Terrorism and Political Violence

"Destroy Them to Save Us": Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence

Scott Straus [a]

[a] Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison,
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

"Destroy Them to Save Us": Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence

SCOTT STRAUS

Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Based on an analytic review of recent scholarly advances in genocide studies, this article investigates the causes, concept, and logic of genocide while suggesting a set of theoretical propositions and avenues for future research. Two emerging theoretical streams of literature on causes—strategic and ideological—highlight different dimensions of genocide and should be thought of as compatible. The study of genocide should be embedded in a broader study of political violence; the two literatures have been strangely cloistered from each other. To that end, genocide should be conceptualized as group-selective, large-scale violence whose purpose is group destruction. This stands in contrast to violence that is individually selective or indiscriminate; small-scale and not sustained across time and space; and whose purpose is repression, communication, or some other outcome short of group destruction. To develop existing theory and to bring the study of genocide closer to the literature on violence, studying variation in outcomes is essential; that is, students of genocide should ask why genocide and not another outcome occurs, rather than only studying common patterns among genocide cases. Similarly, rather than study primarily sources of escalation and accelerators of violence, scholars should also theorize restraint and decelerators of violence. Further, scholars of genocide should focus attention on the interaction between national and sub-national actors as well as periods of escalation or de-escalation. In these ways and others proposed in the essay, genocide studies can build on recent gains and develop a broader and more coherent field of theoretical inquiry.

Keywords conflict processes, constraint, genocide, ideology, local actors, mass killing, negative cases, periodization, political violence

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the study of genocide and other forms of mass violence against civilians has become more common and more sophisticated. The

growth of research on genocide is not isolated, and indeed it closely resembles growing interest in the related areas of political violence and human rights. Before the 1990s, there existed few social scientific and historical analyses of genocide as such (beyond the specific case of the Holocaust). Today studies of genocide are found at most major university presses, in many flagship journals, and at high-profile academic conferences. The Oxford University Press even recently released a trademark *Handbook of Genocide Studies*.[1] Two scholarly associations on the study of genocide now exist, each with an associated peer-reviewed journal; several universities have created academic centers devoted to the study of genocide (or to Holocaust and genocide studies). There has been rapid growth in undergraduate academic courses taught on the subject, as well as growing interest in policymaking communities on the prevention and punishment of genocide and related atrocities.[2] In short, the end of the Cold War has produced significantly greater legitimacy and intellectual ferment around the study of genocide.

The research gains are real. Overall, the area of research called "genocide studies" is more theoretical, more comparative, and more systematic than ever before. While the Holocaust still dominates by a huge margin the empirical material available on any single case of genocide, detailed, micro-level, theoretically-oriented studies now exist for a number of other important cases, ranging from East Timor,[3] to Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge,[4] to the Armenian genocide,[5] to Rwanda.[6] Other promising theory-oriented studies, for example on Guatemala, are in the works.[7] Qualitative and quantitative comparative analyses have similarly soared in number, and, with that growth, theories of genocide have multiplied. The net impact is an increasingly vibrant area of scholarly inquiry.

However, all is not well in genocide studies. For theory-oriented scholarly studies of the phenomenon to continue to advance, taking stock of the gains while being attentive to lingering obstacles and unanswered questions remains crucial. Such is the main purpose of the article. In addition to surveying and synthesizing the existing literature with a focus on research during the past decade, the article explicates a series of related shortcomings with the existing state of research; the article also generates a series of theoretical propositions.

At least five major questions remain underdeveloped in theoretical studies of genocide. First, is the field moving kaleidoscopically toward disparate theorization or is it converging on key points of consensus? Second, what explains variation among countries at risk of genocide? Why do some situations that have the theoretical ingredients of genocide result in genocide while others do not? Third, what are the main causal mechanisms that link certain identified structural conditions to the outcome of genocide? Fourth, what is the causal "logic" of genocide? Why is genocide and not another outcome the strategic or policy choice of leaders? And finally, how is genocide related to other forms of political violence? There is a pervasive tension about whether to isolate a conceptual distinctiveness to genocide (or a related term such as "murderous ethnic cleansing,"[8] "mass killing,"[9] "mass violence,"[10] or "politicide."[11] However, no matter how that question is resolved, genocide studies has been strangely and unproductively cloistered from the study of other forms of political violence. Addressing these five questions is essential for progressing theoretical studies of genocide.

The article is divided into three sections. First, the article summarizes the main research trajectories and findings that have appeared during the last decade and contrasts those with earlier sets of arguments. The main conclusion is that the intensive

study of genocide has yielded two main clusters of findings and arguments, around war and ideology respectively, as well as several other important insights. I argue that the two main theoretical paradigms are compatible, rather than contradictory, and that each provides theoretical insight into different dimensions of genocide. Second, the article asks whether and how genocide is empirically and theoretically distinct from other forms of political violence. The analysis begins with a conceptual discussion, followed by a discussion of the causal logic of genocide. In both cases, the analysis draws out theoretical and observable implications concerning the nature of genocide, especially in comparison to other forms of political violence. Third, the article identifies three other areas for theoretical improvement that are largely missing from the existing literature: the importance of examining variation and negative cases; the importance of examining the interaction between national and sub-national actors; and the importance of studying over-time variation and periodization.

