

On Genocide. An Introduction

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Abstract. This article is primarily a short introduction in the field of genocide studies. Building on the work of many others, it outlines some of the most important dimensions of genocide and presents some of the main results of genocide studies so far. The focus is on aspects about which most genocide scholars agree, less attention is paid to differences in perspective. It seemed more appropriate for an introductory text to emphasize convergences than to dwell on divergence. The article opens with a discussion on the conceptualization of genocide, then it continues with five sections about the relations between war, civil war, and genocide; about crisis and genocide; the role of political leadership and the state; the process of genocide, including planning and organization; and the role of ideology. The next section is devoted to victims, and the article closes with a short summary and discussion of possible future developments of the field.

1. The conceptualization of genocide: definitions and discussions

Since its first introduction in 1944, by the jurist Raphael Lemkin in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, the term 'genocide' has become well-established and gained wide currency. But over the last sixty years it has also shown itself to be a complex and difficult concept, with a variety of meanings. Sometimes the concept has been used in a broad sense, in other instances it has been narrowed down. In public and political discussions, as reflected in the mass media, the term is at present sometimes used quite generally and loosely, while in other contexts, for instance in international criminal law, it has been used in a strictly limited sense. And with every new case of genocide since 1945 the meaning of the concept has been re-examined. Notwithstanding a certain broad agreement about the core meaning of 'genocide' among specialists in the field, discussions about the most adequate definition and conceptualization are still being carried on at present.¹ One may conclude that the meaning of the concept is still relatively open and in development.

Originally, Lemkin, in several of his contributions on the subject, aimed at a fairly broad conception of genocide. In his book of 1944 he stated for example:

'Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killing of all the members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups (..) The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions of culture, language, national feelings, religion, [and] economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.'²

And a few years later, in 1947, he wrote in an article in the *American Journal of International Law*:

'(..) the crime of genocide involves a wide range of actions, including not only the deprivation of life but also the prevention of life (abortions, sterilizations) and also devices considerably endangering life and health (artificial infections, working to death in special camps, deliberate separation of families for depopulation purposes ..)'.³

At about the same time of Lemkin's first publications on the subject, deliberations were going on within several Committees of the newly founded United Nations, which in the end led to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, approved by the U.N. General Assembly on December 9, 1948, and, according to a recent count, by now accepted by 142 countries.⁴ Article 1 of this Convention affirms that genocide 'whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish', while under Article 2 'genocide' is defined as consisting of:

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

In later years historians and social scientists in the field of genocide studies have reflected on the way in which the Convention has come into being, and there has been considerable discussion about the pros and cons of the definition of 'genocide' as formulated in the Convention. One of them, the lawyer and historical sociologist Leo Kuper, has pointed out that the Genocide Convention of 1948 was created in a fairly strongly politicized atmosphere, at a time when the first contours of the Cold War were already taking shape. During the preparatory deliberations there were 'major controversies' regarding the essential nature of the crime, the groups to be protected under the Convention, the question of intent, the inclusion of cultural genocide, the problem of enforcement and punishment, and the extent of destruction which would constitute genocide.⁵

Kuper, who in his own work has generally adhered to the definition of genocide as given in the Convention, has moreover argued that that same definition is sometimes too limited for historians and social scientists who are trying to understand and explain cases of genocide. In his view it has been a major omission to exclude political groups from the list of the groups protected. Many other scholars have made the same point, sometimes adding the exclusion of economic groups (classes) as another omission. Usually two arguments are advanced to support this point. Firstly, it is argued that political differences are often as significant a basis for massacre and annihilation as racial, national, ethnic or religious differences. Secondly, genocides against national, ethnical, racial or religious groups are generally a consequence of, or intimately related to, political conflict, and, moreover, cannot be explained without reference to important differences in (political) power between the groups involved.

Although quite a few scholars of genocide have used the definition of the Convention in their own work and nearly all of them acknowledge the importance of an internationally accepted definition, others have therefore proposed various other definitions and conceptualizations. A few examples may suffice to illustrate this. According to two well-known authors in the field of genocide studies, Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, 'genocide' may well be defined as:

'(..) a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator.'⁶

Another senior scholar of genocide, Helen Fein, has asserted that 'genocide' is:

'(..) sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of the surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim.' ⁷

Yet another genocide scholar, Israel Charny, has proposed as a generic definition of 'genocide':

'(..) the mass killing of substantial numbers of human beings, when not in the course of military action against the military forces of an avowed enemy, under conditions of the essential defencelessness and helplessness of the victims.' ⁸

While yet another specialist in the field, Irving Louis Horowitz, defines 'genocide' briefly as:

'(..) a structural and systematic destruction of innocent people by a state bureaucratic apparatus.' ⁹

As an example of a currently common and non-specialist meaning of the term 'genocide' Webster's Third New International Dictionary can be quoted. Under the word 'genocide' it states that 'genocide' is:

'the use of deliberate systematic measures (as killing, bodily or mental injury, unliveable conditions, prevention of births) calculated to bring about the extermination of a racial, political, or cultural group or to destroy the language, religion, or culture of a group.' ¹⁰

Many other sources could be quoted but it will be clear from these examples that although all scholars tend to focus on massive destruction of innocent people and deliberate mass killing as the core meaning of the concept of 'genocide', they also emphasize different dimensions and draw attention to different aspects of the genocidal process as a whole.

In itself this diversity in views should be no reason for surprise. The general concept of 'genocide' refers to a whole range of specific cases of genocide in the real world, each consisting of (partly) different and quite complex events and developments in different countries and at different times, often difficult to understand and still harder to explain. And it would be very strange indeed if that complexity were not to be reflected in the use of the concept and the study and discussion of the phenomena concerned. Moreover, 'genocide' is far from a neutral concept, it is in fact highly loaded in human and moral, in political and juridical terms. Also, because various forms of massive violence and mass killing are central to it, many people tend to react to genocidal phenomena with strong feelings and strong opinions. And lastly, genocide is also a crime, punishable under international criminal law – in the eyes of many the most serious and heinous crime in human history. Hence perpetrators at all levels of responsibility usually do have a great interest in covering it up, keeping it secret, and in denying it, while on the other hand victims have a strong right to justice, and survivors rightfully claim acknowledgement of their fate and losses, and may expect some form of redress and justice. So it is no wonder that 'genocide' can be considered a strongly contested concept. It follows directly that studying genocide from a historical-sociological and comparative perspective calls for a careful use of the concept and for a conscious and sustained effort by scholars to maintain an appropriate balance between involvement and detachment.

