict studies, race and ethnicity, social psychology and interaction*

Introduction

Scholarship over the last half century suggests that genocide does not manifest without hideously vivid preliminaries: the processes’ paradox of contextual uniqueness and “painful axiom of invariance”¹ has yielded a number of early warning indicators that are considered common to genocides.² Dehumanization—the denial of a person’s humanity and his/her ejection from the “sphere of equal moral standing”³—is often accepted as an important early warning sign for genocide and mass atrocities. This is because it is a psychological-coping device for would-be perpetrators to commit acts that are axiomatically considered immoral, and internalised as exceptionally ethically affronting. However, outside the field of genocide studies, dehumanization is found to exist in instances that are not linked to aggression, conflict, or even violence; in fact, recent research has identified dehumanization in subtle, everyday social perception and common interaction.⁴ Such an incongruity calls into question the validity of dehumanization as a salient early warning sign for genocide.⁵ This is not to refute dehumanization’s role in preparing perpetrators and populations for genocide to occur, but that genocide early warning frameworks need to identify a more pernicious process specific to genocide. Importantly, and to their credit, such an observation has been made by genocide scholars in the past, and thus reinforces the argument made here for a more precise early warning. However, within genocide literature, there remains little distinction between identifying when killing is regarded by the perpetrators as more allowable or tolerable because individuals are no longer included in the perpetrators’ sphere of moral standing (as per dehumanization), and when extermination is regarded by the perpetrators as an absolute necessity—the latter, I contend, being more definite to genocide. Consequently, this article constitutes an embryonic research agenda that offers “toxification” as a contender for this more exact early warning. Toxification is the cognitive perception of victims as malignant and carcinogenic pests that must be purged for the survival of the perpetrator, and/or the perpetrators’ ideal society. While toxification and dehumanization co-morbid, the former is distinct insofar that victims are perceived to be not only outside the perpetrators’ human universe of moral obligation, but as irreconcilably lethal and therefore (in the eyes of the perpetrators) unavoidably exterminable. The observation that perpetrators regard the victims as toxic or fatal prior to extermination is not an anomaly in genocide research: indeed, kill or be killed rhetoric is largely cited. Yet, the operationalization of such a concept as an important early warning sign for genocide is largely absent; if anything, this perception of lethality continues to be erroneously regarded as dehumanization in current early warning frameworks.⁶ The purpose of this article is to offer an emerging conceptual agenda that introduces toxification as possible candidate for a more precise early warning sign for further robust empirical studies: I am not

claiming with any conviction here that toxification is a more telling indicator. Such a claim would require greater empirical breadth that comparatively analyzes toxification in genocide vs. non-genocides—something better suited to future research once the need for a more telling indicator is recognized, and the concept is better understood.⁷ Hence, my inclusion of the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide is to simply illustrate how toxification's two strains manifest. Further, I am not offering toxification as a cause for genocide: while this would be an interesting exercise, it would demand a different investigation entirely.⁸

This article begins with a literature review of dehumanization in genocide literature and broader dehumanization literature to illustrate its limitations as an early warning sign. Next, because this is essentially a theoretical conjecture—albeit in its nascent conception—I will engage with existing social theories regarding the abject and pollution, before providing a thorough explanation of toxification. Lastly, in seeking to avoid definitive claims that toxification is a more telling early warning sign for genocide, I look to the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide of 1994 to illustrate how toxification manifests prior to and during genocide. To demonstrate that toxification is not simply specific to these cases, brief consideration will be given to an additional two twentieth century genocides.⁹

Dehumanization

The definition of dehumanization is consistent in genocide literature and broader dehumanization literature. Dehumanization is understood as the denial of an individual's essential humanness and identity, and thereby situating individuals "outside the boundary in which moral values, rules, and considerations of fairness apply"¹⁰ to other humans.¹¹ It is the "psychological-symbolic removal of others from the classification of *human*"¹² wherein the other is expelled from what Helen Fein termed the "human universe of moral obligation."¹³ An individual is no longer included in the moral compact to be responsible for the other or in the meaningful social fabric that "governs human relationships."¹⁴ Moreover, there are two main ways individuals are thought to be dehumanized: via the denial of human uniqueness (emotions that are felt only humans) and via human nature (emotions felt by humans and animals).¹⁵ The first is often understood as animalistic dehumanization, which refers to the denial of "uniquely human attributes,"¹⁶ such as moral sensibility, reason, emotional depth, and civility. Instead, the dehumanized is regarded as the antithesis of such qualities: coarse, immoral, impulsive, child-like, uncultured and governed by the satisfaction of basic needs.¹⁷ The second is mechanistic dehumanization, which is the denial of human nature, wherein the individual is regarded as incapable of empathy, vitality, warmth; rather, the individual is—like a machine—an insentient being, impervious to pain and passion as humans understand it. Thus, despite emphasizing different characteristics, both forms of dehumanization deny individuals their humanity, individuality and identity.¹⁸ Whereas the latter sees the individual as unable to experience—to "feel pleasure and pain"¹⁹ as a human would, the former sees individuals without agency—the capacity to "plan, intend and exert choice"²⁰ as a human would: in both instances the dehumanized are underserving of being in the universe of human moral obligation.²¹ Dehumanization is thus an estranging and othering process: it is the "activity of repressing, subjugating, annihilating the similarities between the self and others, and the ways in which the other is known and understood."²² Such a decommissioning of humanity causes individuals to treat others as "a means to an end, rather than an end in themselves."²³ Thus, whether writing about genocide or other processes, scholars accept a consistent definition of dehumanization. Yet, while there is a trend in genocide studies to regard dehumanization as a telling early warning indicator for mass slaughter, this same understanding of dehumanization is cited in other, seemingly banal processes in broader literature. Some genocide scholars have acknowledged the insufficiency of dehumanization as a telling early warning sign—as explored below—however, little movement has been made toward operationalizing a better concept. This disparity is explored below.

Dehumanization in Genocide Literature and Broader Literature

In genocide literature, dehumanization is often considered an alarming early warning sign for genocide, because it silences perpetrators' and the population's "universal human abhorrence of

murder,"²⁴ because the targeted group victim is no longer seen as human.²⁵ For instance, Gregory Stanton, in his celebrated Eight (now Ten) Stages of Genocide, regards dehumanization as the very "phase where the death spiral of genocide begins."²⁶ Similarly, Jacques Sémelin asserts that "killing starts with the words disqualifying [the victims'] humanity"²⁷ because it is thought to dull moral inhibitions against butchery. In his concluding analysis, Alexander Hinton cites essentialization—the marking and crystallization of difference—that sees the other as less than fully human as a "hallmark of genocide", because individuals are "depicted as legitimate targets of violence whose execution should not pose a moral dilemma. Killing them is not murder, but rather the slaughter of a lowly animal."²⁸ More recently, on the 9th of December 2014, marking the 66th anniversary of signing the 1948 Genocide Convention, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide Mr Adama Dieng remarked: "The Holocaust did not start with the gas chambers and the Rwandan genocide did not start with the slayings. It started with the dehumanization of a specific group of persons."²⁹ Outside the purview of genocide literature,³⁰ however, dehumanization is not associated with mass murder, ethnic cleansing, forced displacement or other crimes against humanity, nor is it loaded with such severe connotations.³¹

For instance, Nick Haslam et al. found that dehumanization exists in "everyday social perception, and can occur in the absence of intense conflict or aggression,"³² such as the experiences of "women, immigrants, refugees, the homeless, African Americans and other stigmatised groups."³³ Similarly, Laurie Rudman and Kris Mescher write about dehumanization of women by men, wherein women are often seen as instruments or tools, lacking agency, self-determination, and subjectivity: women are thus regarded as fungible, controllable and/or synonymous to animals.³⁴ Using neuroimaging data of Princeton University undergraduate students, Fiske and Lasana Harris found that extreme out groups, such as poor people, the homeless, and drug addicts, were dehumanized to such an extent that they did not register in the participants' medial frontal cortex (the region of the brain responsible for recognizing and attributing a mental presence to others) as social beings.³⁵ Dehumanization occurs in the event of physical difference; that is, if an individual is noticeably physically handicapped or suffering from mental disability that manifests physically.³⁶ Heather Keith and Kenneth Keith³⁷ unveil that people with physical and mental disabilities are frequently dehumanised in contemporary societies, and Phillip Goff et al. identify that Blacks are still thought by sects of contemporary America as positioned "somewhere between the deformed and the simian."³⁸ A number of scholars have conducted various investigations into the dehumanization of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced peoples, and immigrants—all of whom experience dehumanizing policies, but are not destroyed *en masse* with the intention of total annihilation as per genocide.³⁹ Lastly, further distancing dehumanization from genocide, Haslam et al. have argued that "merely being associated with animals or machines, or being denied the corresponding humanness traits or emotions, does not necessarily have negative consequences"⁴⁰ because it apparently enables leaders to make difficult decisions concerning sanctioning strikes that could result in the death of civilians during warfare. Although the aforementioned groups face virulent prejudice, persecution, and often violence as a result of their dehumanization,⁴¹ there is little to no concern for genocide.⁴² Thus, while genocide rarely occurs in the absence of dehumanization, this literature review unveils that genocide does not begin with dehumanization, and that its usefulness as a telling early warning device can be contested.

Some genocide scholars have acknowledged the insufficiency of dehumanization as a telling early warning, and this serves to reinforce the argument made here for a more accurate indicator.⁴³ Rowan Savage writes that "dehumanization is found outside the field of genocide studies,"⁴⁴ and that "dehumanization facilitates genocide, but no means causes massacre, or always has massacre as a result."⁴⁵ In a parallel vein, James Waller identifies that something more malevolent than dehumanization must flag the intention to destroy an entire group of people.⁴⁶ Israel Charny maintains that, "the process that makes genocide possible does not stop at dehumanization... what needs to be added is to justify taking people's lives... the proof that the other is also a terrible threat to our lives and it is *their intent to take our lives away from us unless we stop them*."⁴⁷ Lastly, Johannes Lang observes that "dehumanization leaves only a void"⁴⁸ —it does not necessitate action, but rather allows for a space of possibility. Thus, in addition to the above literature review that points

to dehumanization's limitation as an early warning sign for genocide, what is needed is a specific discussion regarding why this is the case: that is, what dehumanization does, and does not, signal.

Crucially, dehumanization says nothing to the perception of killing a certain group being a necessity. I submit that this is perhaps why dehumanization is seldom loaded with the same alarm outside of genocide literature: dehumanization does not necessitate an individual's mistreatment, abuse, or murder, but simply renders it more tolerable in the eyes of the dehumanizer. I contend that such misplaced emphasis on dehumanization—correctly identified by previous genocide scholars—is due to the blurring of the permissibility of violence and killing (as enabled and signalled by dehumanization), with an apparent imperative to kill. This is not to contest that dehumanization is an important part of the genocidal process; rather, that existing genocide early warning frameworks largely fail to distinguish between an allowable action, and a requisite action. Indeed, it is reasonable to conceptualize dehumanization as having degrees,⁴⁹ yet even in its most absolute form where the individual is considered to be fundamentally inhuman and ejected from the sphere of equal moral standing, dehumanization still does not necessitate killing. This would then lend a thought process to whether there can be variants of dehumanization; however, even if this early warning is assigned a status of dehumanization variant, or belonging to the family of dehumanization, a novel concept that speaks directly to when killing is seen as a necessity in genocide is still required. Thus, there is space for developing such an early warning. In opening this research agenda, I propose the concept of toxification—a concept that eclipses the perception of victims as simply inhuman, and flags that perpetrators see the victims' destruction as a necessity.

An Emerging Research Agenda: Toxification and an Engagement with Social Theory

By way of engaging with Mary Douglas' social theory regarding pollution and Julia Kristeva's the abject, this section offer an embryonic conceptual framework that articulates when perpetrators believe the complete elimination of a targeted group is a necessity. According to Kristeva, the abject refers to the response to the blurring or loss of identity between the self and the other. While the actor of the ethic must be engaged in the "perpetual undoing of the said"⁵⁰ and "must of necessity be ready to be afflicted by the performance of the other,"⁵¹ the other must remain exactly that: a stranger which unsettles, disrupts and disturbs oneself.⁵² Once the meaningful difference between the self and the other disintegrates, and the self is no longer recognizable as distinct against that which its own identity is forged, Kristeva states that the human reaction is typically of horror, exile, and disgust.⁵³ While this conceptualization is helpful in explaining genocide perpetrators' and populations' reactions to certain groups, it sits uncomfortably with the idea of dehumanization that clearly articulates the difference between us and them: we are human; they are not. Nevertheless, Kristeva's analysis highlight that fear, horror and disgust are important to and disgust, and by extension, often warrant an attempt to distance oneself from the source of that makes one's identity uncertain.

Douglas' analysis of pollution is helpful for understanding genocide early warning signs, because it sheds light on the relationship between order and disorder within a pre-conceived system of "tidily organized"⁵⁴ ideas and values, and the way in which dirt and uncleanness is thought to assault this uniformity. According to Douglas, "dirt is essentially disorder;"⁵⁵ thus, if a group is regarded as polluting a society, then they are seen to be spoiling patterns that a group wishes to preserve or achieve. So, it is understandable that there is a perceived necessity to remove such contaminating elements so as to maintain (or achieve) consistency.⁵⁶ However, while concepts such as hygiene, dirt and uncleanness do incite a yuk response and warrant a degree of urgency, they do not speak to life and death situations. I submit that would-be targets for genocide are regarded by the perpetrators to be more than simply a "matter out of place"⁵⁷—something that offends order and stimulates a desire to re-negotiate patterns of existence to ensure uniformity, or "positively re-ordering our environment, making it conform to an idea,"⁵⁸ therein giving "form to formlessness."⁵⁹ This paper builds atop of these ideas of contamination and pollution that spoils patterns to offer a concept that requires the specific response of extermination in the context of genocide: toxification.

Toxification is the cognitive perception of the target group as fundamentally lethal to the furtherance of the perpetrators' survival and society: the group is perceived to be not simply

inhuman or inferior, as with dehumanization, but as a toxic presence that must be cauterized and destroyed. This noxiousness is regarded as irreconcilable, immutable and inextricable, and so cannot be remedied by any means other than extermination: essentially, toxicity incarnate.⁶⁰ Owing to this, slaughter is necessarily extended to women and children: “Kill and scalp all, little and big... Nits make lice.”⁶¹ The term toxic is used not to refer specifically to quasi-medical terminology, but to emphasize its irremediable status.

I offer toxification as the early warning sign that could better signal the onset of genocide than dehumanization. This is because it signals the stimulation of two of the most fundamental and entwined human emotions among would-be perpetrators: fear, and the survival instinct. The perpetrator’s existence is held as a zero-sum game, wherein it can only be guaranteed at the expense of the victims’. Massacre becomes analogous to self-preservation, and killing blurs with purifying, sanitising and disinfecting a society of a mortiferous infection.⁶² Toxification flags that the perpetrators see genocide as a logical and just method of guaranteeing survival undertaken “by an innocent and injured party.”⁶³ As aptly put by Straus, “particular circumstances can cause people to commit harm they might not otherwise have been predisposed to commit”⁶⁴—I propose that toxification could be the early warning sign that signals such a manipulation of individuals’ perception of self-defence.

There are two strains of toxification identifiable prior to genocide. First, the victim group is conceived to be toxic to the ideal; that is, toxic to the furtherance of human civilization, the perpetrators’ ideational reality or utopia, or the body politic.⁶⁵ Victims are portrayed as poisonous deformations in society, the image of human progression, or as infectious contagions in the body politic of the perpetrators. The body politic refers to the unification and embodiment of the nation’s sovereignty and people in common will and blood: that which affects the body politic, affects its people.⁶⁶ For instance, medical rhetoric, metaphors and discourse encompassing pathology, terminal cancerous growths, blood-sucking parasites, diseases, viruses, bacilli, leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis and microbes used to describe the victim group is demonstrative of such toxification. It is this process, whereby victims are branded as necessarily fatal and equaling death for the body politic and/or the perpetrators’ society and future that signals the need for extermination.⁶⁷ In this instance, toxification propagated in the form of toxic to the ideal rests more with abstract conceptualizations of survival. Second, the victims are depicted as toxic to the self: the perpetrators become convinced that the victims will, without fail and given the chance, murder the perpetrators. As aforesaid, victims are immune to persuasion, reason, or affection, and so cannot be reconciled—extermination becomes seen as the perpetrators’ only option. Toxification in the form of toxic to the self signals that perpetrators subscribe to a kill before being killed zero-sum logic. Thus, unlike toxic to the ideal, death is not abstract, and the collective is not toxic to the furtherance of a utopia; instead, perpetrators are genuinely convinced that they themselves and their families will be annihilated if no action is taken against the target group.

It is important to note that research noting the perceived lethality or toxicity of genocide victims is not sparse; in fact, the identification of victims being dangerous or lethal to the perpetrators is prolific in genocide literature, and serves to reinforce the need for an early warning sign that coherently speaks to this observation, such as toxification.⁶⁸ Therefore, as an emerging research agenda, priority here rests with illustrating how toxification operationalizes to give the reader a better grasp of how the concept can be understood in practice. To do so, the next sections turn to the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide of 1994 as examples of toxification, and how it is distinct from dehumanization.