Recent Findings and Arguments in the Study of Genocide

Ask a non-specialist about why genocide happens and the most likely answer would be some combination of hatred, totalitarianism, and scapegoating. These analytic themes tie quite closely to what might be called a "first generation" of comparative research on genocide, a set of arguments for which the Holocaust served as an analytic center of gravity.[12] To explain the foundations of genocide, early theorists variously emphasized intergroup prejudice and divisions;[13] a concentration of power in authoritarian regimes;[14] and scapegoating via prejudice in periods of hardship.[15] The "first generation" genocide studies literature is not limited to these arguments, and some scholars made conjunctural arguments. For example, in a seminal book, Robert Melson argued that a combination of revolution and war is the cauldron for genocide.[16] While Helen Fein emphasized dehumanization, her four-part argument also stressed state decline, ideologies of group domination, and war.[17] Both sets of arguments foreshadow later research on genocide, as I discuss below. Nonetheless, the themes of prejudice (as well as hatred and dehumanization), extremely repressive regimes, and displacing social stress are the most common emphases in the early literature on genocide.

During the past decade, a different set of theoretical emphases has emerged. I argue the most recent scholarship clusters into two main paradigms and several other less common but important theoretical insights.

Strategic Paradigms and the Importance of War

The first main cluster is a strategic or rationalist approach to the study of genocide and related forms of violence, a perspective that is most well developed in the political science literature. The main insight is that strategies of mass violence are developed in response to real and perceived threats to the maintenance of political power. The main empirical finding that informs the strategic perspective is that genocide and other forms of mass violence generally occur in the context of armed conflict. Indeed, the empirical connection between genocide and war is arguably the most robust empirical finding in the most recent literature: genocides generally occur in wartime or in response to the threat of armed conflict; most major cases of genocide, such as the Herero genocide, the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, Rwanda, and Bosnia, all take place in wartime.[18]

That said, there is less consensus on the causal mechanisms linking war to genocide. In a series of quantitative studies, Ben Valentino and co-authors argue that mass killing is effectively a counterinsurgency tactic to "drain the sea" of insurgents.[19] Writing in 2008, after an analysis that included dozens of variables in a statistical model, Valentino and Jay Ulfelder conclude that, "Our analysis emphatically confirms that governments are most likely to perpetrate mass killing when they are fighting insurgencies or engaged in civil wars."[20] They also find that states with low infant mortality, states that have practiced past discrimination, and states that are not members of the GATT or WTO are more likely to commit mass killing. The main interpretation is that weak states lack professionalism and information to sort citizens from insurgents and that if they do not value such citizens even in peacetime they are even less likely to do so in wartime.[21]

Scholars working in qualitative traditions similarly stress a theoretical connection between war and genocide, but they stress different causal mechanisms. Martin Shaw argues that genocide is a form of war and that the logic of genocide is closely associated with the logic of war.[22] In war, he argues that civilian groups are more likely to be constructed as "enemies"; military means of destruction are more likely to be deployed; and military and political centers of power are more likely to be closely allied.[23] In slight contrast, Manus Midlarsky finds that wartime loss, in particular territorial loss, drives genocide. Like Valentino and to an extent Shaw, Midlarsky locates genocide theoretically as a response to threat. War creates conditions of state insecurity and vulnerability, he argues, and loss in war triggers disproportionate responses—what he calls "imprudent realpolitik" in which civilian populations are constructed as threatening enemies.[24] He departs from Valentino who conceptualizes mass killing in instrumentally rational terms, yet both argue that genocide and mass killing are responses to perceived threat. Melson argues that in war states link enemies of the revolution to external wartime enemies, thereby increasing the risk that the domestic "enemies" will be targeted for elimination. Similarly, Jacques Sémelin argues that war contributes to defining some groups as internal enemies, and war increases uncertainty and vulnerability, which can lead to the use of violence.[25] In research on Rwanda, I also found war to be a central driver of genocide, arguing that war legitimized the use of violence against constructed enemies, created uncertainty and insecurity, thereby empowering hardliners over moderates and also triggering the use of violence, and led specialists in violence (soldiers, paramilitaries, and militias) to enter the domestic political arena.[26]

To summarize, a cluster of authors writing recently on genocide emphasize a strong empirical and theoretical connection to war; in that literature, there are three consistently articulated causal mechanisms. First, war creates threat and insecurity, which in turn increase the probability that violence will be used to counter the threat. That is the core of the strategic perspective that most authors share. Second, war increases the probability that perceived opponents will be classified as "enemies," whom in war one seeks to destroy. War thus changes the categorization of opponents and alters the range of tactics used against opponents, in particular increasing the probability that violence and destruction are the choice. Third, war instigates the use of militarized forms of power (militaries, weaponry, and so forth), which facilitate lethal violence against perceived enemies.

However, two key questions remain. First, why are civilian, non-combatant groups targeted, and, second, why is the strategic objective systematic destruction of civilian groups? Ulfelder and Valentino make two arguments. One is a function

of capacity and tactics: in guerilla war, states with weak control, capacity, and limited information kill civilians en masse because such states cannot separate civilians from insurgents. The other is a function of preferences: where states do not value citizens, where they discriminate, they are inclined to target civilians. The latter begs the question of what explains preferences or what explains how states construct enemies. That question is essential, and as I discuss below paradigms that emphasize ideational constructs—in particular, how states construct social groups and legitimate political communities and how leaders define their objectives—provide at least partial answers to these questions. By contrast, Midlarsky employs prospect theory and psychology to argue that loss triggers disproportionate responses to threat, while Shaw locates civilian targeting in what he calls modern, ''degenerate'' warfare, which by definition targets civilians.