Even though no single clear, unambiguous, and generally accepted definition of genocide exists, most definitions and conceptualizations contain important common elements. By focussing on these elements it is possible to arrive at a working and 'sensitizing' understanding of crimes of genocidal intent. Moreover, many in-depth studies of specific cases of genocide are available – especially about the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman-Turkish empire during the First World War; about the persecution and genocide of the Jews in Germany and elsewhere in Europe between 1933 and 1945; about the genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979; the genocidal events in Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995; and the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 – and in recent years quite a few comparative studies of genocide and genocidal processes have appeared. It seems possible to deduce from these studies some general insights into some of the main factors and causative forces which have contributed to genocidal policies and genocides in the past, and may possibly do so again in the future. These studies also shed light on the broader circumstances and conditions under which genocidal processes may develop. Thus it seems possible to give a rough sketch of the genesis of genocide.

2. War, civil war, and genocide

A first point on which nearly all authors agree is that genocide has to be carefully distinguished from war and civil war. War in the modern sense means a violent conflict between two or more sovereign states, primarily fought out between their armed forces. War may entail considerable numbers of military casualties. Because of the development of a practice of 'total war', especially during the World Wars in the 20th century, of which one of the consequences has been a blurring of the dividing line between combatants and non-combatants, it may also lead to large numbers of civilian victims. Military casualties and civilian victims of war are, however, usually not considered victims of genocide. The same holds true for civil war. Civil war implies a violent conflict between two or more armed and organized parties within a society formerly encompassed by one sovereign state organization. The American historical sociologist Charles Tilly has characterized such a situation as a situation of 'multiple sovereignty'.¹¹ Where before one sovereign state with one central monopoly on violence over the whole of the territory existed, there are now several armed parties within the same territory, embroiled in contestation over the state, each claiming its own monopoly on violence, while the previous central monopoly has fragmented and disintegrated. Civil war may also lead to considerable numbers of casualties among the fighting forces of the parties involved, and may also bring about many civilian deaths, either directly through acts of war, or through atrocities related to military action, but, again, this is usually not considered as genocide.

What distinguishes genocidal situations in principle from situations of war and civil war is that during genocides one party – the persecutors and perpetrators – is armed and organized to use force, while the other category – the persecuted and victims – is not armed nor organized to use force. Armed resistance is rare, and moreover usually crushed by the superior power of the perpetrators of the genocide. In genocidal situations the means of violence and the means of (military) organization are extremely unevenly distributed, and overwhelmingly concentrated on one side, that of the perpetrators.

These arguments are clearly reflected in several of the definitions quoted, especially those by Chalk and Jonassohn, Fein, and Charny. Genocide is not war, nor civil war, it is mostly a form of one-sided, not two- or more-sided, mass killing, the victims are essentially defenceless and helpless

against the power of the perpetrators, and even when they pose no threat, they are targeted for persecution, forcible uprooting, deportation, and potential and actual destruction.

Although most genocide scholars agree that genocide should be distinguished from war and civil war, they naturally recognize at the same time that situations of war or civil war may contribute in manifold and various ways to the development of genocidal situations and genocides.¹² For instance, (the threat of) war or civil war may provide an opportunity for genocide, while it may function also as a cloak and a rationale for genocide. Such has been very clearly the case with the Armenian and Jewish genocides, while it has also played a role in the Cambodian and Rwandan genocides.

3. Crisis and genocide

Although genocide has happened regularly in the history of humanity, it is a rather rare phenomenon and many genocide scholars have argued that genocide only occurs under conditions of serious, extended, and enduring crisis of the state-society concerned. That may be considered a second common element about which most authors agree: genocides happen during phases or episodes of grave crisis of and in a state-society.

Such crises result from interrelated previous international and domestic developments and forces; they flow from a fateful combination of long term developments and short term events; they develop more slowly or are brought about by quick and drastic changes; and they are primarily of a political and economic nature. Naturally, conditions of (threatening) war and civil war may contribute strongly to the development of such crises. One of the most important consequences is a serious and increasing destabilization of state and society, and in its wake a decreasing pacification of social relationships and a corresponding increase in the use of violence. Serious destabilization can assume many different forms and manifest itself in various ways, but the following aspects are among the most important.

Firstly, under conditions of increasing external and internal pressures governments, state organs, and other political and administrative institutions start functioning less well than previously. This may entail repeated changes in government and political regime, and rather quick changes in the functioning of the state, especially with regard to the organized forces of the monopoly on violence. The monopoly itself may be undermined or, for various reasons, seriously impaired. While political and economic problems multiply and increase, the state's ability to handle, let alone solve, them, decreases.

Secondly, destabilization will possibly also become manifest in increasingly sharper competition for political positions and power between various political elites, parties or groupings within the country. Destabilization then entails increasing polarization. While the functioning of the state organization and other political institutions deteriorates, the risk increases that relevant political elites stop accepting formerly legitimate restraints on their political behaviour and policies. They may then start to delegitimize the institutional order in various ways from within the state organs or from outside, they may try to reinforce their power base through populist mass mobilization, and, when the crisis deepens, they may even start considering the use of violence to reach their political aims, whatever these may be. If that happens, and political opponents start to threaten or even actually use force and violence against each other, serious depacification will set in which may manifest itself in political murders, violent street riots, terrorist attacks, violent mass

repression and other forms of political violence. Once the threshold of violence is crossed on a sufficiently large scale, the polarization process within a society will enter a new phase: it will become far more serious and massive, and it will become far more difficult to find a way back to more pacified conditions.

Thirdly, for the population at large, or considerable parts of it, the development of such a crisis and the ensuing destabilization will, among other things, lead to experiences and feelings of increasing tension, insecurity, and fear. These feelings may be brought about by drastically deteriorating economic circumstances – for instance, fast increasing unemployment, sudden loss of personal income, and increasing risks for personal property in money or goods. They may also be strongly enhanced once the state and the organized forces of the monopoly on violence – i.e. the police, the judiciary, and the armed forces – no longer seem able or willing to guarantee and actually maintain one's personal security and that of the groups to which one feels oneself to belong. The increasing competition between the main political elites may also play a role. Parts of the population will actively participate in the political mass mobilization, thereby they themselves will become part of the ongoing polarization process, which, among other things, increases the chances that they will start to see supporters of other political groupings within the country increasingly as 'enemies' instead of co-citizens. When that happens the polarization process will be propelled forward again. People will react differently to increasing material and physical insecurity, but for many the rising insecurity will also entail increasing mental disorientation and insecurity which may make more and more people more susceptible to radical political ideas, rhetoric, appeals, and promises on the part of radicalized political elites.

