

UNITED STATES  
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM  

---

CENTER FOR ADVANCED HOLOCAUST STUDIES

**From the Holocaust in Galicia  
to Contemporary Genocide**  
**Common Ground—Historical Differences**  
Omer Bartov

WASHINGTON, D. C.

**From the Holocaust in Galicia  
to Contemporary Genocide**  
**Common Ground—Historical Differences**

Omer Bartov

JOSEPH AND REBECCA MEYERHOFF ANNUAL LECTURE  
17 DECEMBER 2002

The assertions, opinions, and conclusions in this occasional paper are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum or of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

A somewhat different version of this article will be published as “Seeking the Roots of Modern Genocide: On the Macro- and Microhistory of Mass Murder,” in *The Spector of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, May 2003).

First printing, February 2003

Copyright © 2003 by Omer Bartov,  
assigned to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

THE JOSEPH AND REBECCA MEYERHOFF ANNUAL LECTURE on the Holocaust has been endowed by a 1994 grant from the Meyerhoff family to promote excellence in and to disseminate Holocaust research. Lifelong residents of Baltimore, Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff were involved in philanthropic activities in the United States and overseas in music and the arts, Jewish learning and scholarship, and human services, among other concerns. Jewish history and education were a primary focus in their philanthropic efforts. This tradition has been upheld and enhanced by their children and their children's children. Their son, Harvey M. Meyerhoff, is Chairman Emeritus of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. The annual lecture is held in the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Theater of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



THE TOWN OF BUCZACZ sits astride the Strypa River, some thirteen miles north of the Dniester, thirty-five miles south of the provincial capital Ternopil (Tarnopol in Polish), and about eighty miles southeast of L'viv (Lwów in Polish, Lvov in Yiddish, Lemberg in German), which was the capital of Galicia under Austrian rule and of Polish Red Ruthenia before the first partition of Poland in 1772. Between the world wars Buczacz was less than forty miles from the Soviet border. Initially a village with a fortress and palace belonging to the noble Polish Buczaczki family whose records date at least as far back as the fourteenth century, Buczacz developed into an important trade center between Poland and the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Passing into the hands of the Potockis, one of the most powerful noble families in Poland, in the early seventeenth century, Buczacz was founded as a town in 1684.

Jews are known to have resided in Buczacz since the fifteenth century. Records indicate that the Jews participated in the defense of the locality during the Cossack raids of 1648, the Tatar onslaught of 1655–1667, and the Turkish wars of 1672–1675, in which Sultan Muhamed IV laid siege to the fortress and dictated the Treaty of Buczacz to King Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki under the linden tree behind the palace. The community absorbed many refugees fleeing the massacres of Hetman Bogdan

Chmielnicki's Cossacks. Following these devastating wars the town was restored by Jan Potocki, and the Jews of Buczacz recovered, seceded from the religious jurisdiction of the Lvov community, built an impressive synagogue, and obtained permission to reside in all parts of the city and pursue all occupations, as well as gaining jurisdictional autonomy.

For much of the next two centuries the Jews constituted the single largest ethnic and religious group in Buczacz, alongside the Poles and Ruthenians, who later came to be called Ukrainians. The Jews worked as agents for the Polish nobility, managing or renting their estates. By 1915 about a fifth of the large estates in the Buczacz district were owned by Jews, who were also the first to learn German following the partition of Poland in 1772 (in which Buczacz was first made part of the Zaleszczyki district and then of the Stanisławów district). After the severe occupational and residential restrictions initially imposed by the Austrians were lifted in 1848, the community began to grow and flourish, reaching close to 8,000 people, or just over half of the total population of Buczacz, by 1910. Engaging in commerce and, from the late nineteenth century, in petty industry, Jewish tailors, furriers, smiths, bookmakers and wagon-drivers practically dominated these trades. By the early twentieth century they were also entering the professions in increasing numbers. Relations between the majority of Misnagdim (traditionalists), and the smaller groups of Chassidim (pietists) and Maskilim (secular-minded supporters of the Enlightenment) were largely cordial, as were relations with the gentile Polish and Ukrainian population. Thus the first elected Buczacz municipal government, established in 1874, comprised twelve Jews, nine Poles, and nine Ukrainians. Indeed, in 1879 the Jew Bernard Shtern was elected mayor, a position he held until 1921, while also serving as head of the Jewish community after 1890 and being elected as representative to the Austro-Hungarian parliament in 1911.

Although the community established the only modern hospital in Buczacz in 1891, modernized the school system, and promoted a variety of cultural institutions, the early years of the twentieth century also witnessed a rise in antisemitism that led to increasing emigration of Jews to North America. With the outbreak of World War I most of the Jews fled to the western parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and those who stayed behind were subjected to brutalities by Cossacks serving in the Russian army. During 1918–19 Buczacz came under the rule of the short-lived Ukrainian republic, and was then briefly occupied by the Red Army in the course of the Russo-Polish War. The retreat of Soviet forces was followed by a spate of murder, pillage, and

rape of the Jews by bands of Petliura's Ukrainian nationalists. By 1921 there were only 3,858 Jews out of a total population of 7,517 in Buczacz, and even after the partial recovery of the town, ten years later the Jewish population stood at a mere 4,439 people. Once at the heart of one of the largest and most vibrant concentrations of Jews in Eastern Europe, the Jews of Buczacz, as those of numerous other neighboring towns, were undergoing a process of pauperization and demoralization. Discriminatory policies by the Polish government, which ruled Galicia throughout the interwar period, excluded Jews from a variety of trades and industries, and ensured that Eastern Galicia remained economically underdeveloped and depressed. Following the death of Poland's military ruler, Marshal Józef Piłsudski, in 1935, official Polish antisemitism increased. Thus by the late 1930s the municipal high school imposed a quota on Jews, and the teachers seminary admitted no Jews at all. These political and economic conditions must have contributed to the growing influence of the Zionists in Buczacz, who ruled the community in coalition with other Jewish political parties. Despite the precipitous decline of those years, the surviving Jews of Buczacz would later boast of having produced some of Eastern Europe's most renowned figures, among whom the historian Emanuel Ringelblum and the future Nobel Prize-winning author Shmuel Yosef (Shai) Agnon are best remembered. (Buczacz was also the birthplace of Sigmund Freud's parents and of Simon Wiesenthal.)

In accordance with the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact that divided Poland between Nazi Germany and the USSR, Buczacz came under Soviet rule in September 1939. At the time the town had approximately 10,000 Jewish, 5,000 Ukrainian, and 2,000 Polish inhabitants. Most Jewish institutions were suppressed by the Soviets, and many Jewish refugees fleeing the Germans and seeking shelter in Buczacz were deported into the interior of the Soviet Union. With the German attack on June 22, 1941, hundreds of the town's young male Jews were conscripted into the Red Army. As the Soviets withdrew, and even before German forces marched in on July 7, Ukrainian nationalists began brutalizing the Jews, accusing them of collaboration with the Soviets. On July 28, 1941, helped by local collaborators, units of SS Einsatzgruppe D executed about 350 Jewish males, most of them educated. At that time the Germans also ordered the creation of a Jewish council supported by a Jewish police force. Throughout the fall of 1941 Jews were conscripted into forced labor, robbed of their property, and deprived of food and medical care. Then on October 17, 1942, a German unit assisted by Ukrainian police sent 1,600 Jews to the Belzec extermination camp and killed on the spot another 200