A strictly strategic perspective should address two additional and conflicting problems. First, if genocide is an optimal choice in wartime, why is that choice not more common than it is? Or, second, why would leaders expect the strategy to succeed, given that most high-profile past cases yield failure: whether in the late Ottoman empire, Nazi Germany, Cambodia, Rwanda, and even the former Yugoslavia genocide and mass killing was followed in short order by regime change.

Ideological Paradigms

With some degree of contrast, a second cluster of arguments has emerged in the past decade that emphasizes the ideological origins of genocide. The central insight in this literature is that one needs to understand the ideas in people's minds, in particular those of leaders, in order to understand how and why genocide occurs. The most consistent focus in the literature is on ideological visions of and for the state, that is, on the ways in which leaders imagine the purpose of their polity and the legitimate community of citizens that belong to the polity. Harff, for example, in her multivariate analysis finds ''exclusionary ideologies'' a key variable.[27] Several recurring ideological themes are the importance of utopia, purity, fantasy, and obsession—themes that in the main suggest quite different origins and dynamics from explanatory paradigms that emphasize the strategic origins of genocide. To be sure, as Ben Kiernan suggests in his sweeping history of genocide, the sheer vastness of a genocidal enterprise requires pragmatic skill, a combination of what he terms ''apocalyptic vision and prudent compromise.''[28] Yet the clear analytical emphasis is on ideology.

A representative author is Eric Weitz, who emphasizes that leader-level visions of utopia based on their conceptions of race and nation.[29] He argues that leaders who commit genocide are revolutionary; they are animated by visions of utopia; they harness the state to implement their future; and they imagine a future with pure, homogenous populations.[30] Similarly, Sémelin emphasizes that examining the ''imaginary'' is necessary to understand genocide. Ideology is the ''binding agent,'' he argues, that connects security fears, to identity, to quests for purity that involve destroying others to save one's own community.[31] Genocide is, as he describes, when actors ''destroy 'them' to save 'us'.''[32] In Kiernan's historical survey, ideology is also the key ingredient. He argues that idealized conceptions divorced from reality are common to genocides across time.[33] He identifies four specific ideological ''obsessions'' and ''preoccupations'' that animate genocidal violence: racism, territorial expansionism, agrarianism or ''cults of cultivation,'' and desire to restore purity and order based on imagined antiquity. And Michael Mann's work also strongly

emphasizes ideology. He argues that the root of genocidal violence is imagining the nation as an organic whole, which in turn is based on an ethnic interpretation of democracy. In his famous phrase, the risk for genocide is greater when the "demos" is imagined as an "ethnos." That said, Mann, like Sémelin, Melson, and Weitz argue that genocidal violence is more likely when (respectively) organic nationalist, purity-seeking, revolutionary, or utopian states are in acute crises, especially in war[34]—a point to which I return.

Ideological arguments solve two analytic problems that trouble strictly strategic arguments that emphasize the dynamics of war above all else. The first is to answer the question of why civilians are targeted in large numbers in the midst of a crisis; that is, ideological approaches solve the issue of civilian group selection. Ideology delimits legitimate in-groups and illegitimate out-groups. The central mechanism is exclusion, as Harff, Melson, and Fein argue, but the mechanism could be conceptualized as division, as Kuper suggests, or discrimination, as Ulfelder and Valentino claim. Ideology also creates specific goals and even obsessions that carry the seeds of extreme violence. The vision itself suggests violence—a purified national community or a return to an idealized past, for example. In addition the gap between a utopian, unrealistic commitment and the ability to attain the goal lends itself to a process of violence to cleanse or hasten the process of purification. The second analytic problem that ideological arguments help to solve is that they provide an answer as to why in some wars but not others states target civilians en masse. The answer is: the ideological vision of the leadership will shape how a state defines strategic enemies and strategic objectives, thus indicating which states are likely to respond to perceived threat with mass violence and which are not.

How are these two clusters of arguments different from earlier research? Clearly, the themes of war and elite ideology resonate with Fein's and Melson's earlier research. Yet the most recent paradigms are sharply different from strictly culturalist arguments that locate the origins of genocide in inherently hateful social relations.[35] The most recent literature emphasizes leaders' ideals and strategies, not widespread prejudice and inter-communal hatred in the population. Even if Mann and Sémelin address questions of mobilization and micro-level perpetration, the model of genocide is top-down—a point to which I will return. The most recent scholarship also downplays autocracy.[36] Ulfelder and Valentino consistently find regime type not significant in various models, and Mann argues that the roots of genocide lie in democratic ideals not authoritarian practice. That said, most arguments are not inherently contradictory; the main insight of regime type arguments is that authoritarian states have fewer feedback mechanisms and checks on power. In crises or where elites have utopian visions, a smaller decision-making circle could fuel escalation and the use of extreme violence. Still, the theoretical reorientation in the most recent work is valid: authoritarianism as such is not a necessary condition for genocide, nor even its central wellspring. Finally, the recent scholarship deemphasizes scapegoating. Crises, in particular wars, trigger mass violence but the causal mechanisms are not about blaming others for one's own hardship.