Some caveats are in place here. First, this developmental model of emerging crisis, serious destabilization, and increasing polarization between political elites and parts of the population is necessarily a very general one. How such developments have taken place in specific cases in the past is not under discussion here. Apart from historical differences between cases – which are usually quite considerable – the aim of this scenario is to point out broadly similar developments which may lead to potentially genocidal situations. Secondly, although the model points to several of the larger conditions and circumstances which may give rise to genocidal situations, it does not yet specify which causative forces are decisive for genocide to emerge.

4. Political leadership, the state and genocide

One such decisive factor, which might be considered a third common element about which genocide scholars generally agree, is the central and crucial importance of the political behaviour of the national political leadership of a state-society, and the political decisions it takes. Confronted with a serious crisis and the ensuing destabilization the various political elites, parties, and groupings in a country may pull together and try to weather the storm as best as they can. Historically, this has often happened in democracies under threat of war or during a serious economic crisis. But it is also possible that crisis and destabilization mainly result in further discord, division, and polarization among political elites and (politically mobilized) parts of the population. In such cases, it may so happen that after a period of increasing competition and strife, and usually by some combination of mass political mobilization, the use of violence, and backstairs political intrigues, one (part or faction of a) radical or radicalized political elite comes out on top, i.e. succeeds in getting hold of the highest political and administrative positions in the state organization.

Once in power at the level of the central state, such radical and ruthless politicians or political elites may then thoroughly corrupt the state organization, turn it into a de facto dictatorship, and make use of all the power resources of the state to realize their political aims. Genocide against certain groups within the population may be among these aims. Seen in this light, genocidal policies are deliberately decided upon by a political leadership, and genocides begin with political decisions at the highest level of the state.¹³

The decisive importance of political decisions by the central political authorities has been put in different words. Some scholars talk of genocide by 'a state or other authority' or by 'a state bureaucratic apparatus'. As Helen Fein has noted: 'Virtually everyone acknowledges that genocide is primarily a crime of state'.¹⁴ Other authors prefer to speak of 'the ruling elite', 'the political elite', 'the political establishment (governmental and non-governmental)', or 'the political leadership'.¹⁵ Where the one category of authors wants to emphasize the importance of the state organization (the bureaucracy and the organized forces of the monopoly on violence) for and during the implementation of a genocidal policy, the other category wants to underline that states are run by people, and that it is not so much the state as an institution or organization as such which should be seen as the origin of evil, but the way in which the state is used by certain political leaders, their lieutenants and underlings.

But however formulated, all authors in the field of genocide studies stress that the perception, the behaviour, and the decisions of the central political leadership are a decisive factor in the emergence of genocide. Genocide is not a spontaneous expression of communal hatreds, extending back over long periods of time – although these may exist, and may be kindled and fanned by political entrepreneurs and ideologues under certain circumstances. Nor does genocide flow from primeval popular emotions which a government or political elite is unable to control. In other words, genocide is not a phenomenon which develops from 'bottom up'. On the contrary: genocide, especially in its beginnings, is a 'top down' affair. As a 'structural' and 'systematic' series of forceful uprooting and violent events, deportations and massacres, over an extended area and during an extended period of time, involving large numbers of people as victims, and considerable numbers as perpetrators, it is only possible with knowledge, approval, and involvement of the state authorities.

Such approval and involvement may take different forms, best thought of as a continuum. It may be an overt, explicit, and public policy, resulting from (usually secret) strategic decisions by the highest authorities to reach certain political, ideological, or economic aims. But it may also be more covert, implicit, and secret. The actual perpetrators of genocide then act with the connivance, the complicity, and tacit approval of the state. It has been frequently observed that both forms may also follow upon each other. During a process of persecution and genocide several phases have been distinguished, by a so-called 'ideal-typical' method.¹⁶ First, the targeted group has to be defined; secondly, members of the group have to be segregated and expropriated; thirdly, they have to be concentrated; fourthly, they have to be deported; and lastly, significant numbers of them have to be killed. Although in reality these phases may quickly and closely follow each other, it has been observed that the earlier phases of the persecution process may take place quite publicly, while during the later phases secrecy becomes dominant. It has also been noted that the actual murder and killing – the 'ultimate' phase of a genocidal process – may be done by state agents, often special units of police and/or military personnel, put in a special position, exempted from the rule of law, and usually also from normal military discipline, but also by special auxiliary or paramilitary groups indirectly linked to the central state authority.

This third common element in the analyses of genocides implies several important corollaries. One is that in cases of genocide, whatever their specific character, the highest state authorities are always responsible for what takes place during the genocidal process. Or because of their direct active involvement in the forceful uprooting, deportation, and killing of people. Or because of secret and silent complicity. Or, (only hypothetically) because of not acting at all, thereby neglecting the rights and lives of considerable numbers of citizens, and in fact condoning the genocidal acts which take place.

Another corollary is that acts of genocide, perpetrated by individuals, small groups, units, bands, or gangs, cannot be understood and judged in themselves, separate from each other and in isolation as it were. On the contrary, such 'single' acts are better viewed and understood as part of the overall situation in the area or (part of) the country where they take place, within the larger whole of the prevalent power and authority structure. Specific cases of atrocities, massacres, rapes, and of material destruction, torture, and killing, can certainly be analyzed on their own, but they should always also be seen against the background of the larger authority and power structure. Because of decisions at the highest level, whether they take the form of explicit orders, or consist of 'silent' understandings, individuals and groups on middle (for instance regional) and lower (for instance local) levels have the opportunity, can acquire the means, and are given the impunity to act as they do. Moreover, they are often encouraged by current political rhetoric, and also rewarded in material terms. It is their place in the overall relevant hierarchy of power and authority which 'empowers' them, so to speak, to act ruthlessly and callously – and this hierarchy is not necessarily only of a strictly bureaucratic-administrative or military nature, it can also be more general and informal. Because of that 'empowerment' people can and will do things they would probably never consider doing if they had to bear individually the full responsibility for their own acts within 'normal' political and legal circumstances. These insights tie in with the next section.

5. The process of genocide, planning and 'division of labour'

In her definition of 'genocide' Helen Fein has stressed that genocide implies 'sustained action' by perpetrators. Genocide is not a separate event, nor one single act, it is more adequately conceptualized as a complex process in space and time: an interconnected series of many different acts by a considerable number of interdependent people, acting individually and in organized, collective forms. This is a fourth important common element in many analyses of genocides. The genocidal process is a string of patterned events, in which phases can be discerned, and which is characterized by a certain 'inner logic' of its own. Genocidal processes have a beginning, a structured course, and they come to an end under certain circumstances.