The Holocaust: Illustrating Toxic to the Ideal

The purpose of looking to the Holocaust is to illustrate the toxification strain toxic to the ideal; specifically, with its focus on the body politic, the Aryan utopia and the irreconcilable and inevitable lethality the Jewish population was thought to pose to the Third Reich.⁶⁹ The dehumanization of the Jewish population allowed for policies of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice as early as the 1920s. Yet, closer to the Final Solution, such rhetoric and cognitive perceptions of Jewish people began to incorporate assignments of toxicity, most notably as noxious maladies to the German *Volkskörper* and the Third Reich. The Nazi ideology affirmed that the Aryan is the Prometheus

of mankind, and that any individuals who fell foul of this model—such as Jews, Gypsies, Slavs, Poles, homosexuals, hereditarily determined a-socials, and the mentally and physically deficient (that is, people suffering from: congenital feeble-mindedness, schizophrenia, severe hereditary physical deformity, severe alcoholism on a discretionary basis, hereditary blindness and manic depression)⁷⁰—constituted nefarious and noxious obstructions to achieving an ideational utopia.⁷¹ Propaganda disseminated by the Nazi regime⁷² sought to convince the German⁷³ population that preserving the *fehlerhaften und defekten* (deficient and defective) and the degenerate and depraved was to allow false humanity to intoxicate the Aryan ideal.⁷⁴ For instance, Adolf Hitler cited fictitious “historical evidence...[which] shows with terrifying clarity, that in every mingling of Aryan blood (*Blutvermischung des Ariers*) with that of lower peoples, the result was always the end of the cultured people.”⁷⁵ Similarly, and further illustrating how toxification can be understood in practice, Jewish people were depicted in Nazi propaganda as subversive spongers penetrating the *Blutkreislauf unseres Volkes* (the bloodstream of our people).⁷⁶ Jewish people were regarded as the *Erkrankung von Volkskörper* (disease of the body politic), the *Volkerparasit* (parasite of the people), and *Die Sünden wider das Blut* (the sin against the blood), corroding the body politic.⁷⁷ That is, Jewish people were seen as not simply inhuman, but as “maggots feeding on a rotting corpse, the parasites that had to be surgically removed...a plague worse than the Black Death, the sponger who spreads like a noxious bacillus and then kills his host.”⁷⁸ Likewise, the infamous child storybook *Der Giftpilz* (The Poisonous Mushroom), wherein Jews are described as poisonous mushrooms and the “incarnation of everything evil and soulless”⁷⁹ is also an illustration of toxification.⁸⁰ These examples of discourse prior to and during the Holocaust are loaded with connotations that clearly transgress the line of regarding individuals as inhuman and existing outside the sphere of equal moral standing; rather, victims were regarded by the perpetrators as being toxic and fundamentally lethal.⁸¹ By extension, then, the recognition of an entity being toxic introduces an element of necessity to get rid of that which poses an irreconcilable threat.⁸² Fritz Klein, a physician at the Auschwitz concentration camp, reported that just as he would “remove a gangrenous appendix from a diseased body” he removed Jews “as gangrenous appendix in the body of mankind.”⁸³ By this, Klein saw the extermination of the Jewish people “as a therapeutic imperative [out of] respect for human life.”⁸⁴ During the genocide, and reflecting on the systematic carnage of the Jew people, Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer of the Schutzstaffel (SS), stated that, “we [speaking on behalf of the German people] have stayed decent...we have suffered no harm to our inner being, our soul, our character.”⁸⁵ These reports shed light on the perspective of annihilation of the Jewish race as a necessity because of their apparent toxicity. The purpose of looking at the Holocaust was to demonstrate how toxification as toxic to the ideal could be understood in practice. It highlighted that there is a distinction between regarding individuals as underserving of being included in the human universe of moral obligation, and regarding them as something toxic or lethal that necessitates their extermination—the latter, despite being recognized in genocide literature, is often overlooked as a useful early warning sign distinct from dehumanization. While the Holocaust illustrates toxic to the ideal, the Rwandan genocide can be looked to as an example of toxification as toxic to the self.

The Rwandan Genocide: Illustrating Toxic to the Self

In 1994, via the medium of *Kangura*, broadcasts from Radio Rwanda, and community meetings, Tutsis were labelled *inyenzi* (cockroaches), *ibinhindugemb* (heinous monsters without a head or tail), and devils, which consumed the organs and innards of Hutus.⁸⁶ Although this initially appears to be dehumanization, the labels are loaded with toxic and lethal connotations. For instance, a cockroach is not just inhuman: cockroaches are disease-disseminating agents, which hoard and transfer illnesses that are lethal to humans, such as salmonella, staphylococcus and streptococcus. Similarly, such use of the terms monsters, demons or devils suggests that Tutsis were regarded as not simply inhuman entities to be excluded from the sphere of equal moral standing, but something lethal to the survival of Hutus. Such toxicity was described to be inextricable to each Tutsi and is epitomised in a March 1993 *Kangura* article: “A cockroach cannot give birth to a butterfly. It is true. A cockroach gives birth to another cockroach... the history of Rwanda shows us clearly that a Tutsi stays always exactly the same that he has never changed... They are all linked...their evilness in

the same."⁸⁷ Toxification of this kind was unabatedly dispersed throughout Rwanda prior to the 1994 genocide.⁸⁸ This language points to more than just allowing the mistreatment of individuals held to be sub- or less-than human; it signals the creation of a security dilemma in the minds of the perpetrators, wherein the exigencies of survival triumphed a zero-sum game: kill, or be killed.⁸⁹ A Hutu perpetrator of the genocide articulated this perception: "we thought if we killed them all, they would not have the power to kill us."⁹⁰ Another participant stated that the Tutsi "had become a threat greater than all we had experience together... That's how we reasoned and we killed at the time."⁹¹ This rhetoric illustrates the toxic to the self strain of toxification, which signals the genuine subscription to a kill before being killed logic held by perpetrators: it was, in the minds of the Hutu, "a war of self defense"⁹² against a toxic presence. This conviction in a group being held as toxic to the self can also account for individuals who do not join perpetrators ameliorating the toxic threat: for instance, Hutu extremists also murdered *icyitso* (accomplices)—that is, Hutu moderates who refused to partake in massacre, because (by not partaking in the extermination of the *inyenzi*) they were seen to be allowing Tutsis to continue posing a toxic threat to every other Hutu. Consequently, by way of Tutsi complicity and sympathy, Hutu moderates were branded as equally lethal and eliminated as such.⁹³ In sum, the dehumanization of Tutsis as omnipresent and *Unwanzi ni umwe ni umusti* (the enemy is one) played an unequivocal role in grooming perpetrators for carnage by no longer regarding the Tutsis as human, thereby numbing the abhorrence to killing fellow humans and regarding it as more tolerable.⁹⁴ The purpose of this review of the Rwandan genocide, however, was to illustrate the concept of toxification as toxic to the self—something which sits as distinct from dehumanization. This toxic rhetoric moved beyond seeing killing as allowable, and suggests that—in the eyes of the Hutu extremists—there was "no alternative but to annihilate"⁹⁵ the Tutsi in their entirety.⁹⁶

Other Cases that Illustrate Toxification

The above illustrative examples were included to demonstrate how toxification can be understood in practice. The selection of the Holocaust and 1994 Rwandan genocide was on the basis that they best illustrate toxification in practice; it is however appropriate to give brief attention to other twentieth century genocides so as to flag toxification is not specific to these instances. For example, in the context of the Armenian genocide, Pan-Turkish propagandists described Armenians as "invasive infection in Muslim Turkish society"⁹⁷ and "parasites outside the confines of his homeland, sucking off the marrow of the people of the host country,"⁹⁸ before moving onto another host country.⁹⁹ In 1915, Rear Admiral Wilhelm Souchon stated: "It will be salvation for Turkey when it has done away with the last Armenian; it will then be rid of subversive bloodsuckers."¹⁰⁰ Likewise, Mehmed Reshid—a then Turkish physician and later the governor of Diyarbekir—apparently asked rhetorically "Isn't it the duty of a doctor to destroy these microbes?"¹⁰¹

Further illustrating toxic to the ideal, the Cambodian genocide has clear rhetoric that moves beyond marking difference—us versus them—and dehumanization. As Hinton identifies, "the goal of the Khmer Rouge was, as one Khmer saying held, 'to completely annihilate diseases of consciousness',"¹⁰² that is, to exterminate those "hidden enemies burrowing from within"¹⁰³ who Pol Pot regarded as having a "sickness of consciousness"¹⁰⁴ that was toxic to the Great Leap Forward, the utopia as desired by the Khmer Rouge perpetrators. The inclusion of these brief (and, indeed, shallow) engagements with alternative twentieth century genocides was to demonstrate that toxification is by no means distinct to the Holocaust and Rwanda. However, further robust empirical studies are needed to demonstrate conclusively that toxification is a more telling early warning sign for genocide than dehumanization.

Conclusion

Dehumanization is often considered to be an alarming early warning sign for genocide. However, while the definition of dehumanization is consistent across genocide and broader dehumanization literature, a broader literature review unveils that dehumanization occurs in a variety of instances—many of which occur in everyday, social interaction that do not lead to, or are associated with violence or conflict. Accordingly, although dehumanization plays a role in grooming perpetrators into believing discrimination, violence and killing particular individuals is permissible because

they are no longer human, a more indicative early warning sign is one that articulates when killing is seen by the perpetrators as a necessity. This paper is an emerging research agenda that offers toxification as such an early warning. Toxification refers to the cognitive perception of the target group as not merely inhuman, but as toxic to the self, or toxic to the ideal; consequently, the victim group must be purged for the security the perpetrators' society. Whereas dehumanization suggests that slaughtering certain individuals may be tolerable, I submit that toxification perhaps points to the more sinister process specific to genocide—that is, the necessity to kill. The purpose here was to simply introduce the concept of toxification and enhance the reader's understanding of how the concept can work in practice by looking to two twentieth century genocides as the main illustrative examples, and giving brief attention to two additional cases. This lays the foundations for more robust empirical studies that examine other genocides for similar rhetoric, and begin to answer the question posed in the title of this paper. By providing an emerging research agenda into the complexities of dehumanization as an early warning sign for genocide and offering toxification as perhaps a better alternative, I hope to have contributed one more piece to the perplexing puzzle that is the prevention of genocide.

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Endnotes

- 1 Manus Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511491023>
- 2 These early warning signs aim to alert governments of forthcoming mass atrocities, and position such bodies to make timely, informed decisions about response prior to the onset of genocide. While there is no overarching synthesis of all early warning signs, widely accepted genocide indicia include exclusionary ideologies, past genocides or violence, weak economy and governance, governments transitioning toward democracy, authoritarian regimes, and socio-psychological influences. For more genocide early warnings, including dehumanization, see Stephen McLoughlin, *The Structural Prevention of Mass Atrocities: Understanding Risk and Resilience* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Barbara Harff, "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955," *American Political Science Review* 97, 1 (2003): 57-73; Henry Huttenbach, "From the Editor: Earlier Early Warning Signs," *Journal of Genocide Research* 5, 4 (2003): 501-502; Jonathan Whittall, "Humanitarian Early Warning Systems: Myth and Reality," *Third World Quarterly* 31, 8 (2011): 1237-1250; William Donohue, "The Identity Trap: Managing Paradox in Crisis Bargaining," in *The Slippery Slope to Genocide: Reducing Identity Conflicts and Preventing Mass Murder*, ed. William Zartman, Mark Anstey and Paul Meerts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 55-71; Kurt Jonassohn and Karin Björnson, *Genocide and Gross Human Rights Violations* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publications, 1999); David Moshman, "Us and Them: Identity and Genocide," *An International Journal of Theory and Research* 7, 2 (2007): 115-135; David Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide: Practical Steps Toward Early Detection and Effective Action* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2008); Irving Horowitz, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1997).
- 3 Toni Erskine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Duties to Strangers and Enemies in a World of "Dislocated Communities."* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5871/bacad/9780197264379.001.0001>
- 4 Nick Haslam, et al., "Dehumanization: A New Perspective," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 1, 1 (2007): 409-422, 409, 420; Tendayi Viki, Daniel Osgood and Sabine Phillips, "Dehumanization and Self-reported Proclivity to Torture Prisoners of War," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 49, 1 (2013): 325-328; Joris Lammers and Diedrick Stapel, "Power increases Dehumanization," *Group Processes Intergroup Relations* 14, 1 (2011): 113-126; Emanuele Castano and Mirosław Kořta, "Dehumanization: Humanity and its Denial," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12, 6 (2009): 695-707,
- 5 Gregory Stanton, "Could the Rwandan Genocide Have Been Prevented?" *Journal of Genocide Research* 6, 2 (2004): 211-228, 214.
- 6 Thereby blurring the crucial aforesaid distinction between the killing of individuals being more permissible (because they are no longer deserving of the same moral standing as humans), and being a necessity.

- 7 On this point, Timothy Williams and myself are conducting a statistical analysis of toxification in genocide and non-genocide cases in the post-1955 era to determine the extent to which it can be considered a telling early warning sign for genocide. This paper will be presented at the 12th International Association of Genocide Scholars Conference in Yerevan, Armenia of 2015. Specifically, the paper tests toxification as an independent variable that signals forthcoming genocides in a cross-spacial and cross-temporal comparison. Building on existing structural models and using political instability as defined by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) as the unit of analysis, the article empirically tests the impact of toxification as an antecedent that flags latent genocides. The paper will gauge the empirical impact of toxification vis-à-vis other factors, including—but not limited to—the degree of democratization, other ideologies, state capacity, warfare, ethnicity, economic interdependence, and political upheaval, running a logistical regression analysis of post-Second World War genocides, and high-risk cases in which genocide did not occur from the years 1955 to 2013.
- 8 I do not wish to refute the accuracy or relevance of other, accepted early warning signs. Instead, I am simply seeking to highlight the insufficiency of dehumanization as an alarming early warning sign for genocide, and, by extension, open discussions that can lead to a more rigorous early warning framework.
- 9 Again, this is not to support the argument that toxification is a more indicative early warning sign for genocide, as this is not the point here. It is simply to show that such rhetoric does exist outside the two main illustrative examples.
- 10 Susan Opatow, "Moral Exclusion and Injustice: An Introduction," *Journal of Social Issues*, 46, 1 (1990): 1-20, 1.
- 11 For more research on dehumanization and its various consequences, see Phillip Goff, et al., "Not Yet Human: Implicit Knowledge, Historical Dehumanization, and Contemporary Consequences," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94, 1 (2008): 292-306; Victoria Esses, et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanization of Refugees," *Social Justice Research* 21 (2008): 4-25; Louis Winnifred, Victoria Esses and Richard Lalonde, "National Identification, Perceived Threat, and Dehumanization as Antecedents of Negative Attitudes Towards Immigrants in Australia and Canada," *Journal of Applied Social Science* 43 (2013): 156-165; Laurie Rudman and Kris Mescher, "Of Animals and Objects: Men's implicit Dehumanization of Women and the Likelihood of Sexual Aggression," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 38, 6 (2012): 734-746; Samera Esmeir, "On Making Dehumanization Possible," *Modern Language Association* 121, 5 (2006): 1544-1551; Heather Keith and Kenneth Keith, *Intellectual Disability: Ethics, Dehumanization and a New Moral Community* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013); Lisa Haagensen and Marnix Croes, "Thy Brother's Keeper?: The Relationship between Social Distance and Intensity of Dehumanization During Genocide," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 7, 2 (2012): 223-250, 225; Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Uses in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 86.
- 12 Original italics, Israel Charny, "Dehumanization—'Killing' the Humanity of Another," in *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, ed. Israel Charny (California: ABC-CLIO, 1999), 155-159, 155.
- 13 Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide* (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 4.
- 14 Herbert Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanizations of Victims and Victimiziers," *Journal of Social Issues* 29, 4 (1973): 25-37, 43. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1973.tb00102.x>
- 15 Tobias Greitemeyer and Neil McLatchie, "Denying Humanness to Others: a Newly Discovered Mechanism by which Violent Video Games Increase Aggressive Behavior," *Psychological Science*, 22, 5 (2011): 659-656, 661, 663.
- 16 Haslam, et al., "Dehumanization," 414.
- 17 Haslam, et al., "Dehumanization," 413-414.
- 18 Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 48; Esses, et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanization of Refugees," 6-7; Haslam, et al., "Dehumanization," 413.
- 19 Omar Haque and Adam Waytz, "Dehumanization in Medicine: Causes, Solutions and Functions," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 7, 2 (2012): 176-186, 177.
- 20 Haque and Waytz, "Dehumanization in Medicine", 177.
- 21 Susan Fiske, "From Dehumanization and Objectification to Rehumanization: Neuroimaging Studies on the Building Blocks of Empathy," *Values, Empathy and Fairness across Social Barriers*, 1167, (2009): 31-34; Lasana Harris and Susan Fiske, "Dehumanising the Lowest of the Low: Neuroimaging Responses to Extreme Out-groups," *Psychological Science* 17 (2006): 847-853.
- 22 Farhad Dalal, "Racism: Processes of Detachment, Dehumanization, and Hatred," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 75, 1 (2006): 131-161, 158.
- 23 Haque and Waytz, "Dehumanization in Medicine," 178.