An outstanding question concerns the theoretical compatibility of the two main paradigms. I would argue that the paradigms are and should be complementary. A strategic perspective that emphasizes the importance of armed conflict as the main macro environment in which genocide takes place is empirically valid and theoretically crucial. Wars favor violence: they legitimize killing as a tactic; they increase fear and uncertainty; and they trigger militarized institutions that specialize in

destruction, among other issues. But an ideological perspective that emphasizes the political imaginary (to paraphrase Sémelin) seems critical for understanding patterns of civilian targeting: the political imaginary establishes social categories and political goals, which in turn helps to explain why certain civilian groups are targeted for destruction. In other words, the ideological vision of a political leadership will shape how leaders respond strategically to perceived threats. The compatibility is present in some scholarship, in particular Mann, Sémelin, and Weitz, but I would argue for an explicit connection between the two clusters of arguments—each speaks to different dimensions of genocide.

Other Theoretical Insights in Recent Genocide Scholarship

Several other themes are evident in the recent scholarship on genocide. The first is an approach that normalizes genocide as inherent to regular processes of political development, in particular of state building, imperialism, and even democracy. A central connective insight is rather than conceptualize genocide as political violence that happens ''over there'' to others who are ideological extremists or trigger-happy counterinsurgents, scholars should recognize the more familiar origins of genocide. Mark Levene, for example, argues that genocide emerges from state building, state competition, and consolidation in the modern era.[37] As noted above, Mann argues that a wellspring of what he calls murderous ethnic cleansing is a perversion of democratic ideals. Shaw argues that genocide is connected to the history of warfare, arguing that genocide is a form of modern degenerate war.[38] And Dirk Moses argues that the idea of group destruction is tied to the logic of empire and colonization.[39] In each of these texts, the authors normalize genocide, showing how its origins are not alien to ''civilized'' society.

A second important theoretical insight in the recent literature is that genocide should be conceptualized as dynamic. Given the emphasis on intent in the legal definition of genocide, a tendency in popular and scholarly commentary has been to emphasize pre-meditation, leading to static models of genocide. Such models imply leaders were committed to exterminatory violence and subsequently looked for opportunities to implement their plan. By contrast, a consistent finding in the most recent scholarship is how genocide is rarely the first choice of leaders, but rather that the choice emerges over time in response to past failures, events, contingencies, and the actions of one's opponents.[40] The implications are far-reaching, if underexplored. A dynamic model suggests a number of events, incentives, and constraints that could not only push elites towards escalation but also towards de-escalation, a point that I take up below.

A third important area of theoretical focus, but one with contradictory findings, concerns that of state capacity. Here the literature points in multiple directions. Ulfelder and Valentino find that weak states lack the information and professionalism to distinguish combatants from civilians in insurgency. By contrast, Midlarsky argues that states must feel vulnerable, but they must also have the capacity to access and murder targeted populations. Shaw argues that modern warfare technology facilitates killing, implying military capacity is a critical variable. Given the attention questions of capacity and control have received in the literature on civil war[41] the issue deserves further attention in the literature on genocide.

To conclude, the last decade has seen a major expansion of genocide studies. Two principal lines of causal argument have emerged, as have a series of other

fruitful lines of analysis. If synthesized, the various arguments point to two founda-
tional elements of a theory of genocide: a) the phenomenon tends to occur in highly
acute crises, in particular war, in which political authorities deploy mass violence in
response to the perceived threats that they face; and, b) the phenomenon tends to
occur when political elites are committed to ideologies that either create utopian
expectations or that define illegitimate members of a political community in categ-
orical terms. Moreover, the process of genocide is a dynamic one—the choice of
genocide emerges over time. Clearly, more precision is needed. Given that most
armed conflicts do not result in genocide, is there a kind of war or a specific dynamic
in war that triggers genocidal violence? Is there a more specific articulation of the
kind of ideational vision that produces such genocidal violence? Or should we expect
equifinality—that the causal patterns will not be identical and we should expect mul-
tiple causal pathways to lead to the same outcome? Is there nonetheless a common
causal sequence or a critical common logic of genocide? And how does state capacity
matter? All these questions are critical for further developing a theory of genocide.

Genocide and Political Violence

This section and the next take a step backwards to examine some gaps in the
genocide studies literature. The focus is less on a variable-centric approach to study-
ing the phenomenon; the move is a step away from asking what are the typical con-
ditions in which genocide occurs. Rather, the section seeks to make global
observations about the political phenomenon of genocide. I should add that the
focus is on studies of the phenomenon of genocide, not on the policy and normative
question of how genocide could or should be prevented.