Jews who tried to escape. Another *Aktion* took place on November 27, 1942, in which an additional 2,500 people were sent to Belżec, while some 250 were shot for trying to hide or escape. In late 1942 the Jews were enclosed in a ghetto, into which Jews from other communities were also brought. Many died from epidemics produced by the unsanitary conditions. On February 1–2, 1943, 2,000 Jews were taken out and executed. The killings went on unabated, costing the lives of some 3,000 people in April and May 1943. In mid-June 1943 the last survivors of the ghetto were murdered by mass shootings in the vicinity. The small Jewish resistance group failed in its attempt to prevent the *Aktion* of April 1943 and dispersed. Other Jewish partisans still operating in the woods after the liquidation of the ghetto were wiped out by retreating German army units in February 1944. When the Red Army marched into Buczacz on March 23, some 800 surviving Jews came out of hiding in the area, most of whom were only to be murdered when the Germans temporarily recaptured the city. When Buczacz was finally liberated on July 21, fewer than 100 Jews were left. The remaining 400 former Jewish residents of Buczacz who spent the war in the USSR returned to their home town only briefly and went on to live in Israel or North America. Subsequent attacks on the Polish population by the Ukrainian nationalist militias, and the Soviet policies that shifted Poland's borders to the westward emptied the town and region of Poles. Today there are no Jews or Poles in Buczacz, and very few indications of the fate of these communities. The population of the town is made up largely of former Ukrainian peasants who moved into it after the war.<sup>1</sup>

## II.

The main outlines of the genocide of the Jews in East Galicia, in which almost the entire Jewish population, numbering some 500,000 people, was murdered, have recently been reconstructed.<sup>2</sup> Until these studies were published, we knew relatively little about the manner in which the Holocaust unfolded in this region from the perspective of the Nazi administration, although both personal accounts and *yizkor bikher* (Jewish community memorial books) provided insights into how these events were experienced by the victims. Based on a wide range of German, Polish, and Ukrainian sources, this new scholarship offers an accurate depiction and analysis of the sequence of events, the agencies involved, and to some extent the motivation of the local German organizers of the genocide. Other recent studies have also added greatly to our knowledge of the collaboration by local Polish and especially Ukrainian

elements in the persecution of the Jews.<sup>3</sup> However, with the partial exception of Martin Dean's work, this scholarship makes very limited use of Jewish sources and refrains from providing the Jewish, and, for that matter, the local gentile perspective of these events. Thus the picture created in these studies is one of a German invasion that brings in its wake a genocidal policy against the Jews, one that is in part aided and abetted by the non-Jewish population for a variety of reasons ranging from prejudice and opportunism to nationalist aspirations. Consequently, the reader gains very little understanding of how the genocide actually unfolded on the ground and of the nature of the social fabric upon which these policies were enacted and to which it reacted. Compared with the *yizkor bikher* of precisely the same towns mentioned in German accounts, one gains the disturbing impression that these were two entirely distinct events.

The recent controversy over the Wehrmacht exhibition in Germany, and subsequent publications relevant to that debate,<sup>4</sup> have begun to attract more attention to the importance of uncovering the social reality of East Galicia prior to the arrival of the Germans, this in order to understand the manner in which genocide actually took place.<sup>5</sup> The critics of the exhibition were mainly concerned with the two preceding years of Soviet occupation in East Galicia, since these supposedly created or at least greatly exacerbated gentile hostility toward the Jews, who were seen as collaborators with the Bolsheviks. Hence the crucial collaboration with the Nazis in murdering the Jews is traced back to alleged Jewish collaboration with the Soviets against their neighbors. This view remained current in local accounts long after the end of the war.<sup>6</sup> Complicating matters even further was the Soviet policy vis-à-vis the local nationalists who collaborated with the Nazis in the hope of gaining independence from Soviet rule, on the one hand, and the Soviet reluctance to recognize the specificity of Jewish victimhood under Nazi rule, on the other.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, Jewish memories of this period tend to stress the brutality of local collaborators (and, in some cases, of Jewish policemen controlled by corrupt *Judenräte*) even more than that of the Nazis, not least because they were often known by name, had been long-time neighbors, and then helped the Nazis. These individuals often took action on their own initiative and hunted down Jews who hid in "bunkers" or escaped to the countryside. The collaborators often performed with greater efficiency and perseverance than many German units.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, merely reconstructing the two years of Soviet occupation that preceded the German invasion is hardly sufficient as a context for the events of 1941–44. In order to

understand the specific manner in which the genocide unfolded, and to take in the different contemporary perspectives as well the differing perceptions of subsequent historiography, memory, and representation, one must go much further back. Indeed, I would argue that while genocide has very distinct immediate causes, it also must have far deeper local, social, and cultural roots that largely determine the manner in which it ultimately occurs. In this sense, the narrative of genocide must begin at the end—the moment at which everything comes together and breaks apart in one explosive release of violence—and then slowly move back, carefully peeling away the layers of different memories and histories, searching for the stitches that bound that society together and for the tears as well as for the wounds that festered underneath.

What occurred in Buczacz during the Holocaust might not have happened at all, or at least not in the same manner, had the Germans not marched in. And yet genocide would have been much harder to accomplish, and its success much less complete, had the Germans not found so many collaborators willing, even eager, to do the killing, the hunting down, the brutalizing, and the plundering. Conversely, hardly any of the handful of Jews who lived to tell the tale would have survived had it not been for those Ukrainians and Poles who gave them food and shelter, even if at times they charged them for the service and not infrequently drove them out or denounced them once the Jews' resources ran out. After all, such people risked their lives and those of their families for hiding Jews. Only a meticulous reconstruction of life in towns such as Buczacz—whose mix of populations, division of economic roles, social stratification and religious distinctions were typical of the borderlands of Eastern Europe—will provide clues to why hundreds of thousands of Jews were butchered by their neighbors, or at least right next to them, without even token opposition and with a great deal of glee and relief. It may also help us understand why some people, often simple, illiterate peasants, saw the humanity of the persecuted and protected them from the killers.<sup>9</sup>

Eastern Galicia was a society that for many generations had formed links of economic interdependence. To be sure, resentment was never far from the surface, and was marked by periodic outbreaks of violence. In part this can be traced to the fact that, on average, the Ukrainians were even poorer than the Jews and associated the latter with their Polish landlords. In part it had to do with religious differences, especially anti-Jewish sentiments, but also tensions between Uniate Ukrainians and Catholic Poles. Finally, increasing friction was related to the budding nationalism among all three groups. Still, the socioeconomy of Eastern Galicia, just as much as its culture, was

a conglomerate of religions, ethnicities, languages and traditions. To this must be added the fact that many middle-class Jews were moving away from the traditional way of life as they left the *shtetlach* (small and predominantly Jewish towns) and began providing their children with a secular education, often associated with German letters, learning, and schooling. Thus quite apart from Polish, Ukrainian, and Yiddish, the rising Jewish bourgeoisie took up the German language and along with it other attributes of German culture. And then, of course, there was the growing impact of Zionism and the spread of the Hebrew language as a secular tongue rather than as the language of prayer and religious study.<sup>10</sup>

Clearly, the determination of the Nazi regime to murder the Jews is key in explaining the Holocaust. But it is also crucial to realize that while in much of Eastern Europe the Germans had no trouble in unleashing an astonishing surge of local violence against the Jews, this was hardly the case in many parts of Western Europe (as well as in such rare exceptional East European lands as Bulgaria)<sup>11</sup>; hence the need to focus on local dynamics even when striving to understand the whole. For while such specificity may appear to tell us a great deal about one place and very little about the phenomenon as a whole, I would argue that the event of genocide as such must also be reconstructed from the bottom up, from such specific cases of internecine conflict and violence to the larger context that transforms them from isolated incidents of massacre to full-scale mass murder. If we move from Buczacz to Sarajevo, or from East Galicia to Rwanda, we discover a comparable complexity of relationships on the local level, and similar links between the local and the national sphere. As scholars writing on Rwanda have pointed out, our very understanding of the alleged differences between the Tutsis and the Hutus is based on a conceptualization of Rwandan society that was superimposed on it by colonial rule and the Catholic Church, and was only subsequently internalized by the local population.<sup>12</sup> Similarly our easy, not to say facile, distinctions among victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, between collaborators and resisters, Jews and Gentiles, occupiers and occupied, must be subjected to a much more careful historical examination on the local level. What was happening in Buczacz between 1941 and 1944? How did old loyalties and allegiances, friendships and ideological affiliations, old prejudices and fresh memories of persecution and victimhood, work themselves out under the impact of German occupation, between one Soviet occupation and another?