- 24 Gregory Stanton, "The Eight Stages of Genocide," *Genocide Watch*, <http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html>. Accessed 30 June 2013.
- 25 Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 39, 49, 297; Graham C. Kinloch, "The Possible Causes and Reduction of Genocide," in *Genocide: Approaches, Case Studies and Responses*, eds. Graham Kinloch and Raj Mohan (New York: Algora Publishing, 2005), 15-32, 17; Haagensen and Croes, "Thy Brother's Keeper?" 225; Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 49; Herbert Hirsch, *Genocide and the Politics of Memory: Studying Death to Preserve Life* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 101-102.
- 26 Stanton, "Could the Rwandan Genocide Have Been Prevented?," 214.
- 27 Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 39.
- 28 Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill? Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 284-285.
- 29 United Nations News Centre, "Genocide Begins with 'Dehumanization': No Single Country is Immune From Risk, Warns UN Official," (2014), *UN News Centre*, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49556>. Accessed 3 March 2015. For more discussions regarding the importance of dehumanization as an early warning sign for genocide, see Kuper, *Genocide*; Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 99; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 22; Ervin Staub, "The Roots and Prevention of Genocide and Related Mass Violence," in *The Slippery Slope to Genocide: Reducing Identity Conflicts and Preventing Mass Murder*, eds. William Zartman, Mark Anstey and Paul Meerts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 35-52, 39; Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 55; Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- 30 That is, historical, sociological, psychological, anthropological and political scientist studies that concern dehumanization but not in relation to genocide.
- 31 Rico Martinez, Rosa Rodriguez-Bailon and Miguel Moya, "Are they Animals or Machines? Measuring Dehumanization," *The Spanish Journal of Psychology* 15, 3 (2012): 1110-1122; Caroline Tipler and Janet Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanization: Non-human Metaphors of Out-groups," *Social and Personal Psychology Compass* 8, 5 (2014): 214-248, 219, 223; Castano and Kofta, "Dehumanization: Humanity and its Denial"; Haslam, et al., "Dehumanization"; Rowan Savage, "Disease Incarnate: Biological Discourse and Genocidal Dehumanization in the Age of Modernity," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 20, 3 (2007): 404-440; Lammers and Stapel, "Power Increases Dehumanization"; Goff et al., "Not Yet Human"; Keith and Keith, *Intellectual Disability*.
- 32 Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 410.
- 33 Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 420.
- 34 Rudman and Mescher, "Of Animals and Objects," 734-746.
- 35 Harris and Fiske, "Dehumanising the Lowest of the Low," 852; Fiske, "From Dehumanization," 32.
- 36 James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 296-297. For a similar contribution, see Christopher Powell, *Barbaric Civilisation: A Critical Sociology of Genocide* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).
- 37 For additional research regarding the dehumanization of people with intellectual impairments as being vegetables, see Tipler and Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanization," 214-248.
- 38 Goff, et al. "Not Yet Human," 293.
- 39 Esses, et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanization of Refugees," 4-25; Louis, Esses and Lalonde, "National Identification," 156.
- 40 Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 420.
- 41 And so their experiences are not to be devalued or posited as less-intolerable.
- 42 Viki, Osgood and Phillips, "Dehumanization and Self-Reported Proclivity to Torture," 325; Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 420; Tipler and Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanization," 217.
- 43 Lammers and Stapel, "Power increases Dehumanization," 116; Tipler and Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanization," 217; Haslam, et al. "Dehumanization," 423; Karen Stollznow, "Dehumanization in Language and Thought," *Journal of Language and Politics* 7, 2 (2008): 177-200, 178.
- 44 Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 405.
- 45 Rowan Savage, "Vermin to be Cleared off the Face of the Earth: Perpetrator Representations of Genocide Victims as Animals," in *Genocide Perspectives III: Essay on the Holocaust and other Genocides*, eds. Colin Tatz, Peter Arnold and Sandra Tatz (Sydney: Brandl & Schlesinger, 2006), 1-32, 21.
- 46 Waller, *Becoming Evil*, 245.

- 47 Original italics, Charny, "Dehumanization—'killing' the Humanity of Another," 156.
- 48 Johannes Lang, "Questioning Dehumanization: Intersubjective Dimensions of Violence in the Nazi Concentration and Death Camps," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 24, 5 (2010): 228.
- 49 For instance, instead of focusing on explicit dehumanization, Jacques-Philippe Leyens and colleagues introduce the concept of infra-humanization. Infra-humanization is the process of assigning more humanity to one's self and in-group than to members of the out-group; as a consequence, members of the out-group are implicitly ascribed less humanity. For more information on degrees of dehumanization, see Jacques-Philippe Leyens, Paola M. Paladino, Ramon Rodriguez-Torres, Jeroen Vaes, et al., "The Emotional Side of Prejudice: The Attribution of Uniquely Human Emotions to Ingroups and Outgroups," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 4, 2 (2000): 395-411; Naria Delgado, Armanda Rodriguez-Perez, Jeroen Vaes, Jacques-Philippe Leyens and Veronica Betancor, "Priming Effects of Violence on Infracumanization," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12, 6, (2009): 699-714, 700; Paul Bain, Joonha Park, Christopher Kwok, and Nick Haslam, "Attributing Human Uniqueness and Human Nature to Cultural Groups: Distinct forms of Subtle Dehumanization," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12, 6, (2009): 789-805; and Nick Haslam, Yoshihisa Kashima, Stephen Loughnan, Junqi Shi, and Caterina Suitner, "Subhuman, Inhuman and Superhuman: Contrasting Humans with Nonhumans in Three Cultures," *Social Cognition* 26, 2 (2008): 248-258.
- 50 Michael J. Shapiro, "Ethics of Encounter: Unreading, Unmapping the Imperium," in *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics*, eds. David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 57-90, 77.
- 51 Shapiro, "Ethics of Encounter," 80.
- 52 Shapiro, "Ethics of Encounter," 64.
- 53 Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
- 54 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203361832>
- 55 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 2.
- 56 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 41, 95.
- 57 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36, 165.
- 58 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 2.
- 59 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 6.
- 60 William Hewitt, *Defining the Horrific: Readings on Genocide and Holocaust in the Twentieth Century* (New Jersey: Pearson, 2004), 47.
- 61 Hewitt, *Defining the Horrific*, 47.
- 62 Alexander Alvarez, "Adjusting to Genocide: The Techniques of Neutralisation and the Holocaust," *Social Science History* 21, 2 (1997): 139-178; Daniele Conversi, "Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing and Nationalism," in *The Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, eds. Gerard Delanty and Krishan Kumar (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 320-333, 328; Kinloch, "The Possible Causes and Reduction of Genocide," 18; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 47, 235; Jonassohn and Björnson, *Genocide*.
- 63 Savage, "Vermin," 27. At the very least, perpetrators often become indifferent to killing, influenced by obedience to authorities, or act out of fear of the consequences of non-compliance.
- 64 Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power and War in Rwanda* (New York: Cornell University, 2006), 228.
- 65 This manifestation of toxification is marked by modernity and the glorification of science, reason and rationality. It draws upon the linear evolution and perfectibility of humans, wherein some humans ought to be erased because they were stagnating or regressing the advancement of humanity. For discussions on victims being regarded as lethal or dangerous to the body politic, see Eric Markusen, "Genocide and Total War: A Preliminary Comparison," in *Genocide and the Modern Age*, eds. Isidor Wallimann and Michael Dobkowski (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 97-123; Colin Tatz, *With Intent to Destroy* (London: Verso, 2003); Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 17; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 31; Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 408, 411; Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 33; Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 282.
- 66 Marie Fleming, "Genocide and the Body Politic in the Time of Modernity," in *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, eds. Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 97-114, 112-113; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 35; Andreas Musolf, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust: The Concept of Body Politic* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 3; Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 33; Colin Tatz, "The Doctorhood of Genocide" in *Genocide Perspectives III*, eds. Colin Tatz, Peter Arnold and Sandra Tatz (Sydney: Brandl & Schlesinger, 2006): 78-94; Moshman, "Us and Them," 123.

- 67 Susan Sontag, "Disease as a Political Metaphor," *New York Review of Books* 1, 1 (1978): 18; Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 419, 430.
- 68 Thus, and as stated previously, the purpose of this paper is not to prove that toxification is a more indicative early warning sign than dehumanization, as this would require greater breadth of empirical investigation that falls beyond the scope of this paper and is best suited for research once the concept is better understood. Rather, this article offers an embryonic conceptual framework that offers toxification – as a coherent concept that articulates when a victim is thought to be lethal to the would-be perpetrators – as perhaps a more viable alternative to dehumanization.
- 69 Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2003), 107; Moshman, "Us and Them," 128-129; Fleming, "Genocide and the Body Politic," 113; Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 426; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 12; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 35.
- 70 William Rubinstein, *Genocide: A History* (London: Pearson, 2004), 187; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 119.
- 71 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 17; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 42; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 191; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 34; Rubinstein, *Genocide*, 175, 184.
- 72 That is, officials and party representatives of the Nazi party: individuals who worked within the Nazi party, particularly those members in the higher echelons of command responsible for conditioning the public perception of Jewish people, such as Joseph Goebbels, the minister of propaganda and enlightenment, and other political and military figures who regularly delivered speeches to the German public regarding the Jewish presence and the need for their destruction.
- 73 My use of German here is to refer to those individuals in the population who the Nazi regime and ideology regarded as a true German (that is, a German who did not fall into the undesirable categories listed above, and was not a Jewish sympathizer). These individuals were the primary target audience of Nazi propaganda.
- 74 Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 55; Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 413.
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The Process of Othering from the “Social Imaginaire” to Physical Acts: An Anthropological Approach

Anthonie Holslag

University of Amsterdam

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract: This article deals with the underlining aspects of Othering within the genocidal process of the Armenian genocide. It will emphasize that Othering is closely related to another process called Selfing, which gives an insight on the genocidal behavior of perpetrators. The article tries to combine these analytical processes with physical actions, and will thereby argue that these physical actions do not stand by themselves, but are indeed cultural expressions of Othering and Selfing; and that these processes are therefore not mere social imaginaire or abstract notions, but physical and thereby observable actions that gives an insight in genocidal intent. These abstract notions or cultural expressions of Othering and Selfing, which by themselves again will be expressed in the enormity of violence and the different dimensions of violence, have the underlining message that one can only solidify a “Self” by destroying the “Other” in all its mechanisms: cultural, social and physical.

Keywords: genocidal process, anthropology of violence, Othering, Selfing, identification processes, genocidal intent, Armenian genocide, social imaginaire, symbolism of violence

Introduction: From the Abstract to the Concrete

Othering is considered a key element within the genocidal process. Alexander Hinton distinguishes between “essentializing Others” and “annihilating Others,” where essentializing Others is creating dichotomies where Others are considered filthy, impure even animalistic, and are henceforth symbolically essentially different and separate from the in-group. Annihilating Others is the literal and physical destruction of the out-group.¹ Between these two processes we also have social destruction: the social deprivation and destruction of social and cultural indicators of the group that has been targeted. What is of importance here is that a dominant culture group, facing a social and political crisis, looks inward to establish a new sense of Self by inventing an Other.² Dichotomies are created. Images are created, where the Other has no further linkage with main dominant culture and can therefore be severed. This implies that genocide is not born out of feelings of superiority, but quite the contrary, of feelings of inferiority. The sense of self-superiority is only projected on the persecuted group.³ The dominant culture group becomes, as it were, “predatory.”⁴ It feels itself targeted. By looking inwards in smaller and smaller circles, these Others become an internal threat that has to be cleansed and purified. It is only through this purification process and destruction, and eliminating within this a metaphorical and internal threat, that the “new identity” can exist.⁵

Jacques Sémelin emphasises that these identity crisis “are mainly born out of a mental process.”⁶ That both the new identity and the internal threat are culturally and socially created myths. The notion of social and physical destructiveness lies, in his opinion, in the *sociale imaginaire*⁷: a complex network of ideas, imagery, values and symbols. It is here where the genocidal process starts. Not in the acts, but in thoughts and ideas, especially ideas where identity is at the basis, so that “identity supplies the framework within which the process of violence will take shape.”⁸ Genocide is therefore not only a physical warfare, but also symbolic and mythological warfare. It is war aimed at the destruction of identities for self preservation and self-existence.

Even though this gives us a starting point to understand the beginning of the genocidal process and how Others are essentialized as a threat,⁹ or dehumanized to such an extent that they are placed outside the realm of humanity,¹⁰ it does not explain how the *sociale imaginaire* becomes physical acts. This is a gulf that Claude Lanzmann considered the distance between “the desire to kill and the act itself.”¹¹ It is this gulf that I am interested in. How does this *sociale imaginaire*, which is mythological, abstract and intangible, become a physical act? How come specific target groups falls victim to willing executioners?

Even though there are a myriad of answers to the last question—economic motivations, jealousy, local feuds—my focus will be on the reconstruction of identity. Building on Gerd

Baumann's concept of grammatical structures, I will first argue that within Othering there is also a process of Selfing. Secondly, I argue that this process does not occur in exceptional circumstances, but is indeed a common day identification practice. Thirdly, this means that the imagery and the ideas used are not in themselves new ideas, but old ones remanufactured. And, fourthly, I argue, there is physicality embedded in Othering that becomes more overtly present during warfare in general, and genocide in particular.

Rather than criticizing the current theories of Othering, this article attempts to add another dimension to an already complicated and abstract mechanism that, hopefully, will make Othering more tangible and visible by using the Armenian genocide as a case-study. My argument is that the *social imaginiaire*, which is at the heart of the genocidal process, becomes solidified in increasingly physical acts, which Ervin Staub considers "the continuum of destruction."¹² This solidification process has only one aim: to create a "new Self." More over, this solidification process, as I will argue, bridges the gulf which Claude Lanzmann referred to as "the desire to kill and the act itself." Understood in such terms, we will see that cultural genocide and cultural destruction are actually extensive parts of the genocidal process, and are not a specific category by themselves, or a dichotomy of the genocide definition. Cultural destruction is one way, in a myriad of ways, to destroy the Other. Genocide is from this point of view not necessarily a war against a specific targeted group, but a war against identity (a symbolic notion) from which a specific targeted group is derived.

The Armenian genocide is an ideal case study to examine the theory of grammatical structures because in essence the genocide was based on a national, and not overtly religious, ethnic, or even racial ideology. Its ideology was based on citizenship, land, mythology and geographic settings and not vague notions as ethnicity or racial differences in blood. The leaders of the Committee of Unification and Progress (CUP) and the three Pasha's (leaders) that ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1913 onward, were highly secular and only used religion to mobilize citizens. If we use the same mechanisms of Othering and Selfing and place them within an ethnic genocide, which is from an anthropological point of view a problematic one—for ethnicity is based on cultural notions and belief systems which are in essence always fluid and in a state of flux¹³—it would be interesting to see how these mechanisms of Othering and Selfing will be solidified. Or to state it differently: which connotations the perpetrators will attach to themselves and to the Others, for this will say a lot how they will define their ethnic identity, and show how the genocidal violence will develop.

For in the end, using Baumann, the same mechanisms of Othering and Selfing will be at play. And here also lies, in my opinion, the powerful message of Baumann: do not focus on identities, but on identification processes. "In replacing the word 'identities' with the word 'identification' ... we have taken a liberating analytical step."¹⁴ These processes never stop. They do not occur only in highly political situations or settings, but are indeed common identification practices that people use on a day-to-day basis. It is during genocide that one of these identification processes, or grammars, as Baumann called them, will become genocidal. It will become the primary mechanism in which people will try to create a cohesive sense of Self.

It's important to notice, that in here I differ with the interpretation, and further more, the implementation of these identification grammars from Baumann himself. Baumann states that genocide occurs when all forms of identification processes disintegrate.¹⁵ I do not think that they do, but rather that one process becomes more prominent and violent than other identification processes, with only one goal: to solidify the Self. This is important, for if we can decipher the cultural expressions and symbolisms behind the violence—either if this violence is aimed at cultural destruction and/or physical destruction—we can decipher the ideology behind the violence (may this be racial, religious, national or ethnical), and we can show the genocidal intent within the acts of violence itself. The violence becomes the vehicle, so to speak, in which we can trace back the intentions, but also the mental framework of the perpetrators.

The Process of Othering: A Common Day Practice

Gerd Baumann's *The Multicultural Riddle* deals with the contextual nature of identity or, in fact, identities.¹⁶ He claims that individuals adapt different identities throughout the day according to the situation that an individual is in. He gives the example of a fictional office worker who

uses several identities in a single day. With every person with whom he interacts, he tries to find mutual characteristics and taps, depending on the context, various symbols ranging from religious identities to geographical and class identities. With every step his identity is being determined by the context and forms, both for himself and the person he is interacting with, a new framework of familiarity.¹⁷ Individuals therefore do not abide by one categorical identity. They do not see themselves solely as a national, ethnical, racial or religious person. Instead, they also use kinship, class, professional titles, gender, or many others, as categorical identities that are adaptable within a given situation. Individuals are agents who choose their identities within a context.¹⁸ Baumann therefore argues that we should not study the “Turks in Berlin” and “the Sikhs in New York,” but the process of identification itself.¹⁹

In *Grammars of Identity*, Baumann and Andre Gingrich, provide a structural answer to Baumann’s own question how identities are created or how we should study these processes.²⁰ According to Baumann, we can divide the identification processes in three different dimensions or grammars: “baby-grammar,” “segmentation,” and “encompassment.”²¹ The focus in my article will be on baby-grammar for this grammar is, as I will argue, central in the genocidal process.²² Baby-grammar, as the word already suggests, is a primary form of identification and can be interpreted as a cultural language where groups distinguish themselves in a terminology of us versus them. The in-group connects both positive and negative connotations to the out-group on several levels. It is especially during moments in crisis and moments which Abram de Swaan calls *dyscivilisation*²³ that baby-grammar, as an identification process becomes more prominent and aggressive.²⁴ The mechanism of baby-grammar does not only include Othering, but more importantly also Selfing as shown in the underneath scheme:²⁵

Table 1: The Grammar of Orientalization or Reverse Mirror-Imaging

<p>Occident Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rational • enlightened • technological 	<p>Orient Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irrational • superstitious • backward
<p>Occident Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calculating • sober • materialist 	<p>Orient Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spontaneous • luxuriant • mystical

The analytical importance of this approach is that Othering, or baby-grammar, is always linked with reverse mirroring. It is a dialectic process. Each time we attach a connotation to the Other, we are in essence creating an imaginary Self. If we, for example, perceive the Other as spontaneous, we are implying that we think of ourselves as calculating (negative self-connotation). If we think of the Other as backwards, then we consider ourselves progressive or technologically advanced (positive self-connotation). We do not only do this during a crisis, but continuously. It is through this process of mirroring where we draw fictitious lines between groups. According to Baumann all the grammatical structures of identification unravels through the genocidal process:

If the three grammars are truly useful in distinguishing the different starting-points and consequences of selfings- and otherings, then we must look for cases in which our three grammars hypothesis can pre-specify its own criteria of falsification and defeat. Everyone knows such examples, and they are easy to find under key words such as genocide, ethnocide, political, racial or religious extermination or annihilation. Each of these spells a breakdown of all three grammars and a return to the anti-grammar of: “we are good, so they are bad” with the genocidal conclusion: “we must live, so they must die.”²⁶

By placing genocide as a form of anti-grammar, however, we are placing genocidal behavior outside the identification process. Genocide becomes something primordial: disconnected from day-to-day

forms of identification. By doing so, we disregard the fact that ideas of ourselves and Others spring from the same day-to-day identification processes even during genocide, and that Othering and Selfing is of importance within the genocidal continuum. During the genocidal process, and during moments of crisis and decivilization, baby-grammar does not disappear, but becomes the central form of grammar where ideas of Self are established. In this sense we are, within the genocidal process, not only essentializing Others, but also creating an essentializing Self. There is no anti-grammar. The baby-grammar enhances increasingly the negative connotations of Others and the positive connotations of ourselves.