There are no spontaneous, accidental, or unintentional genocides. As noted in the previous section, the beginnings of a genocidal process originate in a decision or set of constituent decisions by the central political leadership of the state-society concerned. They decide to start a genocidal policy, though such a policy may take quite different forms. Such decisions are only very rarely put down in written form. Usually decisions are taken verbally and are subsequently often passed on to lower levels in the hierarchy in verbal form only. As genocide scholars have thoroughly demonstrated, perpetrators on all levels of responsibility typically use veiled language, masked terms and euphemisms – 'Sonderbehandlung' and 'ethnic cleansing' are just two examples – to conceal what their real intentions are, and what the actions ordered are really about. Silent understandings

play a prominent role here, and in various circumstances 'newcomers' to the job very quickly learn the language and the silences required. This veiled language not only serves to hide the operations from curious 'outsiders' and keep them as secret as possible, but also fulfills functions for the perpetrators themselves. By not clearly naming what is intended or actually going on, they may evade full awareness of their own actions, or might even believe that these actions (or their own part in it) are not 'quite real'. Moreover, with regard to the victims the language used may hide from them what is going to happen, and may also contribute to their dehumanization in the eyes of the perpetrators, for instance when human beings are called 'pieces' or 'packages', or when killing people is called 'special treatment' or simply 'work'.¹⁷ One might surmise that especially the central political leaders involved in the first phase of decision-making are well aware of the outrageous, extremist, and deeply criminal nature of their decisions.

The first decisions to launch a genocidal policy and the first orders to sub-top and middle level functionaries – whether they are administrative, military, or police officials, or paramilitary leaders – are not only usually verbal, but may also very well be couched in fairly general terms. To put it bluntly: genocide is about getting rid of (certain categories of) people, is about doing away with 'them', and the overall strategic decision might well be just that statement. Certain people have to be excluded and ousted out of one's state, society, country, territory; out of one's village, town, or city; out of one's area, province, or region. And the first generic strategic decision may consist of only two elements: the rough delineation of the target group or category ('Armenians', 'Jews', 'Tutsis', 'Bosnian Muslims', 'kulaks'), and the outspoken desire or order to get rid of 'them'. How the target group (or groups) is (or are) precisely defined, categorized, delineated, and marked off; which specific measures will be applied; which means will be used to get rid of them; when, where, how, and at what pace over which areas this should and will be done, is usually left to special trusted plenipotentiaries or authorized agents. It is they who work out more precise preparation and planning, thereby activating various sorts of (state) agencies and organs and possibly also private businesses and organizations to take part in the whole undertaking. They in their turn usually also select their own trusted lieutenants, underlings, and lower level personnel, who will have to carry out the dirty work if it comes to that at some later date.

This sheds some light on preparation and planning with regard to genocide. At the time of the first generic decision(s), there may be some very general, vague, and often highly fantasy-laden ideas about how to proceed. At most, these ideas point in a certain general direction: (forced) emigration, other ways to drive members of the targeted group away, depopulation measures, forms of serious negative discrimination, unspecified 'forceful' measures, etcetera. But there is usually no detailed and 'realistic' plan, no step by step scenario, let alone a blueprint, of how to proceed to get rid of certain categories of people. Detailed preparation and planning typically start to take shape only after the general policy decision(s) has been taken. Planning evolves through time, between several responsible authorized agents and (parts of) organizations at various levels, including cooperation and competition, and with all the problems of coordination which are typical for any large scale undertaking. Every agent and organization involved has a certain relative autonomy, a certain latitude in planning and acting, which will sometimes lead to close cooperation, but which at other times may bring about strife and stubborn conflicts. Planning also evolves through 'learning by doing', and so perpetrators go forward step by step, and also by leaps and bounds, to realize their aims, selecting and keeping 'successful' means and methods, and dropping 'unsuccessful' ways and means.

And so the genocidal process gets into gear, leaving the initial and incipient phase, and progressing through planning and the first concerted efforts to put plans into practice, toward a next phase during which it becomes more and more a reality, steered, organized, and more or less coordinated. As genocide scholars have shown, genocidal acts and proceedings will then also become routinized fairly quickly. Planning becomes more and more intense, implementation and practical experience grow, means and methods will be systematically applied, and what perhaps seemed at first incidental forceful measures and single massacres will then, so to speak, 'condense' into genocide: the systematic and ultimately violent persecution of certain categories within the population. In a way, genocides gather speed like flywheels. In the beginning quite some energy and efforts are required to get them going, but once the first phase is past, they may spin faster and faster till they are at maximum speed and continue running smoothly. This does not imply that no more 'obstacles' and 'difficulties' will surface during the genocidal process, but they will in all probability be 'solved', and the process as a whole acquires its own structural dynamics, to which all involved – perpetrators and victims, albeit in quite different ways – become more or less bound.

With regard to the perpetrators, an analogy might be drawn with a group of people entering upon a 'normal' criminal career. One crime may lead to another, more serious crime, which leads to a third, even more serious one, and so on. The people involved will get deeper and deeper into criminal affairs, they will know about each other's doings, and because recourse to the law will become increasingly impossible, mutual trust and distrust among them will become very important for the continuation of their business, and, with heavy crime, probably also for staying alive. In the course of such a process they will become each other's accomplices, and it will then become more and more difficult for anyone among them to opt out. Opting out may even be punished by death. The more serious the crimes, the more strongly the mutual social compulsion among the perpetrators will be, and the smaller the chances for 'a way back', individually and collectively.

This also has some bearing on the end of genocidal processes. Once under way, they will seldom or never be stopped by the same people who set them in motion. There may be some slackening, there may be delays, or even temporary halts for a variety of reasons and depending on various circumstances and conditions, but in most cases genocidal processes have only been definitively stopped by forceful outside military intervention. The Armenian genocide only came to an end in 1918 when Turkey had lost the war; the Jewish genocide only ended when the Allied Powers had completely conquered Germany, and the National-Socialist genocidal regime was finally defeated. The genocidal practices in Cambodia were largely ended once the Vietnamese army successfully invaded the country and the genocide in Rwanda only stopped after the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) had conquered a large part of the country, including the capital. As these examples show, genocidal practices are rarely stopped by 'internal' forces, but most often by 'external' forces, and then usually at great costs to those who ultimately intervene.