In some respects, we cannot speak of genocide on the local level. Massacre and mass killing become genocide only when an entire ethnic group is targeted by a state.

By the same token, however, our understanding of genocide remains highly limited as long as we do not go beyond the level of state organization and mass victimhood. To this extent, it is only by raising our eyes over the horizon of a particular genocide, and by lowering them to a specific locality in which genocide was implemented — even if those subjected to it did not know that their fate was part of a much larger event — that we can advance our understanding of this phenomenon. In both cases, this is a difficult exercise. An informed comparison of different genocidal systems calls for a great deal of learning and synthesizing of data, and requires the construction of a useable analytical framework that will make sense of the comparison. Investigating local communities requires a combination of detective work in seeking out evidence, and a literary ability to write the story of a community in a manner that will bring it back to life. In the case of a site such as Buczacz, we are blessed with the works of the great writer Agnon, many of whose stories are suffused with the sights, smells, and characters of his birth town, Buczacz, and its surroundings. Moreover, quite apart from the impressive book of Buczacz, which collects much historical data on the town along with photographs, personal recollections, testimonies, and documents, as well as the important encyclopedia of Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, the archives of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem contain a wealth of information about the town, culled especially from accounts by survivors of the Holocaust.<sup>13</sup> In the last few years staff of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., have been microfilming documents in these parts of Ukraine that will be of much help in reconstructing the official history of the town and the lives of its Polish and Ukrainian inhabitants.<sup>14</sup> A rich depository of testimonies is also located at the Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH) in Warsaw. Many other documents are held at the Austrian State Archives in Vienna, since Buczacz was for a long time under Austrian rule, as well as in Ukrainian, Polish and Russian archives. Some local non-Jews' accounts of events under Soviet and German occupation have already been published, while others await recovery from the archives or other collections. These will serve in reconstructing the view of those often erroneously described as bystanders but who in fact were active participants in the events.<sup>15</sup> Finally, the records of German units that descended on Buczacz in July 1941 and of its subsequent German occupiers will have to be examined. Here it would be especially important to reconstruct the profile of the units involved and, where possible, of individual soldiers, SS and Gestapo officials, and other agents of the Nazi regime. Existing research and my own initial inquiries indicate that there is sufficient

information to put together a reliable picture of the German occupiers and perpetrators, and to analyze the relationship between them and the various groups under their control. One invaluable source is the archive in Ludwigsburg, which collected the interrogation records of suspected Nazi criminals investigated by the West German police. Further information on individuals is found in the Berlin Document Center, which contains the files of SS and other former Nazi Party members. From such sources one may be able to construct a more intimate profile of the killers.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, documentation of higher Nazi officials will establish the links between events in Buczacz and the larger context of the genocide in East Galicia and, beyond that, the Holocaust as a whole.

### III.

Moving to the larger context of these events, it must be pointed out that both the idea and the practice of genocide probably are as ancient as the idea and practice of war. Indeed, war and genocide have always been closely related, just as both are predicated on the existence of a certain level of human culture and civilization. The biblical concept of a war of annihilation, or the destruction of Carthage by the Romans are two familiar instances of the manner in which the eradication of another culture during war, or in its immediate aftermath, serves as an important instrument in the assertion of group or national identity. Indicatively, in both cases—as in many others—destruction was not only justified, but also lauded as a noble act sanctioned by God (for the ancient Hebrews) or glorifying the republic (for the Romans). In some instances, the intention to perpetrate genocide may not be implemented, or may be implemented only in part; in other cases, genocide may be the unintended consequence of a policy or a set of actions whose initial goal was different. The mass death of Native Americans in both New World continents probably can serve as an example for both models. On the one hand, the intention to destroy the indigenous populations of the Americas did not wholly succeed, especially in Latin America, where most states still contain large numbers of Indians or people of mixed race (with the notable exception of Argentina). On the other hand, it is likely that more Native Americans died from exposure to European diseases than from intentional killing.<sup>17</sup> What seems to be indisputable is that since it is both the product of civilization and the instrument of asserting identity, the wholesale murder of entire categories of human beings can be found in numerous cultures at some point of their history.

Changes in the idea and practice of genocide in more recent times were largely the consequence of their dissemination and implementation by modern nation-states and their institutions. Conversely, the nature of genocidal conceptualizations and actions is also a measure of the modernity of the perpetrator organization. In this sense, bureaucratic, industrial, systematic genocide may actually serve as a signifier of modernity, even if we would like to label it barbarism. However, the victims of genocide need not be at the same point of development as their murderers. Indeed, in numerous modern genocides the victims were technologically, organizationally, and, not least, militarily inferior to their persecutors, which greatly facilitated both the systematization and the legitimization of genocide. Hence the mass murder of the Herero of Southwest Africa by the German Imperial Army in the early years of the twentieth century had many of the attributes of a modern genocidal undertaking despite, or perhaps precisely because of, the fact that the Herero were a premodern society.<sup>18</sup> The mass murder of the Armenians by the Ottoman Empire, for its part, while it contained elements of premodern genocidal ideologies and practices, and was directed at a relatively more advanced but numerically and militarily inferior group, can also be seen as an important harbinger of state-organized mass killing of domestic populations in time of war, nation-building, and ethnic conflict.<sup>19</sup>

The first legal definition of genocide, however, was accepted by the international community only many decades after the practice in its modern guise had already been tried and implemented, in some cases on an extraordinarily large scale. Yet this definition, which also introduced the very term “genocide” to describe the phenomenon, has not helped much in clearly defining what is and what is not genocide, nor in limiting its scope and prevalence. Indeed, the growing attention to genocide in the popular media, among scholars, and even in some political circles, is itself an indication of the failure of the United Nations to enforce its own policy of mobilizing the international community against mass murder.<sup>20</sup> Between Cambodia and Rwanda, the last few decades have witnessed a tremendous expansion of this practice.<sup>21</sup> Simultaneously, the emergence of the term “ethnic cleansing” in the course of the war in Bosnia came to denote a phenomenon that dates, in its modern guise, at least as far back as the late nineteenth century (in the same region of Southeastern Europe and Anatolia).<sup>22</sup> Again, it should be noted, both modern genocide and modern ethnic cleansing have taken place usually during wartime or under circumstances closely related to war conditions.

On December 9, 1948, the United Nations adopted the Genocide Convention, in which genocide was defined as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such.” These acts include “killing members of the group”; “causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group”; “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”; “imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group”; and “forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”<sup>23</sup> This has long been recognized as a problematic definition both because it is too open-ended and vague, in that it does not distinguish between outright killing and other forms of violence and persecution, and because it fails to mention the targeting of political groups and social classes, thereby excluding a vast portion of the victims of state-organized violence in the twentieth century. Quite apart from the general ineffectiveness of the UN in enforcing decisions not supported by the major powers and the fact that states are highly reluctant to intervene in the domestic affairs of other states lest their own sovereignty be challenged, it is clear that the definition of genocide depends to a large extent on the political context within which it is discussed.<sup>24</sup> This would be the case even if we accepted a much narrower definition that would limit genocide to the organized attempt by a state to annihilate the physical existence of another ethnic or racial group as defined by the perpetrator. For one thing, while preventing genocide before it occurs is hindered by the fact that the intention to perpetrate it is exceedingly difficult to prove, waiting for clear signs of implementation often means that the response comes too late. This, for instance, was the case with the Nazi genocide of the Jews and the Hutu genocide of the Tutsis, as well as much of the Serbian “ethnic cleansing” of Bosnia.<sup>25</sup> But it should also be stressed that while we are used to thinking of genocide in negative terms, it has not infrequently been seen as a legitimate or even glorious action, normally presented as an act of justified vengeance in retaliation to, and as a preventive measure in anticipation of, genocide by the very group targeted for murder. This was, of course, Heinrich Himmler’s view of the “Final Solution.”<sup>26</sup> Continuing here generally in the European context, positive descriptions by the perpetrators of “ethnic cleansing,” as I and others define it, are even more common, as for instance in the cases of the population transfers of Greeks and Turks after World War I, the mass deportations of whole ethnic groups by the Soviet Union after World War II, the expulsion of millions of Germans from Eastern Europe, and the continuing efforts to



create ethnically homogeneous areas in the former Yugoslavia by Croats, Serbs, and ethnic Albanians.<sup>27</sup>