Identity entrepreneurs are of extreme importance in this process.²⁷ They are the actors who forge, often based on existing ideologies or existing physical and social scientific theories, a narrative of the new Self. That this new Self is not new in the most narrow interpretation of the word—but is a reconstruction based on existing identities, imagery, mental frameworks, ideologies and scientific theories—makes the role of identity entrepreneurs that much more important. The narrative of the new Self is often based on loose and selective populist readings of newspapers and magazines, literature, popular theories, and folklore. Yet these identity myths are powerful partly because they are built on already existing national themes and images, and therefore familiar, and partly because the so-called scientific basis gives the reconstructed ideas, and the (new) political elite, enough ideological weight for implementation. It gives the illusion, as it were, that the narrative of the new Self is grounded, that the new Self naturally exists. They use baby-grammar to the fullest extent. They continuously mirror themselves to Others within society. First they will mirror themselves to the old elite, then to external enemies, and then to the so-called internal enemies. An analysis of Othering therefore should start with identity entrepreneurs.

A Deeper Analysis in Practice: The Building of Turkish Nationalism and the Pathological Fixation on Identity

Ziya Gökalp was one of the main identity entrepreneurs of the Turkish National identity. He is also one of the most controversial. Some consider him the intellectual mastermind of the Armenian genocide, while others celebrate his contribution to the current Turkish identity after 1923.²⁸ Gökalp was born in 1876 in Diyarbakir and was one of the founders of the CUP. He was intellectually influenced by Spencer and Durkheim and sought a way to combine the Eastern ideology of the Ottoman Empire and the Western canon of thought.²⁹ Uriel Heyd concludes that the writings of Gökalp illustrate the major inner problems of modern Turkish nationalism: “of how to regain national self-respect and self-confidence which had been so deeply shaken by the continues decline of the Ottoman power and prestige vis-à-vis the West.”³⁰

Already before the first coup in 1908, the Pan-Islam ideology, which envisioned a Great nation of Islam, was questioned. Could the Ottoman Empire keep expanding? According to intellectual Yusuf Akçura, who published an influential article in 1904 called “Three Types of Policies” this was impossible. He contrasted the Islamism with Turkism and argued “that Islamism was doomed to failure and that only Turkism had a chance of political success ... Ethnic Turkish people living in the Caucasus, Crimea and Central Asia had to be liberated from Russian rule.”³¹ The Ottoman Empire should not focus on a Great Nation of Islam, therefore, but on its Turkish ethnic people.

What makes this article important is that it shows openly that the Ottoman intelligentsia were looking inward for explanations for the Ottoman decline. It also shows openly that the West and Russia were seen as great enemies (as international Others) and that only an expansion of the Ottoman Empire could answer these international threats. Or, to phrase it differently, the Ottoman ideology and identity had to be reconfigured. The Pan-Islam could no longer be its basis. If the focus of identity changed, the article suggests, the Ottoman Empire could be restored to its former grandeur.

In this article we see an expression of the threat of the psychological Self. This Self is threatened by the Great Powers in Europe, but also internally by the Pan-Islam ideology. We also see how this threat can be lifted, by reformulating the Ottoman identity and by regaining the former stature of the Ottoman Empire. This threat is not lifted by reconfiguring the borders or stopping the expansion policies. Rather, the Ottoman self-concept can only be saved when the Empire grows. Gökalp was undoubtedly influenced by this article and, as the intellectual and ideological founder

of the CUP, he was very much aware that “the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 affected the politics of the Ottoman Empire and that new values had to be created in all spheres of national life.”³² In many of his writings he therefore tried to distance himself from the former elite and intelligentsia:

There is in our country a class, the so-called Levantines and Cosmopolitans, who try to adopt the aesthetic, moral, philosophical tastes, and entire customs, ceremonies and behaviour of the West rather than its scientific methods and industrial techniques. That is, they try erroneously to imitate the cultures of other nations under the name of civilization.³³

What is important in this quote is that he creates a difference between the old Ottoman intelligentsia and the new intelligentsia, by focusing on what he sees as the neglected so called Turkish culture. As Uriel Heyd’s analysis, “he wanted his countryman to be rooted first of all in Turkish culture and only afterwards to adapt Western civilization.”³⁴

Just like Akçura, Gökalp looked inward on restructuring identity. However, in contrast with Akçura, Gökalp did not dismiss Pan-Islam outright (even though he was critical of the old elite and distanced himself from the Pan-Islam ideology), but implicitly sought a synergy of the Pan-Islamism and a new Turkish identity. It is therefore, from an anthropological point of view, important to understand that he did not create new concepts or new cultural frameworks, but reused, rephrased, and rearranged old ones. His vision of the Turkish National identity was, in fact, based on the Pan-Islam ideology of the old Ottoman Empire and (especially in the beginning of his writings) on the Islamic tradition of a fraternity and equality of believers. This changed in the course of the political developments between 1908 and 1913. Where he first envisioned a multinational State with different communities and separate nationalities, he afterwards concluded that “only a State consisting of one nation can exist.”³⁵ The binding factor was Islam. He considered “Islam as the foundation of the Turkish *culture*.”³⁶

To understand his approach on culture, we have to take a look at his ideas which were inspired by Durkheim. To Durkheim society was an entity, with its own collective conscious.³⁷ Each society had its own history, its own trajectory and its own functions. The aim of society was social cohesion. Gökalp adapted these ideas. To him society passed historically through several stages, from a) primitive or tribal to b) a society based on ethnical affinity, to c) a society with a common religion, to finally d) a society united by culture. It is the cultural heritage rather than political will or affiliation that builds a nation. Gökalp definition of a nation is therefore: “a society consisting of people who speak the same language, have had the same education and are united in their religious, moral and aesthetic ideals.”³⁸ Gökalp therefore makes religion a basic aspect of culture, a primordial phase of culture, and a first step in society’s progression.

We see in Gökalp’s intellectual thoughts, therefore, a primordial approach, where culture encapsulates all the previous steps. This is a very important emphasis and difference with the Pan-Islam. Where in Pan-Islam a great nation of Islam was envisioned, this religion was not necessarily primordial. For this reason, different religions could co-exist side by side. In the Pan-Turkish or later Pan-Turan ideology, however, this was impossible. Religion was a basic feature of the Turkish national and ethnic identity. When a great Turkish national state was envisioned, this excluded non-Muslims.³⁹ We see this returning in some of his early writings. In one of his essays, Gökalp writes:

that non-Muslim communities had no part of the political life of the Empire and were exempt from military service and that they therefore could concentrate their attention on their economic interests and, thanks to the large measure of autonomy granted to them by the Turks, on the development of their social life.⁴⁰

What is interesting in this statement is the exclusive role he gives to non-Muslims in society. Non-Muslims were not burdened by political responsibilities and could therefore pursue economic goals. And, he hereby immediately contextualizes the prosperous position of Christian minorities in some villages and provinces, and combines this with their lack of political commitment. This status quo was tolerated (through *aman* in the Pan-Islam ideology and the millet-system) by the

Ottomans. Non-Muslims were therefore not only outside society, they were also parasitic and it was the old Ottoman intelligentsia that had let this happen.

In the above statement of Gökalp we see identity played out on several levels. First he creates a schism with the old Ottoman intelligentsia and the new Ottoman intelligentsia; second he places the Turks in opposition of the Non-Muslims and, by doing so, intertwines Turkism with Islamism (contrary to Akçura). The Turk is furthermore burdened with the political future of society, while the non-Muslim is not. The non-Muslim is therefore not a part of the political entity. Here again we see the threat of the psychological Self; a Self that was not only endangered by external enemies, but also by the old Ottoman intelligentsia and by other groups who had created a home within the Ottoman Empire. The object of Turkism was for Gökalp "to seek the (Turkish) national culture (*mili harsi aramak*), to bring to light what was hidden in the soul of the nation."⁴¹ The individual was in the ideological framework of Gökalp subordinate to the State. This is a theme we can find in his poetry:

What is duty? A voice that comes down from the throne of God.
Reverberating the consciousness of my nation.
I am a soldier, it is my commander,
I obey without a question all its orders
With closed eyes
I carry out my duty.⁴²

While the crisis between 1908 and 1913 intensified, nationalism deepened. In 1911, during a Congress, the CUP came with the following statement:

In our opinion, it is the aim of the Committee of Union and Progress to establish a united and progressive Ottomanism ... The Committee of Union and Progress considers the Islam the basis of Ottomanism and attributes the existence to this spiritual force.⁴³

Here we see how the ideas of Gökalp, and his ideological framework, become the central piece of the new CUP policy. Embedded within this statement, there is an element of a self-fulfilling prophecy. By stating and restating, through writings, policies, laws and decrees, that the problems of the Ottoman Empire lie with the minorities within the State and the enemies outside the State, the minorities in extent become a real threat as identity is reshaped to counter post an imaginary Other.

An article published on the 4th of August 1911 in the periodical *Genç Kalemler*, after the Italian invasion of Tripoli, claimed that the Europeans' goal was "to swallow us." The article went on to claim that the Europeans "were crushing the peoples in the East, who trampled the humanity of the East underfoot, and who engaged in civilized brigandage which was anything but compassionate and merciful, and which desired to imprison and curse all who were not like themselves."⁴⁴ This article demonstrates how the fear of the physical and psychological Selves increases, and also how the Ottomans use baby-grammar to define Europeans as inhuman and uncompassionate.

The images that Ottoman nationalists used after 1908 became highly pathological, in the sense that they did not come from a positive self-image, but from a negative self-image built upon images of victimization. First, as the work of Gökalp shows, the Turks are victims of the old Ottoman elite (the Ottoman Other). Secondly, they are victims of the inhuman and uncompassionate Europeans (the international Other). And, thirdly, they are the victims of minorities within (the internal Other), who had become prosperous in the old millet-system but did not carry any political responsibility. In each step of the political crisis, Ottoman nationalists can be seen trying to alleviate these three threats to the psychological Self by attaching negative connotations to the different categories of Others (Ottoman, international or internal) and, at the same time, bloating and expanding their own self-image and self-esteem by a false sense of superiority.

The fragility of the self image became crucial during the Balkan wars, where the loss of European territory and possessions had devastating effects. The dream of a rejuvenated and great Ottoman empire shattered. The war became a national shame, as the Ottomans felt that they no longer played a role within the International and European arena. This defeat was handled in the same way as the whole ideological crisis of the Ottoman Empire between 1908 and 1914

was handled: by turning inward, essentializing Others, and essentializing the Self. This becomes obvious in the poem *Esnaf Destam* which Gökalp wrote after the Balkan wars:

We were defeated because we were so backward
To take revenge, we shall adopt the enemy's science
We shall learn his skill, steal his methods

On progress we will set our heart
We shall skip five hundred years
And not stand still. Little time is left.⁴⁵

In this poem we see the victimization and the fragile self-concept—the Ottomans were backwards compared to the Europeans. We also see, after the first line, that this victimization is not a source of introspection. To the contrary, the focus and emphasis is on revenge, on taking a step forward—even five hundred years. There is a sense of threat and urgency in this poem, as if the Ottoman is at the point of being obliterated if it does not respond quickly to the threats. The aim is to destroy the Other before it destroys you. Backwards is juxtaposed with an internal superiority: the Ottoman can skip five hundred years.

The threat of the psychological Self is often repeated by the perpetrators of genocidal violence. Tone Bringa states (referring to Roger Cohen) that genocide was the most overused word in Milošević's vocabulary. Milošević kept repeating the atrocities that were committed against the Serbians during the Second World War. The culprits were *poturice*; "those who had become Turks." (Those who converted to the Islam.) They were seen as internal enemies and, in some contexts, *poturice* was even a synonym for "traitor."⁴⁶ Similarly, Christopher C. Taylor points out that before the Rwanda genocide Tutsi's were depicted as invaders from Ethiopia. Tutsi's were intelligent (*hamite*) invaders, who conquered the slow-witted (*bantu*) Hutu's.⁴⁷ The massacres on Hutu in Burundi in (1972) were used as a political example of what the Tutsis, if they had the chance, were capable of doing.⁴⁸ The larger point is that in these narratives there is an expression and articulation of a need for a preemptive strike. The enemy from within should be stopped before it engulfs, destroys or even, to paraphrase the author in *Genç Kalemler*, "swallows" the dominant culture.

The Self is in an immediate and urgent danger and can only strike outward. This is worded by Gökalp in one of his writings, right before the First World War: "The enemy's country shall be laid to waste; Turkey shall grow into Turan with haste."⁴⁹ The emphasis of course, in these sentences, is on Turan; the great Turkish Empire. In the narratives of the CUP leaders there was no longer a difference between the European Other (the external) and the Christian Other (the enemy within); the latter was the extension of the first. This is best shown by a statement Talaat made to Ambassador Morgenthau, later quoted in *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* in 1918, after Talaat had heard of the massacres on the Armenians:

These different blocs in the Turkish Empire ... always conspired against Turkey; because of the hostility of these native peoples, Turkey has lost province after province – Greece, Serbia, Rumania, Bulgaria. Bosnia Herzigovina, Egypt and Tripoli. In this way, the Turkish Empire has dwindled almost to nothing.⁵⁰

In this statement we clearly see that the Christian minorities were held responsible for the great losses of the Ottoman Empire. This is further exemplified by a statement of diplomat Galip Söylemezoğlu in his memoirs:

A number of crimes were perpetrated during the war ... These crimes occurred for a number of reasons ... I only remember that 350 000 Muslims were murdered during the Balkan War.⁵¹

Here we see how the Balkan Wars legitimized the violence against the Christians. This violence was for survival. It was to purify the nation-state from foreign elements. These foreign elements were at this point in the process, completely dehumanized. They were no longer human beings, or

identities, they were, to quote Kuşçubaşı Eşref, who played a vital role in the cleansings and was a gendarme in the Special Organization: “internal tumors that needed to be cleaned.”⁵² Here we see the baby-grammar in the most direct form. Christian minorities were no longer seen as humans, they were tumors collaborating with the external enemy and therefore had to be murdered. But how can this *sociale imaginaire* become physical acts? How can thoughts turn fatal? To understand this we have to look at how violence progresses.

From Ideology to Action

Both Arthur Kleinman and Nancy Scheper-Hughes argue that there are everyday forms of violence. Scheper-Hughes even considers that genocidal tendencies are an endemic feature of modernity.⁵³ To her peace-time crimes, like inequality, social sentiments and institutions that support inequality can erupt in genocidal violence. Even though I think that this approach blurs the exceptional nature of genocide, it does place violence in a broader context. Violence is not only physical, but also symbolic. Stigmatising individuals, excluding them from social and political bodies can indeed be considered as violent acts.

We have to keep in mind that the ideology that Gökalp manufactured was not entirely new; they were not new ideas created outside the habitus of the Ottoman culture. In many ways they were an extension of the already existing culture and ideology. They only magnified and rephrased other aspects. Inequality and discrimination were not unknown to the old Ottoman hierarchical structure, they were an integral part of it. It is important to underline this for it explains that the perpetrators of genocide didn't had to learn and internalize new cultural constructs and concepts, but only different emphasises of old concepts. By this the social imagery of Others is not that unfamiliar. When it is used in propaganda, and made available to a greater audience, Sémelin warns us that we should not approach propaganda only as a technical tool. Propaganda is first and utmost a “universe of meaning for all.”⁵⁴ What Sémelin implies by this is, is that propaganda is not only a mechanism to persuade or indoctrinate a population, but that there is a more dialectic relationship where the populous are using the propaganda (and therefore also the new concepts) to give meaning and direction to their lives. They do not follow the power holders blindly. The power holders are answering the fears and insecurities of day to day experiences.

Kai Ambos,⁵⁵ as well as Ugur Üngör and Mehmet Polatel,⁵⁶ therefore distinguish three different levels of perpetrators: high level perpetrators, mid level perpetrators and low level perpetrators, also considered foot soldiers or in the case of the Armenian genocide civilians and gendarmes. The high level perpetrators create the ideological framework in which genocidal violence gets sanctified. The mid level perpetrators are the bureaucrats; the ones that implements, oversees the laws and decrees and implementations. The low level perpetrators are the ones that commit the violence itself.