A last point in this section is concerned with the 'division of labour' among the perpetrators of genocide at different levels. Genocide scholars have shown that it is quite usual that the central political leadership, the top-level decision makers, indeed do only just that. Apart from general decisions, they usually do not take part in further planning and preparation, nor do they actively participate in the actual execution of their general orders 'in the field', so to speak. They do not personally humiliate, terrorize, rape, uproot, deport, torture and kill members of the target group(s). Only very seldom do they witness such events directly. Although they are undoubtedly well informed, in verbal and sometimes also in written form, by their adjutants and deputies about the course of specific genocidal actions and the overall genocidal process, they take no further direct

part. Their part in the genocidal process is mainly: indicating the general direction, initiating in general terms, opening up of possibilities, and providing legitimation and means in a broad sense, all through the authority of their own position and acknowledged leadership. And naturally, they may also incite people, publicly and in private, to despise and hate (members of) the target group, and to be prepared to take 'action' against them, thereby contributing to the development of a (potentially) genocidal situation.

The same may be largely true of the sub top and middle levels in the state and other organizations involved in the genocidal process. Middle level officials and functionaries are more closely involved, but may still manage to stay largely out of the last phase of the process. In that last phase regional and local commanders, and lower administrative, military, police, and paramilitary personnel will do the active dirty executionary 'work', right down to the actual uprooting, terrorizing, humiliating, deporting, raping, torturing, and killing of people.

The obvious paradox is that those with the greatest influence on the process as a whole – for originating, starting, preparing, planning, and generally directing it – are not the ones who execute the required violence, while those who do act violently have usually very much less to do with preparations, planning, and coordination – their 'job' being mostly exclusively at the executionary level. While the latter may be caught red-handed, the former, those behind the scenes, bear no doubt a greater responsibility for the genocidal policy and process, but they are – in most historical cases up till recently – often not caught at all.¹⁸

Notwithstanding this intricate 'division of labour' within the category of perpetrators, and the relative autonomy (nearly) each and everyone of them has, all the perpetrators on the different levels are bound together by a more or less shared sense of purpose, intent, and direction: to get rid of the 'undesirables'. To do so certainly requires superior power, but power, organization, and adequate means of violence by themselves are not enough. Nearly all historical and sociological studies on genocide point to the importance of some common and shared form of ideology.

6. Genocide and ideology

Most genocide scholars agree that ideology plays a major role in genocide and should be seen as an important causative force – this is a fifth common element and insight. To be sure, a genocidal policy is decided upon by certain people, central powerholders within the state, and a genocidal process is initiated, launched, and maintained by them in cooperation with many others in different sectors and on different levels of the state-society. Genocide consists of interrelated and sustained hostile acts by particular human beings against certain categories of other human beings. But how people act and why they act in the specific ways they do, is for a large part determined and shaped by their culture and civilization in a broad sense, and by the ideology they adhere to in a more narrow sense.

The general concept of 'ideology' is quite complex and has a variety of meanings, but the anthropologist Clifford Geertz has coined a meaning which may contribute to clarification at this point.¹⁹ According to him, 'ideology' is best seen as a means of orientation: a set of more or less coherent ideas which enable people to make sense of the often opaque social reality around them, and enables them to act in that reality in ways they may then consider significant. An ideology usually contains a diagnosis and a therapy, a model of the world and a model for the world. It tells people something about the present state of affairs in their society (and often also in the world at

large), and it tells them how to act to bring about a more desirable state of affairs in the future. It gives direction and meaning, and it enables people to make sense of a social reality which is often hard to understand and may also be threatening, especially in uncertain times. Correspondingly, the need for (new) ideology generally increases when state-societies enter periods of encompassing political, economic, and social change, for instance, in times of serious crisis, revolution or (civil) war, when many new phenomena and developments may appear, when social relationships in a society undergo fundamental change, and older ways of giving meaning and purpose to action seem to lose their value or may actually become quickly obsolete.

Now, as has been argued in section 3 above, genocides occur during episodes of grave and enduring crisis. During the ongoing destabilization, polarization, and increasing depacification, the different contending politicians and political elites will make use of ideas and ideologies to strengthen and legitimate their own power positions, to mobilize supporters, and to point out the directions in which they think actions and developments should go. They themselves may sincerely believe in the ideology they propagate, but they may also use ideas in a more cynical way, just because they believe they will help them to attain their aims – acquiring (more) power or staying in power, for instance. However, they will use ideas as they see fit, regardless of their truth-value, and above all aiming at arousing, preferably passionate, support for themselves and their policies.

The ideologies invoked may initially span the whole spectrum of available political ideas, but as the crisis deepens and the polarization process goes on, more moderate and reasonable ideas (and the politicians who propagate them) will inevitably lose out, while more radical ideas (and their protagonists) will gain influence. The political and social middle ground will then increasingly disappear.²⁰

Among the radical ideologies varieties of nationalism will figure prominently. This is partly because the crisis is perceived as being of ‘national’ proportions, partly because nationalism as an ideology can have a very broad appeal for people of all sectors, layers and classes in society, partly because of a ‘natural affinity’ between nationalism and (a claim on) central political (and military) leadership, and also because nationalist ideology provides plenty of opportunities to play on individual and collective feelings of pride, identity, and meaning among the population at large. Of the many varieties of nationalism, which commonly range from moderate patriotism and civil nationalism on the one hand to radical and sometimes extremist (racist) ethno-cultural nationalism on the other, the latter often becomes dominant, albeit temporarily. The long-term process of nation-formation is, among other things, a process of social inclusion and exclusion, and likewise radical nationalism is an ideology of inclusion and exclusion, and, ultimately, an ideology of defense and attack.²¹ In a situation of serious crisis, as indicated earlier, the radical nationalist ideological diagnosis will in any case contain a general ‘definition of the situation’, a rough, positive delineation of the ‘we-group’ and a, usually strongly negative, definition of those who as ‘enemies’ are held responsible for the situation in which the nation supposedly finds itself. Furthermore, the diagnosis will also point to a therapy. Typically, rhetoric is used and promises are made that the nation will be saved and redeemed when everybody devotes himself to the ‘right’ cause, when the nation will be purified from ‘alien elements’, and internal and external foes and enemies will be defeated. Whatever the specific circumstances and conditions, the classic nationalist credo of political autonomy, national unity, and a supposedly homogeneous, collective cultural identity will be emphasized.