Genocide studies has developed largely in theoretical isolation from the broader
study of political violence. To a degree, the different tracks are appropriate: many
genocide scholars have sought to isolate a distinct phenomenon (genocide) and to
develop explanations for it. However, as I have argued elsewhere, while still recogniz-
ing the specificity of genocide, study of the phenomenon should be embedded in a
broader study of kin phenomena, in particular political violence.[42] The reasons are
three-fold. First, to understand the specificity of the phenomenon and the logic of
genocide, it should be clear what characteristics are unique to it and what character-
istics are shared with other phenomena. The specification should lead to more precise
and disaggregated theorizing and comparative research designs. Second, empirically
and theoretically, the phenomenon of genocide has similarities with other forms of
violence. If a common finding is that genocide is a form of violence that occurs in
wartime, especially civil war, then a logical connection should exist to studies of viol-
ence in war, especially civil war. Explaining patterns of violence against non-
combatants in war has been the focus of considerable research in recent years.[43] Simi-
larly, if a common finding is that certain forms of utopian and exclusionary ideolo-
gies drive genocide, then a logical theoretical analog should exist to the study of
terrorism, which entails violent targeting of civilians and where one finds similar
attention to messianic ideologies at the leadership level. Yet, despite some recognition
of similarities,[44] the two subjects rarely intersect. Third, as I shall discuss, because
there is considerable disagreement about a social scientific definition of genocide,
insisting on its distinctiveness *in isolation* of related phenomena is shortsighted.

This line of analysis prompts the perennial question in genocide studies: how to
define the term, an issue many authors wish to sidestep but which usually requires

discussion precisely because the term ''genocide'' is so contested. The definitional question plagues comparative research because there are inherent ambiguities and limitations in core elements of the legal United Nations Convention definition and because most scholars offer their own unique definition. Thus, a scholarly area of study has developed around a core but contested concept, which presents an inherent problem for comparative research.

In response to such problems, some scholars discard or downplay the term in favor of alternative conceptualizations. To wit, Valentino employs ''mass killing'' (a certain number of civilian deaths over a period of time); Mann employs ''murderous ethnic cleansing''; Rummel uses ''democide''; and Krain uses ''state-sponsored mass murder.'' Harff defines the outcome of interest as ''genocide,'' ''politicide,'' and ''geno/politicide'' (all of which have the same value in her statistical study). Others place genocide within a spectrum of kin violence: for example, Shaw focuses on genocide as his main outcome, but he places genocide within a spectrum of ''genocidal action'' (and defines genocide differently than others do).[45] Similarly, Sémelin focuses on genocide but argues that the main unit of analysis should be ''massacres.''[46] Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman employ the related concept of ''one-sided mass violence,'' of which genocide would be one extreme.[47] Christian Gerlach eschews genocide for the term ''mass violence.''[48] By contrast, of the authors previously cited, Kiernan, Midlarsky, and Weitz all write about genocide as the outcome in question, though Midlarsky's conceptualization is more restrictive than that of Weitz and Kiernan (with resulting variation in their universe of cases).

How to resolve the issue? The first question is to ask if there is anything specific to the concept of genocide. If there is not, there is no reason to insist on the term; scholars should talk about political violence or killing. I shall argue that not only is ''genocide'' conceptually specific and empirically valid, but also that there exists more conceptual consensus than usually suggested in the literature.[49] I also insist that the specificity of genocide does not mean the phenomenon should be studied in isolation from other forms of violence; in fact, I argue to the contrary.

Raphael Lemkin coined and defined the term ''genocide'' as its name implies: ''destruction of an ethnic or national group.'' More specifically, he conceptualized genocide as ''a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.''[50] (The U.N. Genocide Convention is worded differently, and problematically, as ''intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such.'' Nonetheless, the core conceptualization for both touchstone definitions is deliberate (intentional) group destruction, and that in turn is the core of most existing scholarly definitions, including many from the first-generation of genocide scholarship.[51] How one specifies the core elements, including ''deliberate'' or ''intentional,'' what kind of groups (political, ethnic, racial, religious, gender, linguistic, constructed or real), what constitutes destruction, including what level, what time period, and across what territory, are all subject to different interpretation. But the core specificity of genocide is deliberate (organized, systematic, planned, intentional as opposed to accidental or coincidental) group (with the implication, as Shaw insists, of a focus on civilians) destruction.

Compared to other forms of political violence, genocide is thus distinctive for being group-selective (rather than individual/combatant-selective or simply indiscriminate) and for being group destructive (rather than group harmful or group repressive, for example). Group destruction also implies violence that is lethal,

large-scale, systematic, coordinated, and sustained over time and across space. By consequence, of a violent event or period, scholars may ask: was the violence group selective (i.e., violence in the aggregate that targets a social category or collectivity, rather than individuals, combatants, or is not group-oriented) and was the violence aimed at the destruction of that group (i.e., violence that is consistently lethal, sustained, systematic, and reaches a high level). There should be variation on those two dimensions of different forms of political violence.

Similar to Shaw and Sémelin, the conceptualization places genocide within a spectrum of violent action while still recognizing the specificity of genocide. The conceptualization differs from "mass killing" or "indiscriminate" violence, both of which imply large-scale violence but violence that is not group-selective or oriented toward group destruction. The distinction matters empirically but also theoretically, as I discuss below. The approach is generally consistent with Elisabeth Wood's framework of examining "repertoires" of violence committed by armed groups.[52] Genocide would thus be one aggregate form or repertoire of political violence, differing along the lines suggested above from sexual violence, massacre, torture, terrorist violence, electoral violence, selective violence, and so forth. Some of these repertoires of violence could be and usually are part of genocide, but in the aggregate genocide may be distinguished from them.