My point is that on each level the ideas of Others and Self are to a high extent internalized. This has to do on one hand with the familiarity of the ideas, but also with the implementation and the institutionalization of the ideological framework itself. With each step that an ideological concept gets translated into a law, a decree or an action, the framework becomes as it were tangible. The ideological concepts become concrete. They are no longer *imaginary* constructs, but physical and symbolic constructs, which become—because they get repeated and translated in physical acts—normalized. We could compare this with the continuum of destruction mentioned by Staub.⁵⁷ One action of institutionalization can lead to psychological changes where further and extreme actions of institutionalizations become normal. The ideas of Others, which are first abstractions and thoughts, slowly get integrated into the state apparatus and by doing so become more real. In this sense the first steps of Turkification, are at the same time the first institutionalized steps where images of Others and Selves are not only vocalized in an ideological framework but also textualized, emphasised, essentialized and confirmed. Within the bureaucratic and state apparatus there is an endless mechanism that recreates (and emphasises) Others as a distinct group over and over again. Through bureaucratic measures the Other becomes an absolute outsider, an institutionalized Other who is no longer part of the nation-state.

Power over the body is of special importance here. It is, in the most literal sense, the ultimate power one has over another. This power goes further than bureaucratic and institutional power;

it is the power over personhood.⁵⁸ In this sense violence is the ultimate method of making baby-grammar physical, tangible, visible. The hegemony of ideas is not just internalized in the minds of perpetrators and even the victimized group, but even more, it becomes (literally) inscribed in the body. It is the ultimate confirmation of the existence of the superior Self. Indeed it is the physical outcome, as I will argue, of reverse mirroring.

Within the Acts of Violence: Baby-Grammar as a Physical Expression

Anton Blok argues that violence, no matter how senseless, always carries a meaning. That violence as a cultural category or construction should be understood in the first place as a symbolic activity and therefore meaningful behaviour.⁵⁹ It is by analyzing violence we can start to establish the cultural intent of the perpetrators.

In the memoirs of Hampartzoum Chitjian, there are clear depictions of the several stages of the genocidal process.⁶⁰ In 1912 he observes, as a child, the first stages of symbolic and institutional violence: "From the very beginning our Christian names were changed to secular names by the new teachers. Kasper became Massis and I became Papken."⁶¹ Here we start to see the first steps of the phases identification, but also in an indirect way classification and symbolization. By changing the students' names it became clear who was and who was not a Turk. However, there is another discourse underneath this action; by changing the name, the Christian name became subordinated to the non-Christian name. The Christians were made an Other.

At the same time the Turkification at schools increased:

Within a few days we slowly realized what their intentions were for us. They began a very deliberate plan to convert us. We were to become Turkified. The very first thing they did was to change our Armenian names into Turkish names ... Next day they demanded we no longer speak Armenian. They insisted we speak only in Turkish.⁶²

What we see here are a few very crucial elements. Changing names into secular names is not enough; they have to be changed into Turkish. There is also a refocus on language; not only names became subordinated to the Turkish hegemony, but also the language and even the interpretation of history itself:

Next they started to teach us their Turkish history. We were taught to say in Turkish:

"Freedom, Liberty, Fraternity – long live the people
We are Ottoman, we are brothers, our customs are ancient
We must devote our lives as a gift towards our country
We are Ottomans, we are brothers."⁶³

One had to abide by the new national identity. All Ottomans are brothers, their customs are ancient. Lives should be devoted as a gift to the country. This implies that if one was not an Ottoman (and keep in mind here that definition of Ottoman was more primordial than at the start of the revolution of 1908), one was not a brother and if one did not follow the ancient customs, they were therefore an outsider. What being an Ottoman meant was expressed in the following actions: "The last thing they tried to change was our faith in Christianity. We had to memorize and recite in Turkish: Mohamed is a saint and his teachings are correct."⁶⁴ To be Turkish therefore meant that one had to a) speak the language, b) carry a Turkish name, c) abide to Ottoman interpretation of history, d) follow supposedly ancient customs and e) convert to the Islam. Here we see the theoretical and ideological framework of Gökalp expressed in the modes of (symbolic) violence. In each step the personal identity became subordinated by the Nationalistic identity of the CUP and the Other got more and more institutionalized.

We see from this point onward how the violence increases:

Three weeks later without warning ... three gendarmes entered the Protestant Church before we were taken out to pillage for the day. Without a word they promptly started to

separate boys according to their physical size and age ... as it turned out, the older boys were separated from the group because they were designated to be killed on that day. The Turks knew the older boys were not going to convert and become Turk and therefore would continue to be a threat.⁶⁵

What makes this eyewitness statement so significant is that the individuals who could not convert, or who were considered too old to convert, were a threat to the Turkish identity. Here we see how the imagined threat of the self-concept is expressed in physical action. Here we also see that identity was the focus of the violence. Older boys that could not convert were killed. It was not necessarily the boys themselves that were being targeted—for the younger boys were kept alive—but the Armenian (and or Christian) identity. The removal of material possessions, as the following eyewitness account shows, is of great importance during the violence:

I saw them go: an endless procession, accompanied by gendarmes, who spurred the crowds on with sticks. Scantly clad, exhausted they dragged on. Elderly women had collapsed from exhaustion, but had to carry on; they did not want to get acquainted with the threatening sticks of the gendarmes. The Turkish do not allow them to carry a single item of clothing or a mule or a goat. All that they possessed was sold for next to nothing.⁶⁶

If we consider the economical position of Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire, this violence had a strong symbolic nature. The social status of Christians was often based on their economical position. Taking away material possession therefore is not only taking away their wealth, but also their social status and economic identity. At the same time Christian Churches (another important local identity indicator) were being destroyed:

... the Turkish government, the *Mulhalemi*, and the Kurds were openly encouraged to set their whole plan in action with respect to disposing of all the [East and West] Syriacs in the area. They surrounded Midyat from all sides in vast numbers and started indiscriminate killings of the Syriacs, destroying their houses, churches, monasteries, and palaces.⁶⁷

What makes this statement important is that the killing itself was not enough. Churches and houses also had to be destroyed, as if the landscape itself had to be cleansed (purified) from Christian elements. Here we see that not just people, but more importantly, identity was being targeted. When houses were not destroyed, they were repossessed by Muslims:

Oh, my *Der baba*, wherever we went, they threw us out. Through the windows we would enter the houses left empty by Armenians and sleep there at night, but now those houses are filled with Turkish refugees.⁶⁸

What makes this act so symbolic is that the Turkish refugees are in fact Muslim refugees from the Balkan wars. As Üngör points out, the deportations went both ways.⁶⁹ The Christian minorities were deported outwards, while the Muslim refugees from the Balkan were deported inwards. The Armenian and Syriac houses were to be used as accommodation for the homeless refugees. If we combine this with the importance, that the Balkan wars had, on the identity crisis of the Ottoman Empire, the movement of Muslim refugees was not only economically motivated, but also symbolic. The Muslims were literally claiming possession of their land. It is in this point in the memoirs and eyewitness account that the details of the atrocities become more graphic, but also in the same instant more fragmented and circumventive. The most horrifying scenes are described, but often disassociated. There is a reason for this and this has to do with the explicit nature of the violence itself. It is impossible to capture these horrors in texts; violence goes beyond words and meaning; language doesn't translate what aspired. Michael Taussig speaks of "space of death;"⁷⁰ Sasanka Perera calls it the "shadow of death."⁷¹ Regardless, it is the moment that culture unravels, that all cultural and social meanings within the acts of violence are lost:

space of death is pre-eminently a space of transformation: through experience of coming close to death there will be a more vivid sense of life; through fear there can come not only growth in self-consciousness but also fragmentation, then loss of self conforming to authority.⁷²

The space of death is a moment during the experience of violence, where there are no words, where culture disintegrates, where the victim is very much aware of his physical being and the loss of control over his or her own self-determination and destiny. At that moment the victim is nothing more than blood, brains and bones,⁷³ a physical vessel that can be tortured or killed to the likings of the aggressors. Language cannot fill this experiential space. There are no cultural frameworks that can give meaning, definition or direction; there is only the experience of fear and the realization of death itself.

This is also the moment where violence in the most physical form gets inscribed in the mind and in the (social) body of the victimized group. This is the experience that direct survivors cannot convey; where only loose images get communicated; often non-discursive and through silence. At the same instant however, this moment is symbolically important; especially if we put it in the continuum of the identity crisis of the perpetrators. It is here where the dominance of the perpetrator is the most visible and acute; it is here where the experiential world of the aggressor in fact becomes the experiential world of the victim; where the Other is not just imaginary in the social fabric of the perpetrators world, but where the Other is physically constructed.

Henry Riggs, an American missionary, speaks of the horror of starvation, near Harpoot, where caravan routes converged and the Ottomans created a camp:

As we reached the edge of the camp, an unforgettable scene occurred. Seeing us coming, the people thronged about us, each trying to get within reach, and all crying out with the pitiful fierceness of starvation, "Bread! Bread! Bread!" Each one was thinking of their own hunger, or of her children, so they jostled each other as they surged about us ... more like starving animals than human beings.⁷⁴

In the above description we see the powerlessness of the narrator. We also see something else, something that is not easily captured in words: how the experience of starvation, disease and exhaustion disintegrates the collective identity; that only fear survives. People fight for bread. People fight for life. All other identity indicators are stripped away. For those who did not die of disease, exhaustion or starvation, there was often a worse fate:

Many caravans arrived at Midyat; and they were filled with women and children. They were taken to the mosque's yard. The yard would become overcrowded. To reduce the number of hostages, the Turkish forces gathered the boys, around 500-600. They told them to lie down, face down. Then they took some thick sticks and beat them on the head. Then some 40 to 50 Turkish soldiers riding horses rode back and forth over the boys' heads until they died.⁷⁵

This violence carries multiple symbols. The public display of violence emphasizes the inferiority of the Christian victims to the dominant hegemony. It also meant to depersonalize the victims; to make them puppets in the hands of the power holders. At the same time the disregard in which the bodies were spread out and displayed, also carried a warning for spectators and bystanders:

[the corpses] were laid in such a position as to expose their persons to the ridicule of passers by, and on the abdomen of each was cast a large stone. They had evidently been murdered there at the noon hour and then the brutal guards had stopped to leave behind them the signs not only of violence but of mockery and insult.⁷⁶

Humiliation in life had to be perpetuated after death. The mockery and inferiority had to be inscribed literally in the physical but also in the social and even geographical body; the deaths had to be visible, and where they were invisible, there were often sanitarian and not humanitarian reasons to do so:

The corpses of tens of thousands of Armenians had been buried – not as the sacred obligation finally due to all mankind, civilized or savage, since prehistoric times. Rather, these corpses had been buried by Muslim labourers sent by the government simply to “cleanse the environment” of the pollution caused by tens of thousand of rotten and decomposed bodies.⁷⁷

In the above statement the victims are not only placed outside the new Turkish nation-state, but also outside time. They weren't given the same rights of the prehistoric ancestors of all human kind.

There is another dimension of the violence that we have to address, and which has only been implicitly present in the above statements and this is the sexualisation of violence. One eyewitness account speaks of “raping women and young girls in front of everybody” and of “pregnant women being killed after their babies were taken from their bellies.”⁷⁸ Others describe how girls were taken to harems or were raped before they were killed. There was also violence aimed at genitals: “The male corpses are in many cases hideously mutilated (sexual organs cut off, and so on), the female corpses are ripped open.”⁷⁹ Or, as Danielyan writes, “In Dilman ... we saw the traces of boundless brutality, glowing skewers were run through genitals of both women and men, and they were put to death this way.”⁸⁰ The sexualisation is a reoccurring theme in all warfare, but more specifically present during ethnic cleansings.⁸¹ Some of this violence is considered opportunistic and other strategic, meaning that sexual violence occurs when “an armed group believes it to be an effective form of terror against or punishment of a targeted group.”⁸² There is of course another dimension of sexual violence, and this is the symbolic dimension. Raping a victim is the ultimate physical dominance of the aggressor and the one that is subordinated. Raping is putting shame on women's bodies, and by doing so also on communities. It is a way to differentiate the dominant cultural group from the Other.⁸³ “Women thus become the embodied boundaries of the nation-state.”⁸⁴ Controlling women is controlling the reproduction of identity. This does not explain however the mutilation and the removal of men genitals, as the above quote shows. I think that in these instances there is another mechanism of identity-destruction at play; it is the literal deprivation of the gender identity of the victimized group and thereby enhancing the masculinity of the aggressors.

There are other symbolisms. The metaphors where victims resemble animals are the most often used metaphors in the memoirs and eye witness accounts. The use of these metaphors by survivors is of great importance. It shows how they experienced the violence as something inhuman and in some cases animalistic. By killing the Armenians as animals, they were regressed as non-human beings as the following eye-witness account shows:

Then I saw with my own eyes the Turks beating a fellow named Sahag, who had hid under his wife's dress. They were beating him with hammers, axes right in front of me and his wife. He yelled to her to run away, that we are all going to die a “donkey death”.⁸⁵

The term “donkey death” was referring to the act of cutting throats. It was a way of killing animals, mostly in ceremonial settings.

If we summarize the symbolism and compare it to the mechanisms of baby-grammar and reverse mirroring we come to an interesting observation. During each step in the continuum of destruction the violence increases and a layer of identity is stripped from the victimized group. First the obvious and primary identity markers, like names (kinship), language, (collective) history and religion were destroyed. Then came the physical destruction and within these acts the violence is symbolic; the victims are concentrated, overpowered, de-gendered, penetrated and in the end dehumanized. Through the act of mirroring the identity layer that is stripped away, confirms at the same instant the identity of the in-group. By destroying the names (kinship), for example, the perpetrators are confirming and solidifying their own kinship and heritage. By destroying the language of the out-group, the perpetrators are confirming the superiority of their own language. By making the collective history of the out-group subordinated to the nationalistic tale, the perpetrators are actually confirming their own history. By destroying the religion, the perpetrators are confirming the superiority of their own religion. Within each step of the violence, the fixation on identity for the in-group, is symbolically resolved, ending with the most gruesome acts by

which the in-group confirms its power over reproduction, masculinity and humanity over the out-group.

Arjun Appadurai⁸⁶ emphasises the great importance of Death. Killing is an act where the construction of “fake” identities demands the brutal “creation” of real people through violence: “violent action can become one means of satisfying one’s sense of one’s *categorical self*.”⁸⁷ In this I agree with Appadurai. I think however that this process starts before the killing. It is not only death that solidifies the categorical self, but each step of the violence is solidifying a layer of identity in the minds of the perpetrator.

Vamik Volkan⁸⁸ describes the development of individual identity to a group identity. His approach is psycho-analytical. He describes how an individual first separates a subject from object and establishes his ego, which Volkan describes as an “inner sense of sameness.”⁸⁹ When this ego is constructed, and the individual ages, more layers of identity are absorbed. An individual becomes aware of his gender, his family and eventually his group identity and includes these, into his self-representation. Although it would be too early to hypothesize, it is interesting and thought provoking that within the acts of violence we see a similar process, but then in reverse. First the obvious identity makers (language, names and churches) are destroyed, until the more abstract identities, like gender and humanity, which are to a child more primary, are deprived from the victimized group. By stripping away each layer of identity from the out-group, the in-group solidifies and establishes its identity and more subconsciously, its own existence.

This is where genocidal violence differs from other acts of collective violence: where warfare is used to meet political goals, political actions are used to repress a population and revolutions are used to overthrow the current hegemony and power, genocidal violence is aimed at destroying an identity. This destruction, from the point of view of the perpetrator at least, has to be complete whether it is aimed at an ethnic, national, cultural, racial or even a political identity. This is the reason why genocide is indiscriminately aimed at civilians and generally includes cultural genocide and ethnic cleansing. The goal of the violence is pure annihilation. Genocide is successful when a specific group no longer exists, or even more than that, if not only the nation-state but also the national history is cleansed from this “foreign element.”

Concluding Remarks

It was my goal in this article to bridge the gulf that Claude Lanzmann considered the distance between “the desire to kill and the act itself.”⁹⁰ The answer that I provided lies in the grammatical structures of Baumann. It is thereby important to note that a sense of belonging is a primary and basic need for human beings. This belonging can be attached to a family or a tribe, but can also be attached to more abstract notions as religion, ethnicity, race or nationality. This sense of belonging can be so strong, so derivative, that people are willing to kill for it and die to protect it. Baumann deciphers three structures in which identity takes shape. First he states that identities are always in a state of flux and that studying identities themselves are, therefore, analytically speaking, not all-telling or significant. It is interesting to study how people define themselves, but it does not give us any insight in *which way* people define themselves. He answers this problem, which he considers a “riddle,” by not focusing on identities, but on identification processes. His answer is thereby not agency based, but structurally based.

Baumann deciphers three forms of identification processes. One is primordial however, a process he terms baby-grammar. This is one of the basic forms how identities are created. Through the baby-grammar identification process, individuals create dichotomies between themselves and Others. It is my argument that this baby-grammar becomes the primary grammatical structure during the genocidal processes, when more and more negative connotations are attached to Others, to such an extent that they become essentialized and dehumanized, and the dominant culture group establishes a more cohesive sense of Self. This is a cumulative process, similar to the continuum of destruction. The Other, at first, is only constructed in ideologies and the *sociale imaginaire*. However, the Other becomes more and more tangible through the act of institutionalization. The Other is literally visualized in laws and decrees, through social institutions, until the Other no longer becomes an imaginary Other, but a tangible Other that can be destroyed—a person who can be killed. This is, as I have argued, by studying the Armenian genocide, the bridge between the gulf

of “the desire to kill and the act itself.” On some subconscious level, this grammatical structure—whether motivated to kill by economic gain, or personal jealousy, or any other reason on a micro level—plays an enormous part in the incentives to commit genocide, and also the methods that are used during the killing. To kill a group out of jealousy or economic gain, for example, the group already has to be targeted and dehumanized. To slaughter them like animals and to torture them, shows in the most basic form that they are no longer a part of the dominant culture group.