The radical nationalist ‘definition of the situation’ usually consists of an outline of the ongoing crisis which comes down to the idea that the nation is slighted and discriminated against by

others, that it has experienced unjustified losses of power and prestige in the (recent) past, and that it is threatened by even more serious losses in the near future. It will be argued that its vital interests, its security, and also its pride, identity and meaning, are at stake, and maybe even its sheer physical existence. Moreover, all this has come about through no fault of its own. The national 'we-group' is most often depicted as consisting of honest, hard-working, and upright people, who always did their duty and want nothing more than their fair share of the cake, but who are harmed and threatened in unwarranted ways by supposedly powerful others. Although part of this diagnosis may be realistic, it is usually a mix of historical facts, half-truths, myth-making, and feelings of resentment, which may strongly appeal to many people who find themselves in such a crisis. The nationalist ideology 'explains' to them what is going on, it offers them a framework to understand their individual and collective historical and present fate, and for people who embrace the nationalist perspective possibilities for meaningful and purposeful action are opened up.

It is here that such collective belief systems may become dangerous for certain 'they-groups', 'others' who are not seen as belonging to the 'we-group', but, on the contrary, who under the pressure of the ongoing crisis are increasingly defined as reprehensible, despicable, and blameworthy enemies. Strong identification with one's own group may then easily go hand in hand with strong disidentification with (members of) other groups, and with 'traitors' in one's own ranks. Collective belief systems may give rise to collective hate fantasies, which astute politicians can channel into various forms of collective action and in policies directed against the supposedly threatening 'enemies', whoever they may be and however they may be delineated. It is here also that the connections between such radical ideology, genocidal policies, and genocides lie.

From an ideologically extremist viewpoint supposedly threatening people, minorities, or otherwise delineated categories or groups in the population as a whole should be attacked. Because they are imagined as absolute evil, as the root cause of all the problems, and as posing a grave threat to the further existence and flowering of the nation, all measures against them are permitted. Moreover, because they are depicted as the epitome of evil, they are to a high degree dehumanized, and placed beyond the boundaries of the universe of common human moral obligation. They are outlawed in the widest sense possible, and should be excluded, terrorized, expropriated, uprooted, ousted, driven out and away, and ultimately, in the most extreme cases, killed. To be sure, in reality the individuals and groups targeted most often pose no or hardly any threat at all to, let alone that they are responsible for the problems with which the nation may be confronted, or embody absolute evil. The point is, however, that once radical political leadership imagines them to be so, and considerable parts of the population come to share this belief, often reinforced by vigorous vilifying propaganda campaigns, the outcome may be disastrous. As sociologists have often observed, quoting their colleague W. Thomas: 'if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences'. Under such circumstances, political leaders who initiate genocidal policies, and active participants in genocidal processes at all levels of responsibility, may actually feel that they are doing the right thing, that they are rendering an important service to their nation. They may even be proud of what they are doing or have done – however horrible in the eyes of others – and may also afterwards show no sign of any remorse.

The foregoing argument does not imply that all those who are involved in launching a genocidal policy or who take part as active perpetrators in a genocidal process are exclusively motivated and driven on by an extremely nationalist persuasion, nor does it imply that all perpetrators personally feel a deep hatred towards all members of the targeted group(s). Studies on perpetrators in different cases have shown that people may take part in a genocidal process for

multifarious reasons and motives. But the argument does imply that radical ideology plays a large part in contributing to the development of a generally extremist political climate and to clearing the ground for a potentially genocidal situation. When it actually comes to genocidal acts, the ideology furthermore functions continuously as the ultimate legitimation, rationalization, and justification of the genocidal process. And, lastly, the ideology imparts to all perpetrators in a process of genocide a general, more or less shared sense of direction, meaning, intent and purpose. Whatever their personal motivations, thoughts and feelings may be, they are all inextricably bound up with a complex collective undertaking and they try to make it succeed: to persecute and get rid of certain categories of people, considered as undesirable.

7. Victims

In this sketch of the genesis of genocide the focus so far has been mainly on the perpetrators at different levels. And with good reason: without them there would be no genocidal policy and no genocidal process. Many historians and others in the field of genocide studies have however emphasized that it is also necessary and important to look at the genocidal process from the perspective of the victims. As a sixth common element on which all genocide scholars agree, one may state that victims are generally exclusively chosen because of their supposed membership of a group or a category targeted for persecution and destruction. They do not become victims of persecution and genocide for anything they have personally done or intend to do, nor because they are guilty of any crime or misdemeanour, nor because they pose any threat. One might even say that their individual behaviour, their individual identity, and their own individual self-perception and self-definition are largely irrelevant.²² What counts in being selected as a victim is that specific individual people are perceived and defined by hostile others – the persecutors – to be members of a group or category which they consider reprehensible and despicable. The existence of such a group or category itself may be largely the product of the imagination of the hostile others, and usually many characteristics they ascribe to the group are wholly imaginary, flowing from their own collective hate fantasies.

For instance, preceding the genocidal campaign against the Armenians which started in the spring of 1915, they were collectively declared to form a mortal threat to the security of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire at war. Moreover, they were accused of having enriched themselves at the cost of the Turks, they were blamed, alternately, with the secret desire to rule over the Turkish people or to form their own sovereign state on Ottoman territory, and, lastly, they were accused of encouraging the enemies of the Empire. Such views tied in neatly with far older, wide-spread and strongly negative Turkish and Islamic prejudices and stereotypes with regard to Armenians in which they were for example depicted as ‘sly, untrustworthy and despicable christians’, as ‘ghiaours’ (an Arabic term, meaning: unbelievers who deserve to be killed), and as ‘the cattle of the sultan’.²³ During the persecution of the German Jews in Germany between 1933 and 1939, official antisemite propaganda campaigns endlessly reiterated that all people from Jewish descent formed an interconnected community which was, moreover, continuously conspiring against the German people and the German state, that every Jew formed part of this community, that being Jewish was the most important, indeed the only important, characteristic of the individual people involved – the quintessential ‘master-trait’ so to speak, and that all and everything Jewish was synonymous with all conceivable historical and contemporary evil.²⁴

Notwithstanding the completely untenable and evidently magical ways of perceiving, thinking and reasoning about individual human beings and their relations to larger groupings and categories, genocide scholars have frequently noted that such and similar ways of perceiving and reasoning are in fact very widespread and have played an important role in virtually every genocidal process. During such processes individuals are exclusively reduced to their supposed membership of a group or category, and because the group or category is perceived as deeply evil, declared to be collectively guilty, and collectively condemned, individuals may be and are persecuted and destroyed.