The open-ended definition of genocide can also be used to blur the distinction between perpetrators and victims, and to legitimize one kind of violence in the name of preventing another. Thus, for instance, both in left-wing and in right-wing West European intellectual circles it is not uncommon to hear the argument that there is no essential difference between the American genocide of the Indians, the enslavement and cultural genocide of Africans, the mass killing of the Vietnamese in the war with the United States, the expulsion and maltreatment of the Palestinians by the Israelis, and the Nazi genocide of the Jews. The unspoken assertion of such opinions is, of course, that the United States has no right to present itself as the upholder of world justice, and the Jews have no right to claim any special status by dint of their not-so-unique victimhood.<sup>28</sup> It thus seems to me that while the growing literature devoted to defining and categorizing genocide may add to its obviously crucial juridical conceptualization (even if much of it is written by sociologists and political scientists), a deeper historical understanding of the roots and reality of genocide requires a different approach.

#### **IV.**

As is the case with most historical events, genocide has conventionally been investigated on its own terms, mostly at a degree of generalization that allows a good understanding of its organization and perpetration on a national or local level. For understandable reasons of sources and methodology this approach has been biased in favor of studying the perpetrators. The victims and bystanders have usually been examined separately and less systematically. The two types of historiographies have rarely been integrated.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, comparative studies of genocide that examine it as part and parcel of the modern era rather than as an extreme aberration that can be explained only on its own terms also are hard to come by.<sup>30</sup> It is for this reason that I see a need to develop two different yet related strategies toward the study of modern genocide. First, since just like any other historical event, genocide must be analyzed within a larger sociopolitical and cultural context, one must develop a comparative framework that will facilitate making distinctions between the unique and common features of modern outbreaks of mass murder. Second, as I have indicated above in the case of Buczacz, scholars must also focus on the local level in order to grasp the

sociocultural dynamic that makes for outbreaks of violence within communities that often have existed in mutual interdependence for centuries.

In studying state-directed mass crimes it seems obvious to employ a comparative method. And yet, precisely for this reason such comparisons between degrees of state criminality, and of the relationship between individual citizens and the criminal state, contain within them serious political and moral quandaries emanating from the issue of legalized criminality.<sup>31</sup> Thus, for instance, while the Ottoman genocide of the Armenians seems to have served as a blueprint and a precedent for subsequent cases of genocide—of which the Holocaust stands out in particular—a variety of otherwise quite disparate interests have strongly objected to precisely such a comparison.<sup>32</sup> Curiously, the novel that made the single most important contribution to bringing the Armenian Genocide to public attention, Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, was in fact written with an eye to the growing persecution of the Jews in the 1930s, and was later fervently read by young Jewish rebels in the ghettos and by subsequent generations of Israeli youngsters as a symbol of resistance to slaughter.<sup>33</sup> The reasons for the opposition to comparison are not hard to find. The Turkish government has always denied that an Armenian genocide had taken place. Many other states, including Israel, most Western countries, and the United States, have been wary of antagonizing the Turkish authorities and have therefore consistently played down this episode in favor of furthering their economic and strategic interests in the region. Conversely, many survivors of the Holocaust have been reluctant to compare their fate with the disasters that befell others, lest the genocide of the Jews be marginalized or contextualized in a manner that would belittle their own suffering. Considering that the Armenians were persecuted in part also for their Christian faith, as well as for their national identity, it was difficult for many Jews who perceived their own persecution as rooted in Christian antisemitism to feel sympathy for Christian victims of Muslims.<sup>34</sup>

Another instance of the difficulty of comparison can be gleaned from the changing interpretations of the links, similarities, and distinctions between Nazism and Communism. As the debate over the recent publication of *The Black Book of Communism* has shown once more, and as had already become clear during the 1950s debate on totalitarianism, comparisons between Nazi Germany and the Stalinist USSR often carry a heavy ideological burden.<sup>35</sup> Without going into the well-known details of this debate, it must be conceded that it clearly demonstrates the extent to which comparison of state-organized murder is never, and can never be, entirely innocent. In

this context the case of Cambodia is especially telling. The rampage of the Khmer Rouge has been compared with the Holocaust (as for instance during the *Historikerstreit*, the German historians' controversy in the mid-1980s over the uniqueness of the Holocaust); it was used as an example of communist criminality (in Western Cold-War rhetoric); it was said to be another consequence of American imperialism (in communist Cold-War rhetoric); and, most recently, it was also linked to ethnic prejudice and racial persecution.<sup>36</sup> Hence we must be aware that comparative methods bring with them a significant liability that can often prejudice scholars' conclusions or the reactions and understanding of the public.

Nevertheless, it would be unwise to reject comparative methods simply because of their potential for obfuscation and abuse. Indeed, this very susceptibility to political mobilization indicates the extent to which this approach can reveal the close intellectual, ideological, organizational, and historical links among discrete instances of genocide, which is, of course, why comparisons were so vehemently resisted in the first place. Uncovering the common denominators of modern genocide will, moreover, not only teach us more about the roots of specific instances but also will help us understand the continuing presence of this threat in the modern psyche just as much as in modern politics, whether as actual policy or as memory and *imaginaire*.

One of the most crucial questions that a comparative study of genocide can address is the relationship between what might be seen as immanent predilections in human society or individual human beings, and the emergence of an idea and a practice at a given time and place and its migration from one society to another. A great deal has been said, and some written, on the potential of everyone to become a serial killer under certain circumstances, as well as the potential of all human societies to develop genocidal trends. In the debate between Daniel Goldhagen and Christopher Browning, both scholars invoked a variety of authorities and offered a radically different reading of essentially the same historical documentation in order to support their polar interpretations. For Browning, the German killers were "ordinary men," in the sense that anyone might have acted similarly under similar circumstances; for Goldhagen, they were "normal Germans," in the sense that all Germans, but only Germans, would have been willing and able to step into their shoes.<sup>37</sup> The point to be made here is that this debate is unlikely to progress much further as long as it focuses on only one case of genocide or, indeed, on just a few killing squads. The assumption of similarity to, or distinction from, other societies must ultimately be based on comparison, and neither

scholar offered a truly comparative perspective. There are echoes here of the *Sonderweg* (“special path”) debate, in which for a long time a certain model of normality was assumed against which German uniqueness was opposed, all without any detailed comparison between the alleged “normality” of Britain and France, and the consequently “peculiar” historical development of Germany. Once scholars such as Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn actually proposed this comparison, much of what had been seen as “unique” about the German case melted away.<sup>38</sup>