Through the whole machinery of destruction, we see how a layer of identity of the victimized group is indeed stripped away, to solidify a similar layer into a new image of the Self. Once again, these are subconscious actions, partly because the grammars of Baumann are day-to-day processes. They are not “abnormal” to the perpetrators. The institutionalization of the Other has already taken such a shape, that killing the Other is no longer an abnormal act, but even a communal duty to the dominant culture group. We create our identity without realizing it, over and over again. This is the core of the genocidal process, and also the reason why it is so dangerous and why ordinary men can commit horrendous acts; the processes in which these acts take place, the mechanisms behind the acts, are actually so daily, and grind into society so slowly, that stigmatizing and dehumanizing is normal in our day-to-day behaviour. Baby grammar doesn’t become genocidal overnight, it is a normal process which first gets formed, slowly turns aggressive, then gets institutionalized and can then be expressed physically. In here I concur with the analysis of Emike Ohnuki-Tierney and her definition of *méconnaissance*: actions on a micro level, even inspired by different motivations, confirms the ideological beliefs or belief systems on a macro level⁹¹. There is a dialectic between micro and macro behaviour, and not a dichotomy, and I believe that the grammatical structure of baby grammar provides us an answer where we as social scientists and social critics can actually see negative- and positive mirroring in its most physical form.

This has certain implications for the study of violence and genocide. First, we can derive meaning from the acts of violence and we can establish the genocidal intent, if we study the whole machinery in which the violence takes shape. Secondly, study genocide from this perspective gives insights into the genocide process that are useful to early warning systems to prevent genocidal acts in the future. From the perspective outlined in this article, the most useful insight for these early warning systems, is to focus on the point when ideologies and ideas of Others are turned into actual laws and decrees. In the end, violence, and the act of violence itself tells a story.

Endnotes

- 1 Alexander L. Hinton, “The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide,” in *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, ed. Alexander L. Hinton (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 6–12.
- 2 And even this is a simplification, for in many genocides you see several out-groups.
- 3 Ervin Staub makes a similar observation: “All human beings strive for a coherent and positive self-concept, a self-definition that provides continuity and guides one’s life. Difficult conditions threaten the self-concept as people cannot care for themselves and their families or control the circumstances of their lives.” Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 15.
- 4 By “predatory” Peter Geschiere is referring to a mechanism, in his study on the identity classification of autochthony, that an identity “can start cannibalizing other identities instead of accepting a pluralist configuration.” Peter Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Africa and Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 166.
- 5 Arjun Appadurai, “Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization,” *Public Culture*, 10, 2 (1998): 225–247. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/08992363-10-2-225>
- 6 Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide* (London: Hurst and Co, 2007), 9.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 17.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 49.

- 9 Hinton, "The Dark Side of Modernity," 12–13.
- 10 Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 38.
- 11 Claude Lanzmann, "Les non lieux de la mémoire," in *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, no. 33, 1986, 20.
- 12 Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 17.
- 13 Gerd Baumann considers ethnicity compared to racial or national ideologies, to an identity based on wine (a cultural and cultivated mixture) instead of blood (a racial ideology). A national identity is based on geography, citizenship and land. See also Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 20–21. The Armenian genocide was a genocide based on a national ideology, because ethnicity and religion were secondary; you could convert to Islam and you could become a Turk. With ethnicity the emphasis lies more with descent, kinship, language, religion—and the emphasis might differ with the mindset of the perpetrators and the target group. This is why anthropologists consider it an identity always in a state of flux, for the perpetrators actually emphasize which element is important. It is not that ethnicity was not present during the Armenian genocide, it was secondary to the national ideology, which also explains the high level of conversion and selling and taking in Armenians at slave markets during the genocidal process. See also the testimony of Harutyun Zakar Martikian in, Verjine Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide, Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors* (Yerevan: Gitoutyou Publishing House, 2011), 257. For further study see also: Ara Sarafian, "The Absorption of Armenian Women and Children into Muslim Households as a Structural Component of the Armenian Genocide," in *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001).
- 14 *Ibid.*, 137.
- 15 Gerd Bauman, "Grammars of Identity/ Alterity: A Structural Approach," in *Grammars of Identity/ Alterity: A Structural Approach*, ed. Gerd Baumann and Andre Gingrich (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 42.
- 16 Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 17 *Ibid.*, 85.
- 18 The agency and structure debate is at the center of Anthropological theory, between the question of how much we do is influenced by capabilities and how much of our behavior is guided by structure. This debate has a long history within Anthropology and there is no clear answer. Historically American Anthropologists, especially in the field of Medical Anthropology, are more agent based, while European Anthropologists lean more towards structure. The current consensus is that both agency and structure determines behavior, but that structure guides agency.
- 19 Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 145.
- 20 Baumann, "Grammars of Identity/ Alterity."
- 21 *Ibid.*, 19–27.
- 22 The segmentation process is a grammatical structure where processes of fission and fusion take place *within* a group. Fission means the separation of groups from the main group and fusion the merging of these groups at a higher level. Encompassment reflects a process in which a segment of the group is encompassed by another group. See Baumann, "Grammars of Identity/ Alterity." 24–26. See also the books that influenced his ideas: Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1987). Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
- 23 Abram de Swaan, "Dyscivilisation, Mass Extinction and the State," *Theory, Culture and Society* 18, 2-3 (2001), 265–276.
- 24 The decivilization process is opposed to the civilization process as formulated by Norbert Elias. According to Elias, the civilization process is characterized by a constant need for self-regulation due to increasing interdependent relationships among different groups in society. During this particular process values and behavioral patterns of the middle and higher classes interweave with those of other layers of the community. These processes of civilization, however, are accompanied by moments of decivilization: moments in which the interdependent relationships decrease and an interwoven behavioral pattern unravels. Ton Zwaan, *Civilisering en Decivilisering: Studies over Staatsvorming en Geweld, Nationalisme en Vervolging* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2001).
- 25 Baumann, "Grammars of Identity/ Alterity," 20.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 27 Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 54.

- 28 See Uriel Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp* (London: Luzac & Company Ltd. and The Harvill Press Ltd, 1950). Also see Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp 1876-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1985).
- 29 Ayşe Kadioğlu, "The Pathologies of Turkish Republican Laicism," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 36, 3-4 (2010): 489-490.
- 30 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 170.
- 31 David Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia During World War I* (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2006), 50.
- 32 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 43.
- 33 Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp 1876-1924*, 30.
- 34 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 65.
- 35 Ibid., 131.
- 36 Ibid., 150.
- 37 Emile Durkheim, "Religion and Ritual," in *Emile Durkheim: Selected Writings*, ed. Anthony Giddens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1887 [1972]).
- 38 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 63.
- 39 This is not to state however that the leaders of the CUP were religious, they were as a matter of fact mostly secular. This was not a religious but an intellectual approach on Islam. We have to separate this. For two major reasons: 1) the Armenian genocide was not a religious genocide. It was a genocide based on nationalism and national sentiment. Religion was politicized and used to mobilize the Turkish population. It is unclear what the role of religion was during the genocide, it had both a catalyst and a tempering effect. 2) And this is another important reason why we should be careful: by placing the Islam *now* in the centre of the Armenian genocide, were are in fact unconsciously projecting the *present day* international and political tensions, and the *present day* notions of extreme Islam onto the old Ottoman Empire and the old Ottoman elite. Islam was for Gökalp mostly an intellectual tool to understand the Turkish identity and society.
- 40 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 130.
- 41 Ibid., 110.
- 42 Ibid., 124.
- 43 Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 77.
- 44 Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 81.
- 45 Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 79.
- 46 Tone Bringa, "Averted Gaze: Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995," in *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, ed. Alexander L. Hinton (Berkeley: University of Press, 2002), 215.
- 47 Christopher C. Taylor, "The Cultural Face of Terror in the Rwandan Genocide of 1994," in *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, ed. Alexander L. Hinton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
- 48 Liisa H. Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- 49 Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 93 or, worded differently, in Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, 128.
- 50 Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 92.
- 51 Ibid., 117.
- 52 This quote can also be found in, *Ben de Yazdim*, vol. 5, 1578.
- 53 Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "A Genealogy of Genocide," *Modern Psychoanalysis* 28, 2. (2003), 369. See also Arthur Kleinman, "The Violence of Everyday Life: The Multiple Forms and Dynamics of Social Violence," in *Violence and Subjectivity*, ed. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, Pamela Reynolds (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).
- 54 Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 71-72.
- 55 Kai Ambos, "What Does 'Intent to Destroy' in Genocide Mean?" *International Review of the Red Cross*, 91, 876 (2009). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1816383110000056>
- 56 Ügur U Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turks Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Continuum, 2011).
- 57 Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 17.

- 58 Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, part 1* (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 143.
- 59 Anton Blok, "Zinloos en Zinvol Geweld," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 18, 3 (1991), 203.
- 60 Hampartzoum M. Chitjian, *A Hair's Breadth From Death: The Memoirs of Hampartzoum Mardiros Chitjian* (London: Taderon Press, 2003).
- 61 Ibid., 76.
- 62 Ibid., 100.
- 63 Ibid., 101.
- 64 Ibid., 101.
- 65 Ibid., 104.
- 66 Translated by the author from "Nederlandsche Comité tot Hulpbetoon aan de Noodlijdende Armeniërs. 1918. *Marteling der Armeniërs in Turkije: Naar Berichten van Ooggetuigen.*" (Haarlem, 1918), 16, 17.
- 67 Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors*, 330.
- 68 Gregory Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 249.
- 69 Ügur U Üngör, "Seeing like a Nation-state: Young Turk Social Engineering in Eastern Turkey, 1913-50," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 10, no. 1. (2008): 15-39. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623520701850278>
- 70 Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: a Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).
- 71 Sasanka Perera, "Spirit Possessions and Avenging Ghosts: Stories of Supernatural Activity as Narratives of Terror and Mechanisms of Coping and Remembering," in *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering, and Recovery*, ed. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Margaret M. Lock, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001).
- 72 Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*, 7.
- 73 Mattijs Van de Port, *Gypsies, Wars and Other Instances of the Wild: Civilisation and It's Discontents in a Serbian Town* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), 101-103.
- 74 Henry H. Riggs, *Days of Tragedy in Armenia: Personal Experiences in Harpoot, 1915-1917* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1997), 147.
- 75 Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors*, 342.
- 76 Riggs, *Days of Tragedy in Armenia*, 57, 58.
- 77 Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha*, 242.
- 78 Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors*, 334.
- 79 James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916*. Uncensored Edition, ed. by Ara Sarafian (London: Taderon Press, 2000), 23.
- 80 Eduard Danielyan, *The Armenian Genocide of 1884-1922 and the Accountability of the Turkish State* (Yerevan, self-published, 2005).
- 81 Elisabeth J. Wood, "Variation of Sexual Violence during War," *Politics and Society* 34, 3 (2006), 327. Or Doris Buss, "Rethinking Rape as a Weapon," *Feminist Legal Studies* 17, 2 (2009), 150.
- 82 Wood, "Variation of Sexual Violence during War," 331.
- 83 Sukanya Banerjee, Angana Chatterji, Lubna N. Chaudry, Manali Desai, Saadia Toor, Kamala Visweswaran, "Engendering Violence: Boundaries, Histories, and the Everyday," *Cultural Dynamics* 16 (2004), 129. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0921374004047739>
- 84 Buss "Rethinking Rape as a Weapon," 148.
- 85 Rouben P. Adalian, "The Armenian Genocide," in: *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views*, ed. Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Israel W. Charny (New York: Garland Publishing Inc, 1997,) 71-72.
- 86 Arjuan Appadurai, "Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization," (1998).
- 87 Ibid., 244.
- 88 Vamik D. Volkan, "Individual and Large-Group Identity: Parallels in Development and Characteristics in Stability and Crisis," *Croatian Medical Journal* 40, 3 (1999): 458-465. It is interesting that Franco Fornari also makes a link to how an infant conceives his safety, when he tries to explain the psycho-analytical mechanisms of warfare. He states that groups, just like an infant, can get into a "paranoid-schizoid" position, where the infant or group safes itself by destroying the object by which he feels destroyed. Franco Fornari, *Psychanalyse de la Situation Atomique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 35.

- 89 Vamik D. Volkan, "Individual and Large-Group Identity," 459.
- 90 Claude Lanzmann, "Les non lieux de la mémoire," 20.
- 91 She even goes a step further and states that actions on a macro and global, from an ideological point of view, and actions on a local is a wrong dichotomy. By studying the diaries of Kamikaze pilots, she comes to the conclusion that even though the pilots may differ in their ideologies and thoughts, by becoming a Kamikaze pilot and kill citizens they indirectly confirm the state ideology. This is what she considers *méconnaissance*. Emiko Ohnuki-Thierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalism: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 2–3, 249.

Book Review: *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine*

Laura C. Collins

George Mason University
Arlington, VA, USA

The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine

Edited by Bohdan Klid and Alexander J. Motyl

Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2012. 386pp. US\$ 34,95

Reviewed by Laura C. Collins

George Mason University, Arlington, VA, USA

The official wall of silence erected around the events that precipitated the sentencing to death of what some commentators have approximated at 4 million people between the autumn of 1932 and the summer of 1933 in the Ukrainian socialist soviet republic and the Kuban region of southern Russia—an area in the northern Caucasus that was densely populated by ethnic Ukrainians—only began to crumble toward the end of the 1980s with the implementation of Gorbachev’s Perestroika. Further, it was only following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the subsequent emergence of various official documentation, once hidden, and harrowing personal accounts, once whispered, relating to what has come to be viewed by some as the most notorious of the pan-Soviet famines during the period of the early 1930s that a burgeoning body of scholarly literature began to appear. Subsequently termed the Holodomor, the literature on this famine has sought to analyze the political antecedents and those exacerbating factors that further deepened the severity of the famine felt by ethnic Ukrainians, and crucially the positioning of the Stalinist regime.

Klid and Motyl’s carefully crafted compilation is an attempt, which is wholly achieved, to piece together in one place for both experts and the layperson alike excerpts of some of the most prominent scholarly literature and official documentation along with eyewitness accounts and testimonies dealing directly with the Holodomor. To that effect, following a comprehensive introductory chapter presented by Klid and Motyl, the editors then lay out their volume in six pertinently themed sections. Beginning with excerpts from scholarship on the Holodomor, given the debate concerning the applicability of the charge of genocide to this famine, the documents that follow the scholarship section contain various legal evaluations and resolutions that have emerged directly related to the interpretation of the Holodomor as genocide. The complementary third and fourth sections contain eyewitness accounts. The former contains accounts provided by journalists and traveler writers of the time, in addition to those given by individuals within the Stalinist regime at various levels of its hierarchy. The latter section is wholly dedicated to detailing the accounts of survivors. The fifth section of the volume, simply entitled “Documents” is comprised of both official Soviet archival records along with foreign government documentation. To end, the editors dedicate the sixth section to a vast array of literary works that has emerged dealing with this famine. Much of the initial benefit, therefore, of this work emanates from the diversity and richness of the excerpts chosen, thanks in large part to the skillful navigation of the editors of the myriad political and linguistic constraints previously associated with the accessibility of the documentation. The resultant effect of which makes this a highly credible and indispensable sourcebook for the intended interdisciplinary audience of newcomers and experts.

Emphasis must be given, however, to the dual overarching impetus for this work as laid out by the editors in the introductory pages, which is both one of scholarship and one of specifically advancing the interpretation of the “Holodomor as genocide” (xxxi). Noting their belief that this interpretation will prevail through an appeal to “the normative and the political zeitgeist,” the editors note the likely probability of those “neutral” among the readership accepting this interpretation, while characterizing those who refute it as “diehard skeptic[s]” or as having “a political agenda” (xxxi). Lest one forget that the application of the term genocide has been equally advanced for intended political purposes. Relevant today in light of the crisis that continues to rage

in Ukraine, it is noteworthy to reflect, therefore, on the potential for the politicization of the term genocide, as applied to the Holodomor to obscure the advancement of interdisciplinary scholarship and an understanding of the antecedents and aggravating factors, in conjunction with the role of the Soviet regime.

That said, however, the attention with which the editors have paid to compiling the first section of their sourcebook dedicated to scholarship merits highlighting. The preliminary section starts by tracing the two dominant schools of thought that have emerged dealing with the Holodomor. This first school of thought comprises of works concluding that this famine may be viewed through the prism of genocide as a result of the policies implemented by the Stalinist regime stemming from the early 1930s. These works point to the fact that the policies had as their intent from their initial conception a dual purpose. First, the Stalinist regime sought to dismantle the particularly entrenched peasant resistance to the policy of forced collectivization and its associated grain procurement campaign in the Ukrainian socialist soviet republic and the Kuban region where there was a deep culture of individual farming traditions. Second, the specter of Ukrainian nationalism, the core of which was found in within the peasantry—the “kulaks,” was perceived by the Bolsheviks as one of the most powerful factors that had the potential to thwart the transformative vision Stalin had for his communist empire. To that effect, Stalin, in the early 1930s set forth a plan intended to destroy the Ukrainian nation through decimation of the peasantry. In contrast, while the second school of thought neither dismisses the criminality nor the pervasive nature of the famine in the Ukrainian socialist soviet republic and the Kuban, these works do not categorize the events as genocide, but rather conclude that this famine cannot be viewed as distinct from the complex matrix of the pan-Soviet experience of famines between 1931-1933, that were impacted by several factors.