There are other empirical features of genocide that distinguish it empirically from other forms of political violence. Genocide is "atrocity by policy," as Christopher Browning aptly argues.[53] The perpetrating organization requires capacity to inflict violence, to be group selective, and to coordinate agencies over time and across space. Genocide is, in reality, an aggregate of multiple instances of violence that are repeated in a consistent and systematic fashion. Genocide is also a form of asymmetric violence in which the perpetrator is, I would argue, the territorially dominant power. The organization committing genocide may have diminishing power, including losing in conflict, but for the violence to be committed on a large and systematic scale the perpetrator must exercise effective domination over the targeted population at the time of the violence. As Shaw among others note, the state need not be the perpetrating agent as other "power organizations" could possess such capacity. In practice, however, the most likely actor to possess such capacity is the state, as the dominant power holder in a society. By implication, at the time of the violence targeted groups are highly vulnerable to the violence—they are subordinate.[54]

The line of analysis suggests several theoretical implications. First, if genocide is committed by the territorially dominant organization, usually the state, then the form of violence differs from other forms of violence against civilians. For example, terrorist violence in the general understanding of the term is a form of violence that directly targets civilians, but it is generally committed by non-state clandestine organizations that are the weaker party in an asymmetric conflict.[55] Counterinsurgency indiscriminate violence also would be distinct from genocide. In that case, actors commit indiscriminate violence because they lack territorial control and information to be selective.[56] By contrast, genocide is group-selective violence, generally requiring domination of territory where such violence exists. Second, we might expect patterns of recruitment to follow from the nature of domination. Thus, the demographic of average genocide perpetrators is consistently that of "ordinary men" that reflect patterns of recruitment for other official organizations, such as the military and police.[57] By contrast, we would expect the demographic for terrorist violence to vary

systematically. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that terrorist recruitment attracts ideologically committed, marginalized, or revenge-oriented perpetrators.[58]

If genocide is to be embedded within but distinguished from a larger universe of forms of political violence, a question is: what is the degree of overlap between different forms of violence? As conceptualized here, genocide is an aggregate outcome, like civil war, composed of violence that is similarly patterned over time and territory. Thus, genocide is one level of abstraction greater than violence measured at hourly or daily intervals, such as rape, murder, arson, poisoning, torture, and even riots or massacres. Genocide encompasses (and therefore overlaps with) each of those forms of violence. Empirically, as noted above, a consistent finding is that the policy of group destruction emerges over time and, as Mann and Valentino argue, is rarely the first choice of perpetrators. By implication, genocide is the product of a process or spiral of escalation in which alternative strategies of violence might have been previously tried or exercised. Examined over time then, genocide would be a period within a longer period of interaction between conflicting groups.[59]

There are several observable implications from this line of analysis. For example, a strategy of genocide should sequentially follow other related aggregate strategies of violence, such as targeted assassination, forced displacement, or even indiscriminate mass killing. By implication, many structural conditions and factors that drive violent displacement or mass killing should similarly be present when genocide occurs; there should be substantial theoretical overlap between related strategies of violence. At the same time, if genocide is distinct, then analysis should try to isolate the constellation of conditions in which genocide and not another form of violence tends to occur or analysis should seek to discern what, seen across a history of conflict, drives the escalation (or de-escalation) of violence.

A related concern is to examine the causal logic of genocide, especially in contrast to other types of political violence. In general, genocide studies has not engaged in the kind of analysis about the logic of violence that, for example, Stathis Kalyvas has done to the logic of violence in civil war.[60] Examining the logic of genocide is defensible in that, while genocide may not be the initial choice of perpetrators and while it may be self-defeating as a strategy, at some point in time it becomes a deliberate policy, a strategy, whose nominal purpose may be studied. If the objective in genocide is group destruction, that suggests an important contrast to the logics of other forms of violence.

For example, a significant number of scholars who study terrorist violence and violence against civilians in civil war argue that such violence has a "communicative" function.[61] "Corpse messaging" in the context of a drug war is a vivid illustration.[62] The violence is designed to deter and punish defection, to destabilize or weaken opponents, to goad opponents to engage in self-defeating strategies, and to attract attention (and recruits and money). By contrast, in genocide the violence is not generally communicative, but rather an end in itself. Communication is not the function of violence, but rather destruction is. In civil war, the general objective is to defeat, weaken, or compromise with an enemy as well as to control territory; violence is deployed to achieve those ends. In these scenarios, the ultimate vision of interaction is usually group submission, surrender, or negotiation—but there is a future of sharing territory. The logic of genocide differs. In genocide, negotiation, control, surrender, and submission are off the table. The perpetrating organization pursues group destruction as the best available strategy. Thus, a central question is when and why would alternative strategies, such as group submission, removal, or negotiation, be

off the table? Why is group destruction the chosen option? The question is rarely asked in genocide studies, but it seems essential for the theoretical development of the field.