There have also been proposals in the past to trace the ways in which the idea of genocide, or “ethnic cleansing,” migrated over time and space. Probably the most original sustained attempt to uncover the deep historical and cultural roots of twentieth-century state-organized violence can be found in Hannah Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.<sup>39</sup> Arendt argued that European imperialism, along with Christian antisemitism, were at the core of a set of ideas and practices that made European states increasingly susceptible to resort to mass violence legitimized and propelled by ideologies of expansion and superiority, unity and purity, civilization and barbarism. But Arendt’s insights into the links between imperialism and antisemitism took half a century to be disseminated within the larger scholarly community. For a long time, totalitarianism as a concept was seen primarily as a key to comparing Nazism and Bolshevism. Only the resurgence in the study of colonialism, on the one hand, and of antisemitism and the Holocaust, on the other, finally facilitated the return to Arendt’s original thesis. Thus, for instance, recent research has been focusing on the links among the German genocidal policies against the Herero of Southwest Africa, German involvement in the Ottoman genocide of the Armenians, and Nazi policies against the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>40</sup> Recent work on the links among the German colonial policies and definitions of citizenship has also begun to revise earlier conventions about the origins of the idea of German nationalism and how it differed from the French concept.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, a closer look at the French case through the prism of France’s interaction with its colonial holdings also demonstrates that while the colonizers obviously had an impact on the identity of the colonized, this was anything but a one-sided process. It is now being argued, for instance, that in the wake of the Algerian War and the arrival of the *pieds noirs* on French soil, conceptualizations of citizenship in France underwent a profound, albeit incomplete transformation.<sup>42</sup> Most relevant to the present discussion is new research currently underway on the links between German concepts of race in Africa and of Jews in Europe. Here we find a complex relationship

between the dehumanization and fear of Africans and the antisemitic discourse in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germany. Indeed, many of the terms we usually associate with the Holocaust originated in German debates over the colonies in Africa.<sup>43</sup>

Hence, despite the difficulties and perils of a comparative approach, among which we must also include the threat of superficiality and glibness, there is little doubt that it can reveal much about modern genocide that had eluded earlier scholars who focused on discrete cases. Most clearly, comparative studies indicate that modern genocide—narrowly defined as the eradication of an entire ethnic or racial group—is closely linked to the emergence of the nation-state in Europe and the spread of European empires across the world. Here the appearance of modern antisemitism and the rhetoric of the “nationalization of the masses” also played a crucial role.<sup>44</sup> From this perspective, studying the origins of genocide in a comparative mode is akin to analyzing some of the most crucial and pervasive aspects of modern society, political organizations, and ideologies.

## V.

This being said, some fundamental questions tend to elude comparative studies on the scale outlined above, just as they defy analyses of genocidal systems on the national level.<sup>45</sup> The categories of difference and similarity, origins and mutual influences that preoccupy comparative studies will rarely tell us much about the social dynamics of individual communities subjected to or complicit in genocide. And yet, notwithstanding the modernization of the killing process and the bureaucratic and technological capacities available to the modern state in organizing violence, much of the reality of genocide occurs on the local level, in the interaction among friends and neighbors, as well as in the encounter with and reception of forces arriving from outside the community. Moreover, the conduct of the community is often crucial to the success or failure of state-organized genocide in a given area, as was clearly seen in the Holocaust. To be sure, when speaking of the local level or, indeed, of individual or collective psychology, we are bound to identify elements that have remained unchanged over time and across cultures. But other factors will often be radically transformed under changing circumstances, leading in turn to far-reaching changes in outlook and conduct. This is the point at which a community based on interaction and cooperation may be metamorphosed into a community of genocide.<sup>46</sup>

My main argument here is that we cannot understand certain central aspects of modern genocide without closely examining the local circumstances in which it occurs. These circumstances can be understood only by taking into account all groups of which a given community is composed, and by considering the evolution of relationships among the groups and of their self-perceptions and views of each other over a relatively long span of time. For what is inherent to genocide on the local level is that it frequently involves a moment in which neighbors and friends, even family members (especially where intermarriage has become common), turn on each other, often with almost unimaginable savagery and cruelty. This was the case, for instance, in many mixed communities in Eastern Europe, where Poles, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Lithuanians, Russians, Germans, Latvians, Estonians, and so forth, lived in close proximity with each other and with their Jewish neighbors, and had done so for centuries. While violence was never far from the surface and erupted every once in a while, it was only with the German invasion that endemic hostility and aggression were transformed into a genocidal explosion of unprecedented ferocity. This was also the case in Rwanda and Burundi, in Bosnia, in Cambodia, and, with some qualifications attributable to local and international constraints, also in Palestine and Israel, Indonesia, Maoist China and the Stalinist USSR, and quite a few other spots across the globe. In other words, what needs to be investigated is the link between (physical and social) proximity and (economic, cultural, and political) interdependence on the one hand, and the outbreak of violence that seeks entirely to eradicate one or more of the groups that make up the community; violence often accompanied by acts of brutality, humiliation, and dehumanization that seem to defy generations of shared living, not necessarily in perfect harmony, but in an equilibrium that in many ways had—until that point—constituted the core of the community’s material and spiritual existence.

Studies of this kind require skills rather different from comparative work. Ethnographic and sociological training or at least sensibilities, as well a certain literary ability would be of much use. Indeed, both comparative and what I would call here community studies are based on the assumption that historical understanding can be greatly enriched by making use of other disciplinary methods and perspectives.<sup>47</sup> This is at least partly related to many historians’ sense of frustration with the limits of their conventional methods in explaining genocide. A community study of the type envisioned here also often requires significant linguistic skills or professional assistance, since the community would be composed of groups speaking different

languages or dialects, as well as claiming different cultural traditions and often belonging to different religious faiths. The student of such a community needs to make use of as much personal material as can be found (the existence of such sources is crucial to the success of an undertaking of this nature) and may need to conduct interviews and employ methods of oral history.<sup>48</sup> In other words, while limited to a small geographical area and a restricted number of protagonists, such a community study is a rather complex undertaking. It might thus be argued that the difficulties involved outweigh the anticipated benefits, considering that all we might ultimately come up with would be a more or less reliable reconstruction of the life and death (of part) of a community. But this view can be countered by the argument that much of what we have been unable to grasp when looking at the “big picture” can be much better understood when seen at the local level, where the personal interaction between people, their prejudices, needs, and urges, as well as their memories, traditions, and perceptions would all have to be taken into account. If the devil is in the details, these details comprise a host of very local demons.<sup>49</sup>

It is because I perceive this approach to be of particular importance to our understanding of the mechanics of mass violence on the local level, and because I believe that such local massacres are closely linked to state-directed mass murder—that is, to genocide—that I view my own research on Buczacz as potentially providing us with important clues about the nature of mass murder. For precisely by reconstructing the biography—or, if you will, the split personality—of a single town in Eastern Europe from its establishment to its demise as a multiethnic and multireligious society, we may learn a valuable lesson about the potentials and the limits of multicultural and pluralistic societies.

\* \* \*

To conclude, I have tried to argue that part of the project of understanding modern genocide is to investigate discrete cases of mass murder within a larger historical context, on the one hand, and to closely examine individual instances of mass killing that formed part of an entire genocidal undertaking, on the other. For instance, Raul Hilberg’s *The Destruction of the European Jews* is rightly seen as a model for reconstructing a single case of state-organized mass murder. Yet this approach can be tremendously enriched, and its explanatory potential can be greatly enhanced, both by situating it in the context of other twentieth-century mass murders, and by zooming in on the manner in which policies dictated at the top took shape at the point of contact

among perpetrators, victims, and a variety of bystanders, collaborators, and resisters. This is the moment that interests me most: for genocide is, ultimately, also about the encounter between the killer and the killed, usually with a fair number of spectators standing by. How we get to this point, and why people play the roles they do when it arrives, is what I hope to understand a little better through my future study of Buczacz.