Most pertinently, however, the beginning section of Klid and Motyl’s sourcebook also introduces a third subsection of literature pertaining to more recent scholarship that has endeavored to refine and bridge traditional debates and insights in light of newly disclosed documentation. The centrality of the indisputable national dimension of the famine in the Ukrainian socialist soviet republic and the Kuban region, which is prominent in other scholarship is further brought to the fore by these works, but also, as an excerpt from the work of Italian scholar Andrea Graziosi pertinently conveys, it is through comparison with the other Soviet famines taking place at the same time that the distinct and changing character of the Ukrainian case of starvation, particularly from the autumn of 1932 onwards, becomes apparent. From this point, starvation, which was already somewhat present in the both areas was wielded as a weapon by the Stalinist regime to destroy the Ukrainian nation. (19-26).

The official soviet documentation contained within Klid and Motyl’s volume wholly serves to reiterate the threat posed by the Ukrainian nation as perceived by Stalin and, therefore, the urgent necessity of using any and all means possible to transform Ukraine into an exemplary soviet republic, as an excerpt from Stalin to one of his associates, Kaganovich is testament (p. 239-240). Moreover, the intended purpose of the unrelenting priority placed on the grain procurement campaign throughout Ukraine and the Kuban and the intention to strip peasants of all remnants of sustenance is also apparent as evidence in the correspondence sent by the Ukrainian Communist Party Secretary Stansalv Kosior, which ordered an immediate relinquishing of “all available reserves, including so-called sowing seed” for the purposes of reaching the grain procurement levels (p.251).

The significance of this contribution, therefore, to the study of the Holodomor lies not only within the pages of the compilation, which taken in sum capture the true horror of the months between the autumn of 1932 and the summer of 1933, but also in the scholarship and academic debates that they will likely stimulate across disciplines. Indeed, while the editors masterfully achieve in creating an accessible book for newcomers to the subject, those immersed in scholarship on the Holodomor or more broadly in the study of the history and politics of communism and famines will benefit from previously inaccessible documentation. In sum, as a well written, multi-dimensional, and creative compilation of a most serious and under researched areas particularly within scholarship on genocide, Kild and Motyl’s *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine*, is a recommended reading that demands critical scholarly attention.

Book Review: *Violence: The Enduring Problem*

Christian Gudehus
Ruhr Universität Bochum

Violence: The Enduring Problem
Alex Alvarez and Ronet Bachman
Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2014, 350pp. US\$ 74,00

Reviewed by Christian Gudehus
Ruhr Universität Bochum

Concept

Considering that violence is a prevalent phenomenon and omnipresent in the media, the glaring lack of academic teaching addressing it is astonishing. Accordingly, there are presumably far more courses on peace and conflict studies or genocide studies offered than courses dealing integratively with the various types of violence. *Integratively* means to approach violence from a broad range of vantage points: to take into account domestic violence as well as genocide and to do so with reference to the insights of the respective relevant disciplines. It is exactly this transdisciplinary approach that is chosen by Alex Alvarez and Ronet Bachman: "All violence is connected by a web of actions and behaviors, ideas, perceptions, and justifications. While the individual dynamics of specific violent behavior may vary somewhat, violent acts share a number of essential characteristics that bind them together into what is sometimes called the **unity of human aggression.**" (p. 3) Their textbook, its language and structure, is obviously aimed at undergraduates and interested laymen. In simple terms they explain comparatively complex phenomena and in doing so they confront what they consider to be widely held misconceptions as, for example, the notion that the larger number of perpetrators suffers from a form of psychological impairment. Observations such as these as well as the overall design illustrate that advanced students, let alone researchers on violence are not the main target group. The same impression may be derived from the cover that is virtually dripping with blood and from the marketing blurb that is used to praise the revised new edition of the book on the back cover. Likewise and typical for a textbook, questions and lists of key terms are provided at the end of each section or else a list of works omitted. All these features as well as the given examples and statistics (for instance on acts of crime), moreover, show that this book was intended for the US audience.

Structure & Topics

The strong reference to the US also becomes apparent in the introduction with the heading "As American as Apple Pie." Against the backdrop of the role violence plays in the US society, it discusses definitional questions such as what violence is and, in a next step, how it can be measured. The following chapters introduce various explanatory models derived from diverse academic discourses. Chemical processes are as much taken into account as are psychological explanations and a whole range of sociological approaches. For instance, brain injuries are discussed, the role of the media, the accessibility of weapons as well as the influence of alcohol and other drugs. Subsequently, Alvarez and Bachman tackle various types or else contexts of violence. These comprise assault and murder, violence in the home, robbery, workplace violence, rape, mob violence, terrorism and, finally, genocide. The book concludes with suggestions on how violence may be prevented rendered from the vantage point of public health with a focus on teenagers in the US.

Key Theses

The book is primarily interesting because despite its textbook structure it espouses some central theses that are taken up repeatedly across all chapters. Most prominently, it claims that violence,

no matter what its form, is always the result of a specific combination of causes originating from a social, psychological and situational nature. This entails the recognition that the violence actually executed is the result of processes that, at their beginning, are quite undetermined. Accordingly, it can be understood to be the consequence of dynamic processes and conditions that may well have had a different outcome. Due to this, frequently discussed causes and factors are analyzed for their potential to fuel violence or to de-escalate. At this point, further basic factors come into play: that of status and dominance (p. 29). The fight for social recognition is identified as an essential urge triggering acts of violence—or acts of all kinds really—and is spelled out in the various contexts of violence. This applies, for example, to murders. According to Alvarez and Bachman, these can often be attributed to the fact that someone does not feel sufficiently respected or is offended (p. 30). This aspect continuously recurs in diverse statements, for example, when it is stated that an act of violence is intended to save one's face (p. 66) or to undo the subjective notion that an injustice was committed (p. 89). Thus, emotions come into play that—as must be critically remarked—are not systematically discussed. Likewise, modes of perception, interpretations of the social world and their social framing should be discussed thoroughly since exactly this—how individuals would like to be perceived, how they actually are perceived or believe to be perceived and how the respective perspectives come into existence—according to the authors—is the key to every analysis of violence. Nonetheless, as a matter of fact, a number of socio-theoretical concepts can be found in the book. To give an example, Alvarez and Bachman discuss “script theory” in the context of media audience research. According to this, media—such as films or video games—are not actual causes for violence. Instead, the theory suggests that they influence the way people interpret and perceive situations (p. 44). Exactly with this argument another important point is made: People are shaped by their experiences. Depending on the degree, intensity and, most prominently, positive connotations of violence as part of a person's experience, the likelihood increases that new acts of violence ensue. These excursions into theory are rather short and always reduced in their complexity, which is probably due to the assumed audience. Hence, concepts such as perception and interpretation are employed, yet not investigated in their complexity. However, these easy to stomach references to social theories could be a promising strategy for their successful distribution. After all, for instance the sociology of knowledge, figurational sociological considerations à la Norbert Elias or symbolic interactionism are used as explanatory references.

These references, however, distinguish the intentionality and acts of violence: As it is emphasized that violence is dynamic and a process, a specific viewpoint on the investigated phenomena can be developed. Considering the example of murders, the authors argue, for instance, that these frequently are the result of a “continuum of violence” (p. 79) and hardly ever a predetermined aim. In addition, “this means that, like all social events, the outcome of the encounter depends on the perception and behaviors of the actors involved” (p. 86). Accordingly, acts of violence are not investigated as deeds done by evil people, but as social occurrences that follow the same rules and the same patterns as other, non-violent encounters. This also holds true for terrorist—often labelled as “evil” in the public US discourse—that is scrutinized by taking into account individual behavior. Developments are recapitulated and trivial social aspects of daily life such as questions of belonging, acceptance, prestige and the constructions of meaning, friendship, power and action ability are once more mentioned as relevant factors (p. 238).

As the book is sensationally advertised, its content speaks a different, a de-dramatizing and objectifying language. When the authors indulge in their passion for statistics, perhaps one or the other reader might be inclined to skip over these passages. Yet, this would be a mistake since the detailed investigation of how, for instance, data on “Homicide by Weapon Type” or “Rates of Nonfatal Workplace Violence per 1.000 Employed Persons Age 16 or Older” are accumulated and used, is extremely instructive. This is due to the fact that it sensitizes readers to deal with such information—for instance on youth violence—critically as well as cautiously.

Genocide and Prevention

So, what does the book contribute to the central topics of the journal and, consequently, to the fields of work of its readership—Genocide and Prevention? Researchers on genocide probably will not learn as much although they might be impressed by the authors' ability to safely lead their readers

through the variety of explanatory models so that these are comparatively easy to understand. For newcomers, however, the chapter provides a good and comparatively broad introduction to the topic. At the outset, Alvarez and Bachman review definitional problems and introduce cases that are commonly discussed as instances of genocides. In the following, different factors responsible for these mass crimes are shortly discussed and eventually perpetrator types and then victims and bystanders are outlined. After some consideration on international law and genocide the chapter finishes with an assessment rendered in the form of the hope that the new definition of international relations and law in the future “will help prevent” (p. 271) genocides. Actors such as the Islamic State, which is pillaging Iraq and Syria, up until now have remained unimpressed by the statement so that it may be assumed that this hope will remain unfulfilled.

From the point of view of genocide research, the section on prevention is, for the most part, irrelevant because it focuses primarily on crime in the US or else on youth violence. To name but one example: Organized school activities are mentioned as a means to reduce youth violence. That makes sense, but, in the context of genocidal violence, it is probably only efficient to a certain extent.

Problems

In spite of all these positive aspects, some critical remarks must be made. First of all, violence is (almost) always conceived of as deviant and problematic—as is proved by the subtitle “The enduring Problem.” Analyses of desirable or even required violence as it is practiced, for instance, by soldiers, the police and in large-scale livestock farming, are missing. As a consequence, the questions as to why violence as an option to act actually exists and why it does indeed not belong to everybody’s repertoire of social actions are not answered. Alvarez and Bachman assume that all humans have a disposition to use violence. Consequently, inhibiting and uninhibiting factors come into play. The fact that a large number of people do not resort to violence—eaving aside symbolic and structural violence—is not discussed.

The apparent intention to include as many different aspects as possible unfortunately entails certain weaknesses. Robbery and bank robbery, for example, are of course related to violence. However, no analysis of violence can be found in the discussion of these cases. It seems that they are only included in the book because they are spectacular. The authors actually do not know what to write about them and how to incorporate them. Also, as has been mentioned, principally the reference to socio-theoretical concepts is a bonus even if the abbreviated versions are partly distorted. Simultaneously, Alvarez and Bachman introduce a comparatively old body of theories. Especially developments in the theory of action as well as practice theory, theories that are relevant for the explanation of all kinds of actions, are not accounted for.

Nonetheless, those who teach in the field of violence studies, especially at introductory levels in educational systems, or who as a layman is interested in the topic and lives in the US, will find the book very rewarding.

Book Review: *Warning Signs of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective*

Christopher Powell

Ryerson University

Toronto, ON, Canada

Warning Signs of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective

E. N. Anderson and Barbara A. Anderson

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Reviewed by Christopher Powell

Ryerson University, Toronto, ON, Canada

The search for predictors of genocide is integral to the efforts of scholar-activists to prevent and ultimately end genocidal violence. Any set of such predictors necessarily presupposes, or at least implies, a definite notion of what genocide is and a theory of how it takes place. In *The Warning Signs of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective*, authors E.N. Anderson and Barbara A. Anderson attempt precisely this. They conceptualize genocide in terms similar to Rudolph Rummel's concept of democide, propose an etiological theory of genocide grounded in evolutionary psychology, infer the warning signs of genocide in the making, and propose remedial measures for preventing genocide while its conditions of possibility are still being established. They also offer their own list of countries at risk of committing genocide, with some surprising inclusions. The book is flawed and its argument is problematic in several ways, but it offers interesting insights along the way and makes a worthwhile contribution to further attempts to formulate a preventative theory of genocide.

Anderson and Anderson begin by recognizing that Ben Kiernan's *Blood and Soil* and Stephen Pinker's *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, both of which appeared during the writing of this book, serve as major interlocutors and indeed forced "the biggest rewriting projects the two of us have ever had to undertake in our rather long professional lives!" (p. xii). Indeed, in one sense the entire book reads, and succeeds best, as Rousseauian rebuttal of Pinker's Hobbesian take on how human nature contributes to violence. Anderson and Anderson argue forcefully that genocide happens not because human nature is competitive and antisocial, but precisely because human beings are innately sociable, solidary, and moral. Human beings, the authors argue, evolved to live solidaristically in bands of fifty to one hundred and fifty individuals. As a result we have an innate psychological disposition to cooperative group behaviour but also an innate psychological capacity to fear anything which we perceive as a threat to our group, and to convert that fear into hatred which motivates us to destroy the source of the threat. Individual fear and hatred, however, cannot produce genocide, which requires a level of social organization and coordination far in excess of that which obtained among our ancestors in the African savannah. For fear and hatred to lead to genocide, first a group must be defined as Other in a rigid and stereotyped way, then "opportunistic politicians" must exploit this situation by inflaming individual feelings to make them the dominant feelings of the group as a whole. This collective hatred and fear are institutionally reinforced when political leaders form a "thuggish band of enforcers," which may consist of armed gangs or paramilitaries or which may consist of the nation's armed forces as a whole. Finally, "when war or extreme unrest breaks out, insecure but autocratic elites use such means to try to control the situation" (p. 119). The escalation of this use of violence against designated social others to maintain autocratic power is what produces genocide.

On the basis of this model the authors make predictions about countries at various levels of risk for genocide. Examples of "extreme immediate risk" are Congo-Brazzaville, DR Congo, Egypt, Indonesia, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, and Sudan. Longer-term risks include Burundi, China, Eritrea, Guatemala, Iran, Iraq, Mali, North Korea, and Pakistan. Beyond this, the authors assess various levels of risk for Colombia, Central America, much of sub-Saharan Africa, Russia and Eastern Europe, Turkey, and India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Provocatively, Anderson and Anderson argue that conditions for genocide are emerging within the United States itself. They argue that “fear-based ideas—hatred of women and minorities and glorification of strength and bigness” have become central to American conservatism (p. 124); this escalating collective fear and hatred, along with increasingly rigid out-group status assigned to subordinate groups such as Hispanics, non-Hispanic illegal immigrants, labour unions, women, homosexuals, and so on could become the basis for institutionalized collective hatred which could lead to genocide.

The key point which Anderson and Anderson stress is that the roots of, and predictors for, genocide lie not in *ideology*, whether of blood and soil, revolution, or anything else, but in a socially shared *emotion* and the translation of that emotion into institutionalized violence.

The preventative measures that the book recommends focus on addressing the causes of fear and hatred of social others and on preventing the calcification of individual feelings into collective feelings and institutions. These measures revolve around five key concerns, of which the first, “dealing with hatred and the political exploitation of it,” is the most directly justified by the book’s theoretical model. If the roots of genocide lie in the social fears converted into group hatreds, it follows logically that, for instance, education “to teach people to cope proactively with trouble and to be independent thinkers” (p. 138) and to “stop defining groups as absolute, essential entities” (p. 136) should be part of an effective prevention, as would some constructive engagement with religion (p. 139). Other measures that the authors recommend, such as preventing economic downturns and fostering democratic accountability, address the social circumstances that generate social fears or that enable the political mobilization of fear and hatred by elites.

The authors’ recommendations are ambitious, even utopian, implying a wholesale transformation of global society along social liberal lines. This broad reach exemplifies some of the key strengths and weaknesses of the book. On the one hand, it is good to see explicit connections made between genocide prevention and related projects like human rights, human security, and multiculturalism. On the other hand, the authors make no attempt to explain which actors will implement their recommendations or where the political will to do so will come from.

The book’s other contributions are similarly uneven. On the one hand, there are many specific insights to be had, small and large. For example, the observation that “genocide often bears an uncanny resemblance to domestic violence, and also to schoolyard bullying” (p. 4, see also pp. 87-88) suggests an interesting connection or isomorphism between social processes at micro and macro scales. The same is true for the argument that “what has been called ‘dehumanization’ is really a process of developing and consolidating group rejection or barriers” (p. 61), and for the examination of the neurobiology of fear and its effects on rational judgment (p. 17-18). The general proposition that genocide relies on the collective mobilization of particular emotional orientations rather than on particular and characteristic ideological orientations opens up an interesting line of inquiry into the relationship between genocidal projects and embodied dispositions.

On the other hand, the book offers no theoretically informed analysis of power, of difference, of the modern nation-state or the modern world-system, or of any particular social institutions. In this sense genocide appears entirely contingent: for contingent reasons such as a sudden loss of status by a dominant group, individuals become fearful and prone to hate; and for additionally contingent reasons some political leaders try to capitalize on this fear and hatred to their own advantage; and for contingent reasons this succeeds and people buy in to a genocidal agenda.

One of the weakest parts of the book comes in its opening chapter. Anderson and Anderson define ‘genocide’ very narrowly—as the “systematic, cold-blooded, bureaucratically administered extermination of entire ethnic, religious, or political groups, by their own national governments, in the absence of anything that a rational external observer could consider an adequate reason” (p. 6). This model closely resembles Rudolph Rummel’s concept of ‘democide’, as the authors acknowledge. But aside from a few brief and dismissive mentions, Anderson and Anderson ignore the entire definitional debate of the past twenty years, including the entire line of scholarship represented by Moses, Woolford, and others who argue for treating cultural extermination of indigenous peoples as genocide. Martin Shaw’s pivotal *What is Genocide?* is nowhere discussed. Lemkin’s definition is invoked as gospel but Lemkin’s writing are not examined and the authors miss important aspects of what Lemkin had to say.