An initial hypothesis is that genocide is a form of future-oriented violence in which an opposing group is perceived as inherently threatening and as likely to gain the power to act on their threat. That is, the representatives of a dominant organization must fear their domination is fleeting. If a group is perceived as inherently dangerous for whatever reason, but usually because of ideological constructs and armed threat, negotiation is off the table—no matter what assets or agreement is reached the group will always pose a dangerous threat. If the group is perceived as inherently dangerous, forcing the group into submission and removing the group will be logical only if the dominant organization can continue to remain dominant or otherwise contain the threat. By contrast, if representatives of a dominant organization perceive an inherently dangerous group and an imminent or even long-term future erosion of power, they could choose to flee or to destroy a group as a preemptive measure of self-protection.

Imagine a hypothetical situation where a leadership consistently perceives an inherent existential threat from another group. If that leadership controls an organization that is territorially dominant and believes it can retain that dominance, group submission, containment, control, and separation/expulsion would be the dominant strategy for handing the threatening group. However, if there is a real fear that the ability to dominate is eroding, then group destruction might become the short-term strategy to protect a group's long-term survival. As Sémelin perceptively argues, that is why the logic of genocide is often, "destroy them to save us." The above analysis suggests that in addition to emphasizing war and threat, on the one hand, and ideology and the construction of threats and goals, on the other, the question of domination over time is essential for explaining genocide.

Further Gaps

In this final section, I address additional areas of theoretical and empirical weakness in the emerging literature on genocide with the aim of flagging topics that deserve greater attention.

First, a central methodological weakness in the existing literature on genocide and other forms of mass violence is a strong focus on comparing cases with similar outcomes. The modal comparative strategy in the existing literature is to examine cases that resulted in the same general level of violence. Kiernan's broad historical survey is a good example—a survey across some two thousand years of genocide cases across all continents. But with some exceptions—Midlarsky, Valentino, and Mann all have some discussion of negative cases—the main research agenda has been to find what disparate cases of genocide and mass killing have in common. Most contemporary comparative analyses thus focus on some mix of the major 20th century cases—the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, the former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda. For the development of theory in a generally theoretically weak field, the research design is justified. The main objective has been to see what different cases have in common as a way of generating plausible causal narratives. However, for the refinement and testing of theories, a research design that primarily selects cases with the same outcome on the dependent variable will be profoundly limited.

Going forward, a key question—and one that will help embed genocide studies in a broader study of political violence—is, what explains variation? Why in some cases is genocide the outcome or strategic choice while in others it is not? The main arguments in the existing literature tend to over-predict; the main arguments point to conditions and variables that are considerably more common than genocide and other forms of mass killing are. Most wars, for example, do not result in genocide; many states have embedded ethnic nationalist ideologies. Yet when viewed across time and across all states in the world, the outcome of genocide is relatively infrequent. Why is genocide the result in some cases but not others? That is an essential question to which the existing literature has paid insufficient attention.

In a 2006 book, Daniel Chirot and Clark McCauley pose precisely this set of questions. They isolate four main logics—what they call motives—of what they call mass political murder. These include convenience, revenge, fear, and what they call fear of pollution. "Convenience" is the notion that mass political murder can be a utilitarian or cheap solution to a particular problem. "Revenge" indicates that mass violence emerges out of anger and the desire to punish, in particular after honor has been violated. "Fear" signifies that mass violence happens when perpetrators fear for their own survival. Finally, "fear of pollution" highlights usually ideological efforts to purify societies. The authors in turn suggest several reasons why genocide does not happen more frequently. It is costly and can trigger revenge; conflicting groups can work out modes of exchange, such as exogamous marriage; conflicting groups can work out codes of honor and warfare, which in the modern world could include international humanitarian and human rights law; there can be material interests that create economic incentives to reduce conflict; and finally there can be the promotion of what they term enlightenment: ideas that promote individualism, modesty, and skepticism.[63]

The avenue of inquiry that Chirot and McCauley encourage is excellent; what is needed is greater attention to hypothesis testing and research design. A promising empirical strategy is to focus on "negative" cases—that is, to examine cases that from a theoretical viewpoint have a high probability of genocide, but that nonetheless have a different outcome.[64] Such is a research design that Wood emphasizes when examining sexual violence in civil war.[65] A related point is to focus theoretically not only on sources of violence but also on sources of restraint. Much of the existing literature highlights accelerators of mass violence. Instead of only asking the question, what drives genocide and mass violence, researchers should also ask what restrains or decelerates genocide and mass violence? Answers to that question should help explain variation in outcomes among plausible cases of mass violence and genocide.[66]

Second, another area that deserves greater theoretical and empirical attention is the relationship between local and national actors in the formation and execution of genocidal campaigns. The existing theoretical literature on genocide bifurcates the unit of observation. On the one hand, most studies focus on macro-level, structural conditions and national leaders' decision-making rationales. The implied model of how genocide occurs is that of top-down, centralized implementation of a policy determined in the capital. On the other hand, the literature focuses on perpetrator-level, individual-level explanations seeking to answer the question of why individuals participate in genocide.[67] Missing from many studies of genocide is an account of the ways in which sub-national coalitions and interactions of actors matter for shaping the outcome of genocide. By sub-national, I refer to a mix of important actors—province- and town-level civilian administrators or security forces; influential

professional, religious, or business actors who shape policy in rural areas; or ethnic groups that are located on the periphery. Are alliances between national and local actors necessary for genocide to occur? Are policies of genocidal mass violence accelerated or initiated at the local level? In short, in what ways do sub-national dynamics shape genocide? While some scholars pay attention to the question, by and large the question has not been squarely addressed in the existing literature.