## Notes

1. This account is based on the following sources: Danuta Dombrowska, Avraham Wein, and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas Hakehilot: Polin. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities from Their Establishment to the Aftermath of the Shoah of World War II*, vol. II: *Eastern Galicia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980 [in Hebrew]), pp. 83–89; Yisrael Kohen, ed., *The Book of Buczacz* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1956 [in Hebrew]), pp. 39–74 (chronicles), pp. 233–302 (testimonies); Yad Vashem, section 0.3 (testimonies [in Hebrew]): Simcha Tischler, file 10229, recorded June 26, 1997; Yisrael Muncher, file 5878, recorded April 27, 1990; Esther Paul, file 6723, recorded October 23, 1992; Halfon Eliyahu, file 8553, recorded October 21, 1947.
2. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenvernichtung in Ostgalizien, 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); Thomas Sandkühler, “*Endlösung*” in *Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz, 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996).
3. Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (New York: St. Martin’s Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1999). On Belorussia, see Bernhard Chiari, *Alltag hinter der Front: Besatzung, Kollaboration und Widerstand in Weißrußland 1941–1944* (Dusseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1998); Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999).
4. See especially Bogdan Musial, “*Konterrevolutionäre Elemente sind zu erschießen*”: *Die Brutalisierung des deutsch-sowjetischen Krieges im Sommer 1941* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2000). See also Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: Soviet Conquest of Poland’s Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).
5. On the exhibition itself see especially Hamburg Institute for Social Research, ed., *The German Army and Genocide: Crimes Against War Prisoners, Jews, and Other Civilians, 1939–1944*, trans. Scott Abbott (New York: The New Press, 1999); Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *War of Extermination: The German Military in World War II, 1941–1944*, multiple translators (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000). On the controversy, see Omer Bartov, Atina Grossmann, and Mary Nolan, eds., *The Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 2002).
6. See a brief summary of Ukrainian literature in Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenvernichtung*, pp. 397–98. See further in Jan T. Gross, “A Tangled Web: Confronting Stereotypes Concerning Relations between Poles, Germans, Jews, and Communists,” in István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt, eds., *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); pp. 74–129; Timothy Snyder, “‘To Remove the Ukrainian Problem Once and for All’: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ukrainians in Poland, 1943–1947,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1/2 (1999); pp. 86–120; Peter J. Potichnyi and Howard Aster, eds., *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1988); Zvi Gitelman et al., eds., *Cultures and Nations of Central Eastern Europe: Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Peter J. Potichnyi, ed., *Poland and Ukraine, Past and Present* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of

Alberta, 1980); Ivan L. Rudnytsky, ed., *Rethinking Ukrainian History* (Edmonton: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

7. Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

8. See, as just one example, Irene and Carl Horowitz, *Of Human Agony* (New York: Shengold Publishers, 1992), pp. 86–93.

9. For three moving accounts of life in an East European *shtetl*, see David Zagier, *Botchki: When Doomsday Was Still Tomorrow* (London: Peter Halban, 2000); Theo Richmond, *Konin: A Quest* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995); Eva Hoffman, *Shtetl: The Life and Death of a Small Town and the World of Polish Jews* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1998).

10. For background see Deborah Dash Moore, ed., *East European Jews in Two World Wars: Studies from the YIVO Annual* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1990); Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983); Yisrael Gutman, Ezra Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk, eds., *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1989).

11. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fragility of Goodness: Why Bulgaria's Jews Survived the Holocaust*, trans. Arthur Denner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

12. Timothy Longman, “Christian Churches and Genocide in Rwanda,” and Charles de Lespinay, “The Churches and the Genocide in the East African Great Lakes Region,” both in *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack, eds. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), pp. 139–160, 161–79.

13. See n. 1, above, for a very preliminary sampling.

14. I am now in the process of collecting them.

15. See, e.g., Waldemar Lotnik, *Nine Lives: Ethnic Conflict in the Polish-Ukrainian Borderlands* (London: Serif, 2000).

16. This archive was the main source for Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1993) and Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996).

17. David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

18. Tilman Dederig, “‘A Certain Rigorous Treatment of All Parts of the Nation’: The Annihilation of the Herero in German Southwest Africa, 1904,” in Mark Levene and Penny Roberts, eds., *The Massacre in History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), pp. 205–22; Helmut Walser Smith, “The Talk of Genocide, the Rhetoric of Miscegenation: Notes on

Debates in the German Reichstag Concerning Southwest Africa, 1904–14,” in Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop, eds., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp. 107–23; Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).

19. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, 3rd rev. ed. (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1997); Richard G. Hovannisian, ed., *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991); Ronald Grigor Suny, “Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationalism: Armenians, Turks, and the End of the Ottoman Empire,” and Ara Sarafian, “The Absorption of Armenian Women and Children into Muslim Households as a Structural Component of the Armenian Genocide,” both in Bartov and Mack, *In God’s Name*, pp. 23–61, and 209–21.

20. Michael P. Scharf, *Balkan Justice: The Story Behind the First International War Crimes Trial Since Nuremberg* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 1997); Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998); Howard Ball, *Prosecuting War Crimes and Genocide: The Twentieth-Century Experience* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999); Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice* (New York: The New Press, 2000); Gary Jonathan Bass, *Stay the Hand of Vengeance: The Politics of War Crimes Tribunals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

21. R. J. Rummel, *Death By Government* (New Brunswick; London: Transaction Publishers, 1996); Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons, and Israel Charny, eds., *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997).

22. Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 17–56; Dan Diner, *Das Jahrhundert verstehen: Eine Universalhistorische Deutung* (Munich: Luchterhand, 1999), pp. 195–201.

23. Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 10, and for a general discussion of definitions and the relevant literature, *ibid.*, pp. 8–27. See also the study by Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

24. On April 17, 2001, a Belgian court began the trial of four Rwandans accused of taking part in the genocide of the Tutsi in 1994. This was the first case in which a jury judged people accused of war crimes in another country. A partial precedent was the arrest of Gen. Augusto Pinochet of Chile in Britain. Belgium is the former colonial power in Rwanda and was directly involved in the events leading to the genocide there. It has also ratified rights conventions that allow it to try people for international crimes. The United States has strongly objected to this practice. Meanwhile, as of December 2002, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, set up in 1995 by the UN in Arusha, Tanzania, completed the cases of only eleven people and is still considering sixty-three people indicted on charges related to the war in Rwanda. In Rwanda itself 4,500 have been tried, some 100 executed, and more than 100,000 await trial. Some 800,000 Tutsis were murdered in the space of a few months during the 1994 genocide.

As of March 2002, The Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, set up in 1993, indicted more than eighty people on war crimes charges related to the violent breakup of Yugoslavia during the 1990s. Thirty-one have been tried and the cases of twelve—including former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic—are now being heard. See Marlise Simons, “An Awful Task: Assessing 4 Roles in Death of Thousands,” *The New York Times* (April 30, 2001) A3; <http://www.icty.org/>; <http://www.un.org/icty/>; <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/03/04032002090354.asp>. Further on Rwanda in Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

25. David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941–1945* (New York: The New Press, 1998); Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 1998); David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

26. See more in Omer Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction: War, Genocide, and Modern Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 25–30.

27. Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: A Short History*, pp. 113–56; (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), pp. 61–3; Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804–1999* (New York: Viking, 1999); Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1996); Julie A. Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); Terry Martin, “The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing,” *The Journal of Modern History* 70/4 (December 1998), pp. 813–61; Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Amir Weiner, ed., *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth-Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, forthcoming).

28. See, e.g., Alain Brossat, *L'épreuve du désastre: Le xx<sup>e</sup> siècle et les camps* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996), pp. 20, 23. A more complex view in Catherine Coquio, ed., *Parler des camps, penser les génocides* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1999). For an allegation of Jewish instrumentalization of the Holocaust, see Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (New York: Verso, 2000); and a more balanced view in Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

29. One important recent exception is Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. I, *The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997). But this volume is concerned only with the prewar years.

30. For some attempts in this direction, see Yves Ternon, *L'État criminel: Les Génocides au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1995); Mihran Dabag and Kristin Platt, eds., *Genozid und Moderne*, Vol. I *Strukturen kollektiver Gewalt im 20. Jahrhundert* (Opladen: Leske and Burich, 1998); Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Hans Maier ed., *Wege in die Gewalt: Die modernen politischen Religionen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2000). In the last few years some new comparative studies have been launched. See

Eric Weitz, *Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming). Ben Kiernan of Yale University is also engaged in writing a study of comparative genocide.