Nor is there a substantive engagement with other social scientific models aimed at predicting genocides. Gregory Stanton's predictive model is referenced briefly in its 1996 articulation, but his subsequent revision of that conception into a ten-stage model is not critiqued. Michael Mann's rigorous and detailed predictive model in *The Dark Side of Democracy* is not even mentioned despite its obvious direct relevance to the authors' project. Aside from Kiernan and Pinker, in fact, little recent work is engaged with. As a result, the historical overview in Chapter 6 feels like it could have been written twenty years ago, and Appendix I, "Statistics of Genocide, With Risk Factors," does not have the methodological rigour to live up to its subtitle.

Overall, however, *Warning Signs of Genocide* makes a very specific but worthwhile contribution to genocide scholarship. The project of developing a theoretical model of genocide capable of predicting the sociogenesis of genocidal violence in its early stages and prescribing effective measures to halt or divert this process is large and complex, but such a project must account for the interplay between objective social structures and subjective individual motivations. The argument in *Warning Signs of Genocide* provides one piece of that puzzle. There are gaps in its scholarship, one gets the sense that the authors don't have a strong understanding of social or cultural theory, and the conception of genocide is much too narrow. But Anderson and Anderson do succeed in offering a plausible account of certain connections between human evolution, emotion, and social structure. This account could be useful for a more robust and sociologically informed theory of genocide.

Film Review: *Ida*

Jack Palmer

University of Leeds
Leeds, United Kingdom

Ida - Film Review

Director: Pawel Pawlikowski
Poland/Denmark/France/UK, 2013

Reviewed by Jack Palmer
University of Leeds
Leeds, United Kingdom

Evil is a challenging subject for the social sciences. It has traditionally been associated with moral philosophy and theology, specifically with theodicy, which deals with the challenge of reconciling God's existence with the existence of evil. The social sciences emerged in the wake of the Enlightenment as the self-reflexive study of modernity, and came to oppose recourse to the explanation of events in terms of faith and belief. In large part, they were established in the service of human progress and rationality, notions which were dealt a severe blow by the violence of the 20th century, a 'century of genocide'¹. The challenge that is posed by its legacy, and that much of it was committed in the name of progress and rationality, has been reflected upon by numerous social and political thinkers, including in some of genocide studies' most influential works². A forerunner in this debate was Kurt Wolff, a major twentieth century contributor to the sociology of knowledge. In his 1969 essay *For a Sociology of Evil*, Wolff stated that when considering the various catastrophes of modernity—Auschwitz, the Gulags, Hiroshima, Vietnam—we find ourselves caught in a 'paralysing suspension between two impossible worlds: one in which we can no longer believe, a world ordered by religious directives and moderations; and one which we cannot bear, a world without these directives and moderations'³.

This 'paralysing suspension' characterises the tense relationship between the two characters at the heart of Pawel Pawlikowski's *Ida*, the title character Ida Lebenstein and her aunt, Wanda Gruz. The former is an orphaned novitiate nun, on the verge of vowing a life of devotion to the Catholic Church. The latter is a world-weary and disillusioned judge for the communist PZPR (Polish United Worker's Party), nicknamed 'Red Wanda' and responsible for dealing with "enemies of the state". Set against the austere background of the Polish People's Republic in the 1960s, the film follows their short interaction. At the beginning, Ida (known as Anna at this point) is told that she ought to visit Wanda, her only remaining relative, before she makes her vows. Wanda informs "Anna" that she is not who she thinks she is; her name is Ida Lebenstein and she is a Jew, whose parents and brother were killed during World War II. Ida resolves to find her parents' graves, only to be told that they have no graves—"neither they nor any other Jews"—and that their bodies might be "in the woods or in the lake". Wanda warns Ida of the stakes of this venture into a dark past—"what if you go there and discover there is no God?"—but decides to accompany her. The two women set off to find out how their relatives died and where their bodies might be located.

As the pair travel deeper into the countryside, towards Piaski, the tone of the film becomes increasingly disquieting. The area that they visit is less a *gemeinschaft* based on unity and mutual understanding⁴ than one characterised by suspicion and secrecy. Questions about Jews are sidestepped by the villagers. At the old family home of Ida's mother and Wanda, a young family insist that there is no record of a Jewish family ever living there. As the film progresses, however, it is revealed that the bodies are located in the woods. The woods—dark and ghostly, tangled yet desolate—constitute an apt metaphor for the film's memorialisation (or lack thereof) of the Holocaust. On their journey, the two characters do not confront any tombs or plaques commemorating the dead of the kind director Pawlikowski remembers from his childhood in

Warsaw, which he describes as a “city littered with ghosts.”⁵ Poland in the 1960s, as represented here, was far removed from contemporary memorial culture. One is reminded of Primo Levi’s thoughts on how his memoir, *If This is a Man*,⁶ “fell into oblivion for many years ... because in all of Europe those were difficult times of mourning and reconstruction and the public did not want to return in memory to the painful years of the war that had just ended.”⁷

The Holocaust does more than haunt the film’s characters and setting; it haunts the film itself. It is never confronted directly, remaining (alongside Stalinism) a menacing background presence. There are no visual representations of death camps and Nazism, or reconstructions of overt violence and suffering. It is sharply distinct, therefore, from Hollywood Holocaust films like *Schindler’s List* and *Life is Beautiful*, and more broadly from other films about genocide such as *Hotel Rwanda*, films that have attracted criticism for the trivialisation or aestheticisation of genocide⁸. It thus occupies an interesting space in the debate about the visual representation and memorialisation of atrocity and genocide, in which films about the Holocaust occupy a central place. *Ida* is not marked by a voyeuristic, spectatorial gaze, or a desire to find something ‘life-affirming’ in the aftermath of one of the most violent episodes of human history⁹. Nor does it self-consciously attempt to act as what Jeffrey Alexander calls a “bridge metaphor” that provides “the symbolic extension so necessary if the trauma of the Jewish people were to become a trauma for all humankind.”¹⁰ Insofar as *Ida* tackles the subject of the Holocaust (and Pawlikowski has tried to downplay its centrality)¹¹, it does so in a complex and ambiguous way.

Ambiguous too is the presentation of Polish-Jewish relations. Though Pawlikowski states that *Ida* is principally about what it is to be Polish,¹² the film cannot escape this thorny issue. This was made clear in protests against the film by the Polish Anti-Defamation League, who argued that the *Ida* unduly ignores the German occupation during World War II and suggests that Poles (particularly peasants in rural communities) were responsible for the Holocaust.¹³ For Pawlikowski, “when people say that Poles connived with the Nazis – well, some did, some didn’t. Some people, quite a few, behaved atrociously. Others, quite a few, behaved with incredible courage. Most just tried to survive, the whole country was a victim.”¹⁴ For some on the Polish left, however, *Ida* has been attacked for its purported insinuation of the links between Judaism and Stalinism,¹⁵ particularly in the character of Wanda Gruz. As Pawlikowski would have it, *Ida* is an existential film, not one that attempts to “tackle history.”¹⁶ That its success has resulted precisely in a tackling of history in Poland is perhaps a testament to the film’s complexity and nuance.

Both *Ida* and *Wanda* find themselves in Kurt Wolff’s paralysing suspension, caught between a world in which they cannot believe and a world which they cannot bear. For *Wanda*, the trip hardens her disillusion with devotion to any form of transcendental principle, be it communism or Catholicism. Attempting to find solace in alcohol, cigarettes and casual sex, *Wanda* struggles to believe in anything at all and harangues *Ida* about her naïve religious devotion. For *Ida*, discovering her identity and learning of her parents’ fate understandably leads to a questioning of faith. This questioning is emphasised by the pair’s encounter with a jazz musician, a saxophonist with a penchant for John Coltrane who symbolises for both *Ida* and *Wanda*, perhaps even for Poland, the possibility of an alternative future marked by a gradual Westernization. Whether this is a desirable future, however, is a moot question. This is a film about many things: identity, memory, religion, jazz music, and more. It is, for our purposes, also a powerful treatise on living in the aftermath of genocide and confronting evil.

Title of the Film: *Ida*; Director: Pawel Pawlikowski; Producers: Eric Abraham, Piotr Dzieciol, Ewa Puszczynska; Screenplay: Pawel Pawlikowski, Rebecca Lenkiewicz; Stars: Agata Kulesza, Agata Trzebuchowska, Dawid Ogrodnik; Cinematography: Ryszard Lenczewski, Lukasz Zal; Film Editor: Jaroslaw Kaminski; Countries: Poland/Denmark/France/UK; Year of Release: 2014; Production Company: Opus Film, Pheonix Film, Portobello Pictures. Duration: 82 minutes.

Endnotes

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 - 11 David Sims and Pawel Pawlikowski, "Ida's Bittersweet Success: An Interview with Pawel Pawlikowski", *The Atlantic*, February 18, 2015. Accessed February 20, 2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/02/pawel-pawlikowski-on-the-personal-and-the-historical-in-ida/385568/>.
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 - 13 Andrew Pulver, "Polish Nationalists Launch Petition Against Oscar-nominated Film *Ida*", *The Guardian*, January 22, 2015. Accessed February 20, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/jan/22/ida-oscars-2015-film-polish-nationalists-petition>.
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 - 15 For a useful overview of the debate that *Ida* has inspired in Poland see: "Review of 'Ida': Identity and Freedom." *Notes From Poland*, January 9, 2015. Accessed February 23, 2015. <https://notesfrompoland.wordpress.com/2015/01/09/review-of-ida-identity-and-freedom/>.
 - 16 David Sims and Pawel Pawlikowski, "Ida's Bittersweet Success: An Interview With Pawel Pawlikowski".

Film Review: *E-Team*

Rafiki Ubaldo

Hugo Valentin Centre
Uppsala University
Uppsala, Sweden

E-Team – Film Review

Director: Ross Kauffman and Katy Chevigny, Documentary
USA, 2014

Reviewed by Rafiki Ubaldo

Hugo Valentin Centre
Uppsala University
Uppsala, Sweden

Anna, Ole, Peter, and Fred “are members of the Emergencies Team, or The E-Team, a division of Human Rights Watch ... trained to deal with unfolding crises, document war crimes and report them to the world”.¹ Using a *cinéma vérité* approach, Ross Kauffman and Katy Chevigny, two award-winning filmmakers, follow The E-Team in the field in Syria and Libya.

First, Anna and Ole are absorbed in reviewing the complex plan to smuggle them into Syria to investigate and document the crimes being committed. They cross the border into Syria illegally, and the camera filming them walks the viewer through images of ruined building and empty streets—empty except for a couple of street vendors manning blueberries stands and a few children running around. Then Anna and Ole walk into someone’s home to interview family members about crimes they witnessed and/or relatives they lost. Destruction and despair are there to be seen.

In the middle of the interview a heavy sound of a passing plane, probably a jet bomber, provokes commotion in the home, interrupting the interview, and everyone takes shelter; but the camera keeps rolling to give us foggy images of scared movements and worried voices. Members of the interviewees’ family lament: “*What is our crime? What have we done [for bombs to be dropped on our homes like this]?*” The interview goes on in spite of the pain and fear visible in the face of the interviewee. Question after question, the E-Team members do their possible best to establish facts and responsibilities. This one scene highlights the work the investigators can do, sometimes conducting multiple interviews about one and the same incident. E-team members have to answer questions such as what exactly happened in one place, and why and how to conclude that, based on their findings, a violation of international law has occurred. On other occasions, such as in the scenes of bombs falling on the Syrian town of Azaz, Anna and Ole witness crimes being committed at the same time that they are conducting investigations to ascertain who is responsible for the destruction.

In the case of Libya, Peter and Fred arrived at the crime scenes after the killing of Gadhafi. They came at the right time to witness large quantities of sophisticated weaponry abandoned in the desert, and a sea of secret documents the Gadhafi regime was not able to destroy before its demise. Peter’s expertise in weaponry allowed for the possibility of determining the provenance of Gadhafi’s weapons. Additionally, Fred’s vast experience in tracking violations of human rights helped Human Rights Watch conduct detailed analyses of the documentation left behind by Gaddafi’s secret services.

The Emergencies Team enjoys a consistent following among mainstream newspapers and television channels in the Global North. Filmmakers Ross Kauffman and Katy Chevigny take viewers back to the Balkan Wars of the 1990s to explain the birth and subsequent success of The Emergencies Team. In September 1998, Fred and his colleagues visited the Balkans to document human rights violations. One evening Fred was informed about ongoing killings in the Gornje Obrinje region in Kosovo. He was urged to go there and see for himself. Instead of following

the tradition at Human Rights Watch to collect data and go back to New York and produce a report, he wrote a press release, and shared it with the media. That story made headlines in major newspapers in the United States of America and led decision makers, including the White House, to take action to intervene and stop the killings in Kosovo. In 2002, Fred, by now considered the Father of The Emergencies Team, testified in the *Milošević* case before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague.

Kauffman and Chevigny's research into the ICTY video archives and the particular material they chose to use in this film serve the claim that *cinéma vérité* aims at projecting "something that really happens, and the method by which the film was made—which defines a role for the filmmaker in filming the scene as it unfolds—seems to ensure the authenticity of the scene."² The encounter between Milošević and Fred during the court proceedings at the ICTY is not a natural setting in itself. Courtrooms are arranged settings in which interactions and interventions are more or less regulated in order for the judges to accomplish their tasks of hearing different parties to trials. However, when Milošević intervenes to accuse that Human Rights Watch has shown determination to have him arrested and tried, he provides Fred with a spontaneous opportunity to defend the organization: "We do not start with an end result, or a conclusion, or an aim, and then search for the facts that will lead to that conclusion. We start with research in the field that leads us up to the end." Furthermore, Milošević's accusations against Human Rights Watch awakened Fred's attention to direct his candidness towards the judges and respond in the strongest and clearest terms. The camera captured that spontaneous and strong appeal to provide one of those rare scenes where *cinéma vérité* approaches succeed "in filming people without making them appear manipulated or self-conscious."³ In order to know more about what it was like to testify against Milošević, Kauffman and Chevigny decide to interview Fred. While trying to formulate his answer, Fred struggles to hide tears; he swallows them to clear his throat—one may say—and declares: "I honestly felt like I had a responsibility that every person who told me their story, and lived through this horrible experience, that I now owe them their moment in court. And this was a chance to represent them."

Other episodes allow critical views to be voiced when the E-Team members meet skeptics. In Moscow, for example, Anna goes to launch the Human Rights Watch report on Syria, with the hope of convincing the Russian government to stop supporting the Syrian government. According to Human Rights Watch reports, the Syrian government is largely responsible for ongoing human rights violations in the country. During the question-and-answer session, a journalist suggested that Anna works for an organization that is not independent, but rather is an agent of American imperialism. In another episode, and during a mission to investigate Human Rights violations in Libya, a rebel leader tells Peter that his organization cannot be fully reliable because it changes alliances as soon as the people it used to defend gain power. Such episodes prevent the film from being a public relations production on behalf of Human Rights Watch. Instead, by allowing critical voices to be heard in the film—thus highlighting the complexities of issues human rights defenders face—Kauffman and Chevigny realize a powerful plaidoyer for the different organizations that take risks to sound the alarm against violations of human rights.

An additional but equally important element that makes this film a success is the art of capturing negotiations of normality in times of war. In the E-Team, the war does not manifest itself through bombs and fighting in Syria or Libya. For Anna, Ole, Peter and Fred the war is experienced during the investigating violations of human rights in the field, living among the victims, trying to cope with life with them, but it does not end there. The war continues for them when these investigators go back to Paris, Berlin, or any other city in the peaceful West. They carry the war with them for as long as they keep working on a case. Their search for normality can best be described through anthropologist Ivana Macek's understanding of negotiating normality in times of war and/or mass violence: "patching together a semblance of existence, living from day to day on terms [one] could neither finally accept nor directly deny."⁴

Macek was able to directly experience the siege of Sarajevo during which she collected data about lives of people who were affected by the violence as the war went on. She observed that people felt humiliated and ashamed because they could not live as decently as they used to, or could not avoid depending on foreign aid in order to make it through the war.⁵ Yet they were

inventive and proud enough to create all sorts of ways and tools to ensure a life reminiscent of the normality of the pre-war times.⁶

Humiliation, shame, inventiveness and pride happen in the lives of The E-team members as well. When they succeed in exposing crimes they feel pride and show it. When they fail to garner a desired attention, or when the camera records long moments of silence, and faces lost in some thoughts, it is as if they are ashamed of not solving problems, or realizing that the victims do not enjoy the luxury of escaping that madness while they will go back to Paris, New York, Berlin, or Geneva.

Anna and Ole are not only teammates; they are also a married couple. At one occasion, their wedding anniversary happens while they are in war torn Syria. Instead of giving in to the desolation and destruction around them and postpone their celebration, they find ways to live as normally as possible under the circumstances. Ole gets a haircut, Anna makes herself beautiful, and they wish each other a happy anniversary. On another occasion, Ole and Anna are traveling inside Syria with their local colleague and translator. He mentions to them that his wife is pregnant. The pregnancy is still in its early stage but he is so excited that he counts every day that passes.

How could one possibly have a child at a time they are witnessing and/or witnessing mass violence? Kauffman and Chevigny do not ask that question in the film, but they provided us with a magnificent work that provokes that question in us. Therein lies the importance of their film: helping us realize that we constantly negotiate going back and forth between conditions we can neither completely accept nor completely refuse. With the E-Team, the picture of the unparalleled human capacity to destroy provokes revolt; at the same time, one is baffled and inspired by the picture of human ability to overcome war, mass violence, or genocide, and survive to give life—again.

Title of the Film: *E-Team*; Directors: Katy Ross Kauffman and Chevigny; Producer: Marilyn Ness; Cinematography: Rachel Beth Anderson, James Foley, Ross Kauffman; Film Editing: David Teague; Country: USA; Year of Release: 2014; Production Company: Big Mouth Productions, Red Light Films, in association with Impact Partners. Duration: 88 minutes.

Endnotes

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