Social scientists and historians who study processes of persecution and genocide have also pointed out several other regularities and mechanisms in this context. It has been observed frequently, for instance, that the group(s) targeted for persecution is (are) often vulnerable. It has also been argued that that vulnerability may even be one of the main reasons why they are targeted. A group which is not very powerful from the outset is certainly an easier prey for attack than a group that is well entrenched in society, influential and powerful. However, it is not so much that victims are relatively powerless and helpless right from the start, but they are made increasingly vulnerable and defenseless by and through the persecution process itself, that is: by the powers and people sustaining that process.

It should be underlined that the measures of forcibly uprooting people, forceful separation of families and households, and mass deportation of people to unknown destinations, which are part and parcel of nearly every genocidal process, in and by themselves go a very long way to making people powerless and extremely vulnerable. By forcefully breaking up the existing social relationships within the group and deeply disturbing its normal social life through the use of violence, they also go a very long way towards the actual destruction of the group. For the people involved such measures invariably imply catastrophic experiences and very serious harm. For those who survive it is usually very hard or well-nigh impossible to recover.

Genocide scholars have also noted as a regularity that processes of persecution and genocide tend to take (large parts of) the targeted group(s) by surprise. Especially at the beginning of such a process it is often very difficult for the potential victims to discern what is going on, but also later on, when the process is well under way and up to a point more visible, it may remain quite hard for many members of the targeted group(s) to understand and realize what is going to happen. Obviously, this is precisely what the perpetrators are out for. By keeping their real intentions secret, by consciously hiding their planning and preparations as much as possible, by all sorts of tactics of deliberate misleading and deceiving of (members of) the targeted group(s) during the process of persecution, they try to maximize the surprise effects of their actions, to disempower the victims, raise the overall uncertainty and insecurity of the victims, and thus realize their aims. But even apart from all these deliberate and premeditated activities from the side of the perpetrators, it remains difficult for many victims to foresee what hostile others are planning to do to them. Nobody can look into the future, reliable information is often difficult to come by, even more so in uncertain times, and victims most often live between hope and fear. Moreover, it is probably very hard for most people to fully realize that one's own government and one's own state is aiming at the complete and total destruction of one's life, of one's family and relatives, and the larger group or category one may feel to belong to. However, even for those who more or less correctly foresee what is in store for them, the possible courses of action are usually limited.

More or less suddenly confronted with (the threat of) organized, armed – and thus powerful – others with hostile intentions, there are basically only three ways in which people can react. They

may try to hide or flee, they may put up some form of resistance or even a fight, or they may try to accommodate as best as they can to the then usually very fast and fundamentally changing circumstances and conditions.

Regarding the first option, sociologists and historians have more than once pointed out that for hiding in cities, towns, or villages, potential victims need to have trustworthy and reliable friends or other relations outside the targeted group, who moreover have the means, and are ready and willing to take the risk of hiding people who are wanted by the authorities. In virtually every case of persecution and genocide, rendering help or assistance to the people targeted has been strictly forbidden and often been severely punished. Considerable amounts of money may also be required to pay for a more or less safe hiding place. When people can take to the hills, the mountains or the woods, to hide out there, they will after some time need at least some outside support for food and other necessities of life. And in all cases there is the perpetual risk of betrayal. Trying to flee entails other difficulties, as among other things financial means, safe transport, unharmed travelling, and suitable sites to leave the country are required. When large groups among the population are hostile towards members of the targeted group, fleeing will be dangerous. Moreover, in all cases drastic decisions have to be made, usually within a short period of time. Because of these problems hiding is often only possible for a tiny minority of the targeted group, and whether fleeing is an option for larger groups very much depends on the overall situation.

The second option, to resist or to fight, is even more exceptional. As has been noted before, the targeted group is normally not armed nor organized to use force, and the perpetrators, who are prepared, organized, and armed, typically suddenly descend upon them. Whether this takes the form of large scale arrests, followed by detention, and subsequent deportation, or the form of destructive violent attacks or raids on neighbourhoods, towns, villages or hamlets, in all cases units of police, military, or paramilitary personnel will rather easily be able to dominate the situation. In such situations things will move fast, many people will be terrified and at a loss, and thereby paralysed, and most people will do as they are told. It should be concluded that given the overwhelming inequality in power between the persecutors and the victims, the option of resisting or fighting is rarely a possible course of action for most members of the targeted group(s).

The third course of action, trying to accommodate as best as one can to changing conditions and circumstances, is thus the one most often followed by most members of the targeted group(s) when they are directly confronted with acts of persecution. It should be emphasized that this option is not freely chosen by people, but that they act that way under strong and continuous compulsion and coercion by hostile others, backed up by serious threats and acts of physical violence. An important general consequence is that the persecuted, individually and collectively, then suffer a further severe loss of their relative autonomy, of their liberty and freedom to act according to their own will. Although there will be differences here between individuals and groups among the persecuted, depending on the specific circumstances, nearly all of them will become more vulnerable, and that vulnerability in itself may be taken advantage of by the persecutors to act even more callously. But however the persecuted and victims may behave, their behaviour can hardly be judged in the 'normal' terms of personal choice, responsibility, and morality, because under the extreme conditions of violent persecution these terms no longer apply.

What happens to the victims of persecution once they are caught in person by the persecutors, may vary quite considerably. They may be detained for shorter or longer periods in temporary detention centers, prisons, improvised or highly organized concentration camps, or locked up in ghettos or city neighbourhoods. They may be forced to different forms of hard labour in cities,

camps, or rural areas. They may be deported in various forms and under varying circumstances, on foot, by train, in buses or lorries, or aboard ships. In single transports of deportees they may be ambushed, plundered and (repeatedly) terrorized by rape, torture, wounding and murdering, or endlessly sent on from destination to destination. They may be directly killed in improvised or organized massacres on the spot, or on special killing fields nearby or further away. Or that may happen later on in death camps or at other places. And there are many different ways of destroying and killing people.

It is especially by trying to imagine the fate of the victims, not only in general terms but also in all their horrible details, that one may hope to grasp the real meaning of processes of persecution and genocide.

8. Summary and discussion

As noted earlier, the meaning of the concept of 'genocide' is not yet fixed, still relatively open, and in development. At present a broad, open, comparative, and processual historical-sociological approach to the phenomenon and the concept seems preferable. Further development towards a better understanding may come from the efforts of the scholarly community and the gradually growing jurisprudence about genocide.