31. Ingo Müller, *Hitler's Justice: The Courts of the Third Reich*, Deborah Lucas Schneider, trans. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1991); Michael Stolleis, *The Law under the Swastika: Studies on Legal History in Nazi Germany*, Thomas Dunlap, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Michael R. Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial 1945–46: A Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1997).

32. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide: A Review of the Historical Evidence of German Complicity* (Watertown, MA: Blue Crane Books, 1996); Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Roger W. Smith et al., “Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 9 (Spring 1995), pp.1–22.

33. Franz Werfel, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, Geoffrey Dunlop, trans. (New York: Viking Press, 1934); Yair Auron, “Zionist and Israeli Attitudes Toward the Armenian Genocide,” in Bartov and Mack, *In God's Name*, pp. 267–288; Auron, *The Banality of Indifference: Zionism and the Armenian Genocide* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000).

34. For a comparison of the reconstruction of collective identity after genocide, see Maud Mandel, “Faith, Religious Practice, and Genocide: Armenians and Jews in France following World War I and II,” in Bartov and Mack, *In God's Name*, pp. 289–315. On Armenian memories of genocide, see Donald E. Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

35. Stéphane Courtois, Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Paczkowski, Karel Bartošek, Jean-Louis Margolin, *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, Jonathan Murphy and Mark Kramer, trans. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1999). See also François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, Deborah Furet, trans. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999); Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). A recent history of Nazi Germany that makes a case for similarity with the Soviet system is Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000). A comparison of personalities can be found in Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992); and of systems, Ian Kershaw and Moshe Lewin, eds., *Stalinism and Nazism: Dictatorships in Comparison* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Different opinions on the usefulness of the concept of totalitarianism can be found in Krzysztof Pomian, “Totalitarisme,” *Vingtième Siècle* 47 (July–September 1995), pp. 4–23; Klaus-Dietmar Henke, ed., *Die Verführungskraft des Totalitären*, in *Berichte und Studien* 12 (Dresden, 1997), and Henke, ed., *Totalitarismus: Sechs Vorträge über Gehalt und Reichweite eines klassischen Konzepts der Diktaturforschung*, in *Berichte und Studien* 18 (Dresden, 1999); Ian Kershaw, “Nazisme et stalinisme: Limites d'une comparaison,” *Le Débat* 89 (March–April 1996), pp. 177–89; Henry Rousso, ed., *Stalinisme et nazisme: Histoire et mémoire comparées* (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1999).

36. Ben Kiernan, ed., *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge, the United Nations and the International Community* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993); Kiernan, "Genocidal Targeting: The Two Groups of Victims in Pol Pot's Cambodia," in *State Organized Violence: The Case of Violent Internal Repression*, P. Timothy Bushnell, Vladimir Shlapentokh, Christopher K. Vanderpool, and Jeyaratnam Sundram, eds. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 207–26; Eyal Press, "Unforgiven: The Director of the Cambodian Genocide Program Rekindles Cold War Animosity," *Lingua Franca* (April/May 1997), pp. 67–75. Kiernan presented a paper on the Cambodian genocide as ethnic persecution at the conference Lessons and Legacies: Laws, Evidence, and Context, the Holocaust Educational Foundation, Florida Atlantic University, November 1998. Further in Jean-Louis Margolin, "Cambodia: The Country of Disconcerting Crimes," in Stéphane Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism*, pp. 577–644.

37. Browning, *Ordinary Men*, and Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. For the debate see Geoff Eley, ed., *The "Goldhagen Effect": History, Memory, Nazism—Facing the German Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Robert R. Shandley, ed., *Unwilling Germans? The Goldhagen Debate* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Norman G. Finkelstein and Ruth Bettina Birn, *A Nation on Trial: The Goldhagen Thesis and Historical Truth* (New York: Owl Books, 1998); Julius H. Schoeps, ed., *Ein Volk von Mördern? Die Dokumentation zur Goldhagen-Kontroverse um die Rolle der Deutschen im Holocaust* (Hamburg: Campe Verlag, 1996); and Daniel J. Goldhagen, Christopher R. Browning, and Leon Wieseltier, "The 'Willing Executioners,' 'Ordinary Men' Debate," Washington, D.C., United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996. The most important psychological study on which Browning relies is Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1975).

38. The classic example of the *Sonderwegtheorie* is Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871–1918*, Kim Traynor, trans. (Leamington Spa: Berg Publishers, 1985, <1973>); the refutation, David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

39. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951). See also Carl J. Friedrich, ed., *Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1954). See further in Steven E. Aschheim, "Nazism, Culture and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*: Hannah Arendt and the Discourse of Evil," *New German Critique* 70 (Winter 1997), pp. 117–139.

40. Isabel Hull of Cornell University presented a paper on some of these issues at the conference Lessons and Legacies: Laws, Evidence, and Context, the Holocaust Educational Foundation, Florida Atlantic University, November 1998. She is engaged in a major research project on the genocide of the Herero and its ramifications. See also note 2, above.

41. Laura Wildenthal, "'She Is the Victor': Bourgeois Women, Nationalist Identities, and the Ideal of the Independent Woman Farmer in German Southwest Africa," in Geoff Eley, ed., *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 371–95; Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992). Such research has also had interesting repercussions on our understanding of gender and the impact of colonialism on the

evolution of its conceptualization in Europe. For the range of influences on German society, see Friedrichsmeyer et al., *The Imperialist Imagination*.

42. Todd Shepard, “Decolonizing France: Reimagining the Nation and Redefining the Republic at the End of Empire” (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University 2001).

43. Christian Davis is completing a Ph.D. dissertation at Rutgers University tentatively titled “Colonialism, Antisemitism, and the German-Jewish Consciousness,” which addresses this issue. See further in Cornelia Essner, “Zwischen Vernunft und Gefühl: Die Reichstagsdebatten von 1912 um koloniale ‘Rassenmischehe’ und ‘Sexualität,’” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 6 (1997), pp. 503–519; Smith, “The Talk of Genocide.” Friedrichsmeyer et al., *The Imperialist Imagination*. For the origins of the German *imaginaire* of race and gender in connection with the colonies, see Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

44. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991, <1975>); Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction*, pp. 911–42.

45. The classic model for the latter approach is Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, rev. ed., 3 vols. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985).

46. The most striking cases of local massacres within the framework of a much larger genocidal undertaking that received recent scholarly or journalistic attention concern the Holocaust, Bosnia, and Rwanda. See Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Nick Ceh and Jeff Harder, eds., *The Golden Apple: War and Democracy in Croatia and Bosnia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide* (New York: Macmillan, 1993); Elizabeth Neuffer, *The Key to My Neighbor’s House: Seeking Justice in Bosnia and Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 2001); Alison Des Forges, “Leave None to Tell the Story”: *Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999).

47. For comparative and analytical community studies, see Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

48. See the especially pertinent study, Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainian, 1919–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002). For an earlier period, see Gershon David Hundert, *The Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatów in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

49. The debate surrounding the publication of Gross’s *Neighbors*, in Poland and elsewhere, is a good indication of the potentially explosive nature of such studies, despite the fact that Gross does not attempt to reconstruct the social and cultural fabric of life in Jedwabne before the war. See, for example, “Polish Face Truth of Jedwabne,” Associated Press, *The New York Times* [NYT](March 12, 2001); Peter Finn, “Painful Truth in Poland’s Mirror: Book on 1941

Massacre of Jews Shifts Blame from Nazis to Neighbors,” *The Washington Post* (March 14, 2001); Adam Michnik, “Poles and the Jews: How Deep the Guilt?” NYT (March 17, 2001), pp. A15, A17; Steven Erlanger, “Soul-Searching at Another Polish Massacre Site,” NYT (April 19, 2001), p. A3. See the debate in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* [TLS]: Abraham Brumberg, “Murder Most Foul: Polish Responsibility for the Massacre at Jedwabne,” TLS (March 2, 2001), pp. 8–9; and letters to the editor by Jan Nowak and Czeslaw Karkowski, TLS (March 16, 2001), p. 17; by Abraham Brumberg, TLS (March 23, 2001), p. 17; by Norman Davis and Werner Cohn, TLS (March 30, 2001), p. 21; by Vaiva Pukite, Tony Judt, and Abraham Brumberg, TLS (April 6, 2001), p. 17; by Norman Davis, TLS (April 13, 2001), p. 17. In the Israeli press, see Sever Plotzki, “1,600 Jews Locked in a Barn and Burned Alive,” interview with Jan Gross, *Yediot Aharonot* (January 19, 2001 [in Hebrew]), pp. 20–21; “Poles Accept Blame for 1941 Massacre of Jews,” *The Jerusalem Post*, (March 15, 2001). On an early postwar massacre of Jews in Poland, see Krystyna Kersten, “The Pogrom of Jews in Kielce on July 4, 1946,” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 76 (1997), pp. 197–222.



OMER BARTOV is John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History, Professor of History, and Professor of German Studies at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Professor Bartov was born in Israel and received his B.A. in history from Tel-Aviv University and his D.Phil. in history from Saint Antony's College of Oxford University. He was professor of history at Tel-Aviv University (1983–1992) and Rutgers University (1993–2000). He is the recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities Scholarship, and Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship, among others. His publications include *Mirrors of Destruction: War, Genocide, and Modern Identity* (2000); *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (1996), which received the Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History; *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (1991); and *The Eastern Front, 1941–45: German Troops and the Barbarization of Warfare* (1985; 1986; 2001). This past June, Professor Bartov led the Center's 2002 Summer Seminar for College and University Faculty, entitled "The Holocaust: History, Testimony, Representation." For this year's Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Annual Lecture, he attempts to place the Holocaust in Buczazc, Eastern Galicia—part of his own family's history—within the broader history of genocide and interethnic relations in Eastern Europe.

## *Available Occasional Papers*

“Lithuania and the Jews,” CAHS symposium presentations, 2005

“The Path to Vichy: Antisemitism in France in the 1930s,” by Vicki Caron, 2005

“Sephardim and the Holocaust,” by Aron Rodrigue, 2005

“In the Shadow of Birkenau: Ethical Dilemmas during and after the Holocaust,” by John K. Roth, 2005

“Jewish Children: Between Protectors and Murderers,” by Nechama Tec, 2005

“Anne Frank and the Future of Holocaust Memory,” by Alvin H. Rosenfeld, 2005

“Children and the Holocaust,” CAHS symposium presentations, 2004

“The Holocaust as a Literary Experience,” by Henryk Grynberg, 2004

“Forced and Slave Labor in Nazi-Dominated Europe,” CAHS symposium presentations, 2004

“International Law and the Holocaust,” by Thomas Buergenthal, 2004

“Initiating the Final Solution: The Fateful Months of September-October 1941,” by Christopher Browning, 2003

“On Studying Jewish History in Light of the Holocaust,” by David Engel, 2003; web version [www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/engel\\_02/engel.pdf](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/engel_02/engel.pdf)

“Past Revisited: Reflections on the Study of the Holocaust and Contemporary Antisemitism,” by Steven J. Zipperstein, 2003; web version [www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/zipperstein\\_03/zipperstein.pdf](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/zipperstein_03/zipperstein.pdf)

“From the Holocaust in Galicia to Contemporary Genocide: Common Ground—Historical Differences,” by Omer Bartov, 2003

“Confiscation of Jewish Property in Europe, 1933–1945: New Sources and Perspectives,” CAHS symposium proceedings, 2003

“Roma and Sinti: Under-Studied Victims of Nazism,” CAHS symposium proceedings, 2002

“Life After the Ashes: The Postwar Pain, and Resilience, of Young Holocaust Survivors,” by Peter Suedfeld, 2002

“Why Bother About Homosexuals? Homophobia and Sexual Politics in Nazi Germany,” by Geoffrey J. Giles, 2002

“Uncovering Certain Mischievous Questions About the Holocaust,” by Berel Lang, 2002

“World War II Leaders and Their Visions for the Future of Palestine,” by Gerhard L. Weinberg, 2002

“The Conundrum of Complicity: German Professionals and the Final Solution,” by Konrad H. Jarausch, 2002; web version [www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/conundrum.htm](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/occasional/conundrum.htm), 2002

“Policy of Destruction: Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy and the Genesis of the ‘Final Solution,’” by Peter Longerich, 2001

“Holocaust Writing and Research Since 1945,” by Sir Martin Gilbert, 2001

“Jewish Artists in New York during the Holocaust Years,” by Matthew Baigell, 2001

“The Awakening of Memory: Survivor Testimony in the First Years after the Holocaust, and Today,” by Henry Greenspan, 2001

“Hungary and the Holocaust: Confrontations with the Past,” CAHS symposium proceedings, 2001

“Facing the Past: Representations of the Holocaust in German Cinema since 1945,” by Frank Stern, 2000

“Future Challenges to Holocaust Scholarship as an Integrated Part of the Study of Modern Dictatorship,” by Hans Mommsen, 2000

“Moritz Fröhlich—Morris Gay: A German Refugee in the United States,” by Peter Gay, 1999

“Jewish Resistance: A Working Bibliography,” by CAHS staff, 1999; third edition 2003; web version [www.ushmm.org/research/center/resistance/biblio.htm](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/resistance/biblio.htm), 2000, third web edition, 2003

“Profits and Persecution: German Big Business and the Holocaust,” by Peter Hayes, 1998

“On the Ambivalence of Being Neutral: Switzerland and Swiss Jewry Facing the Rise and Fall of the Nazi State,” by Jacques Picard, 1998

“The Holocaust in the Netherlands: A Reevaluation,” a USHMM-RIOD conference summary by Patricia Heberer, 1997

“Jewish Resistance: Facts, Omissions, and Distortions,”  
by Nechama Tec, 1997

“Psychological Reverberations of the Holocaust in the  
Lives of Child Survivors,” by Robert Krell, 1997

“The First Encounter: Survivors and Americans in the  
Late 1940s,” by Arthur Hertzberg, 1996

“The ‘Willing Executioners’/‘Ordinary Men’ Debate,” by  
Daniel Goldhagen, Christopher Browning, and Leon  
Wieseltier, 1996

“Preserving Living Memory: The Challenge and Power of  
Video Testimony,” by Geoffrey H. Hartman, 1995

“Germany’s War for World Conquest and the Extermination  
of the Jews,” by Gerhard L. Weinberg, 1995

***Single copies of occasional papers may be obtained by addressing a request to the Academic Publications Branch of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies. A complete list of the papers is also available on the Museum’s website at [www.ushmm.org/research/center](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center).***

**T**he Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum promotes the growth of the field of Holocaust studies, including the dissemination of scholarly output in the field. It also strives to facilitate the training of future generations of scholars specializing in the Holocaust.

Under the guidance of the Academic Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, the Center provides a fertile atmosphere for scholarly discourse and debate through research and publication projects, conferences, fellowship and visiting scholar opportunities, and a network of cooperative programs with universities and other institutions in the United States and abroad.

In furtherance of this program the Center has established a series of working and occasional papers prepared by scholars in history, political science, philosophy, religion, sociology, literature, psychology, and other disciplines. Selected from Center-sponsored lectures and conferences, or the result of other activities related to the Center's mission, these publications are designed to make this research available in a timely fashion to other researchers and to the general public.



CENTER FOR ADVANCED HOLOCAUST STUDIES  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW • Washington, DC 20024-2126 • [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)