A helpful tool to detect and trace genocides in the past as well as at present has been developed by Helen Fein. She argues that basically five conditions may enable one to speak of a 'genocidal policy' or of 'genocide'. In a nutshell: there is a continuity of attacks by perpetrators to destroy group members; the perpetrators are a collective or organized actor; victims are selected because they are members of a group; victims are defenseless and are killed regardless of whether they surrender or resist; the destruction is undertaken with intent to destroy and the mass-murder is sanctioned by the perpetrators.²⁵ Furthermore, Fein has identified two conditions – also emphasized in this article – that may reinforce genocide: firstly, the absence of sanctions against killing, or the failure to enforce them, and, secondly, the presence of ideologies and beliefs legitimating genocide. When these conditions largely apply in specific cases one may speak of genocide. It follows that the best, albeit relative, protection of a society against genocide resides in a well functioning constitutional state organization, a working system of democracy, and a stable monopoly on violence which operates according to the law.

In the preceding pages it has been argued, firstly, that genocide should be carefully distinguished from war and civil war, while at the same time one should recognize that situations of war or civil war may contribute in various ways to the development of genocidal processes. Secondly, it has been pointed out that genocide only takes place under conditions of grave and enduring crisis. A general model of the emergence of such crises has been presented in a very condensed form. Destabilization, polarization, depacification, and increasing use of violence are at the heart of such crises. Thirdly, in the course of the crisis a radical and ruthless political elite may succeed in taking over the state organization. The political behaviour and decisions of this political leadership may be considered of decisive importance for the emergence of genocide. It has been argued that a genocidal process does not develop from 'bottom up', but that it is typically a 'top down' development, although the precise involvement of the state may take different forms. One corollary is that the highest state authorities are always responsible for what happens during the genocidal process, another corollary implies that 'single' acts of genocide should be (also) considered against

the background of the prevalent power and authority structure. Fourthly, it has been emphasized that genocide is a complex process, with a beginning, a structured course in which phases can be discerned, and an end – usually brought about by forceful external intervention. Furthermore, in trying to understand a genocidal process attention should be paid to the decision-making, the gradual emergence of planning and organization, and the division of labour within the category of perpetrators. Fifthly, it has been argued that ideology is also of crucial importance for genocide to emerge. Radical ideologies, including radical nationalism, contribute to the development of an extremist political climate; to the marking off of the groups or categories to be targeted; they legitimize, rationalize, and justify the genocidal process; and impart to the perpetrators a sense of direction, intent and purpose. Sixthly, it has been underlined that every genocidal process should also be considered from the angle of the victims, who are typically chosen because of their supposed membership of a group or category targeted for persecution. It has been argued, moreover, that such groups are made increasingly vulnerable and defenceless through the process of persecution, that it is usually very difficult for them to foresee what is going to happen, and that their possible courses of (re)action are severely limited. Keeping their fate central in one's mind seems to be the best compass when studying, assessing and judging genocides.

At present, the interdisciplinary field of genocide studies is growing apace. Over the next decades many more detailed historical and empirical studies will appear about different specific cases of genocide in many parts of the world. A better understanding of genocide, greater insight in its genesis and dynamics, and better explanations of its occurrence will probably flow from more comparative historical-sociological work. Hopefully, empirical and theoretical progress in the field will in the longer run also contribute to more and better prevention of the great evil that genocide is.

¹ See for recent discussions: Alex Alvarez, *Governments, Citizens and Genocide. A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Approach*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 28-55; Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide. Utopias of Race and Nation*, (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 8-15; Steven L.B. Jensen (ed.), *Genocide: Cases, Comparisons and Contemporary Debates*, (Copenhagen: The Danish Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, 2003); and Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

² Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), p. 79.

³ Raphael Lemkin, "Genocide as a Crime Under International Law", *American Journal of International Law*, 41 (1947), p. 147.

⁴ Weitz (2003), op.cit., p. 9.

⁵ Leo Kuper, *Genocide. Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), pp. 19-39, esp. p. 24.

⁶ Frank Chalk & Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide. Analyses and Case Studies*, (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, in cooperation with the Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies, 1990), p. 23.

⁷ Helen Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*, (London: Sage Publications, 1993), p. 24.

⁸ Israel Charny, "Toward a Generic Definition of Genocide", in: George J. Andreopolis (ed.), *Genocide: Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), p. 66.

⁹ Irving Louis Horowitz, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1997, 4th ed.), p. 21.

¹⁰ Merriam-Webster, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language. Unabridged*, (Cologne: Könemann, 1993), p. 947.

¹¹ Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp. 189-222.

¹² See for instance Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst. The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation*, (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

¹³ It has been argued that while established and functioning democracies have shown themselves to be immune against genocide up till now, there is a strong correlation between radical dictatorships, be they right-wing or left-wing, and genocide. Cf. Barbara Harff & Ted Robert Gurr, "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945", *International Studies Quarterly*, (1988), 32, pp. 359-371; Helen Fein, "Accounting for Genocide after 1945: Theories and Some Findings", *International Journal on Group Rights*, (1993), 1, pp. 79-106; Robert F. Melson, *Revolution and Genocide. On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and The Holocaust*, (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

¹⁴ Fein, *Genocide* (1993), p. 12.

¹⁵ For instance, Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia. The Policy of 'Ethnic Cleansing'*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), pp. 6-7.

¹⁶ For instance in Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1984 (1961)), pp. 31-32.

¹⁷ Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors. Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, (London: Macmillan, 1986); Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil. The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*, (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹⁸ Leo Kuper, *The Prevention of Genocide*, (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 173-194.

¹⁹ Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System", in: id., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 193-233. For specific studies of cultural aspects of genocide, see Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference. The Anthropology of Genocide*, (Berkeley/London: University of California Press, 2002).

²⁰ Cf. Leo Kuper, *The Pity of It All. Polarisation of Racial and Ethnic Relations*, (London: Duckworth, 1977).

²¹ Cf. Ton Zwaan, *Civilisering en decivilisering. Studies over staatsvorming en geweld, nationalisme en vervolging, (Civilization and Decivilization. Studies on State Formation and Violence, Nationalism and Persecution)*, (Amsterdam: Boom, 2001), pp. 86-105.

²² Alvarez (2001), op.cit., p. 48; Eric Markusen, "Genocide and Total War", in: Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski, (eds.), *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), p. 101.

²³ Melson (1992), op.cit.; Zwaan (2001), op.cit., pp. 198-258.

²⁴ Zwaan (2001), op.cit., pp. 292-293.

²⁵ Fein (1993), op.cit., pp. 25-27.