There are several reasons why an examination of sub-national dynamics is critical for the development of genocide studies. First, the study of violence in civil war pioneered by Kalyvas has yielded major theoretical insight through disaggregating dynamics at the national and local levels.[68] One hypothesis is that the dynamics of genocide should similarly follow distinct logics and pathways at the national and at the local level. By contrast, an alternative hypothesis is that what distinguishes genocide from other forms of political violence is the dominance of national-level factors in the origins and execution of the violence. The point is that the question deserves attention, and that attention should help to further embed and distinguish the study of genocide in a broader study of political violence. Second, detailed studies of individual genocide cases consistently indicate that sub-national dynamics are critical to the ways in which genocide takes place and may be critical to why genocide takes place. Detailed studies of the Holocaust in Germany's World War II empire show how local and national initiative and innovation interacted with ideological objectives at the center.[69] Geoffrey Robinson's account of the dynamics of mass violence in East Timor details the importance of interaction between local and national actors; detailed accounts of Rwanda demonstrate critical patterns of interaction at the local level; and Christopher Sullivan's research on Guatemala puts local dynamics squarely at the center of the analysis explaining patterns of violence.[70] Again, the central analytic issue is to understand the place and importance of sub-national (or in the case of Germany sub-imperial) actors and dynamics to understanding outcomes.

Third, if disaggregating national and sub-national dynamics is critical for the development of genocides studies, so too is disaggregating cases over time. As argued in the previous section, an important but theoretically underemphasized finding of much recent work is the way in which genocide is the outcome of a dynamic process of decision-making. That conclusion is evident, again, from detailed studies of specific cases, but also from macro-comparative studies such as those of Valentino and Mann, in particular.[71] A theoretical implication is that cases should vary over time, and scholars may yield insight into sources of escalation and de-escalation by examining periodization. The question is likely quite relevant to explaining variation among cases—at critical junctures or because of the presence of certain constraints, some situations move toward greater levels of violence while others move towards lesser levels of violence. Another question is to ask whether patterns and processes of genocidal violence change over time, such that an examination of the dynamics of perpetration in the early stages of genocide may be quite different from later stages.

Periodization is especially relevant to the study of genocide because as a type of political violence genocide is defined, in part, by its duration. As discussed earlier, genocide is an aggregate of similar acts of violence repeated and sustained across time and space. Genocide is most generally conceptualized as a continuous ''campaign,'' as a chain of violence. That conceptualization indicates an important element of time or periodization, which stands in contrast to, for example, a riot or massacre. The simple point is that examining periodization is potentially critical for developing and refining an overall theory of genocide.

Conclusion

Genocide is a real and important form of political violence. In the past decade, scholars have advanced a set of arguments about the origins of the phenomenon. In this article, I summarize the main arguments, which cluster around the importance of war and ideology, and argue that each speaks to different dimensions of genocide. Synthesizing and refining the paradigms is essential for continuing to develop a theory of genocide. I further argue that isolating how the phenomenon is similar and different in empirical and theoretical terms from other forms of political violence is crucial, as is the question of why in some situations genocide is the policy choice while in others another form of violence is. In addition to these questions, the article identifies three main avenues for future research: examining "negative cases," interactions between national and sub-national actors, and periodization within cases. Each area of inquiry is underdeveloped in genocide studies and remains important for advancing theories of the phenomenon.

Notes

1. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

2. Madeleine Albright and William Cohen, *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2009); Gareth Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Once and For All* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2008). Note too that there exists now within the United Nations Secretariat an office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide; in August 2011, U.S. President Barack Obama announced a new policy initiative to prevent genocide and atrocity.

3. Geoffrey Robinson, *"If You Leave Us Here We Will Die": How Genocide Was Stopped in East Timor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

4. Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill? Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005); Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–79* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

5. Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

6. Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

7. Christopher Sullivan, "'Those They Identified as the Enemy': An Empirical Analysis of the Use of Genocidal Massacres In a Counter-Insurgency Campaign," Unpublished Manuscript, Department of Political Science, University of Notre Dame, 2010.

8. Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

9. Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

10. Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

11. Barbara Harff, "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 57–73.

12. Scott Straus, "Second Generation Comparative Research on Genocide," *World Politics* 57, no. 1 (2007): 476–501.

13. Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Helen Fein, "Genocide: A Sociological Perspective," *Current Sociology* 38, no. 1 (1990): 1–126; Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

14. Irving Louis Horowitz, *Genocide: State Power and Mass Murder* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1976); Rudolph Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994).

15. Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

16. Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

17. Fein 1979 (see note 13 above).

18. The extent of the empirical connection between war and genocide depends to a degree on conceptualization both of the outcome and of armed conflict. Some definitions of the outcome, such as "politicide" (mass killing of political groups), would point to cases that occur outside of armed conflict. Chile or Argentina would be examples. Also true is that how one conceptualizes "armed conflict" or "war" shapes the intuition. In the Communist Cambodian, Soviet, and Chinese cases, for example, murderous agrarian reforms and purges were committed when regime leaders claim they are fighting wars.

19. Benjamin Valentino, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay, "'Draining the Sea': Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare," *International Organization* 58 (2004): 375–407.

20. Jay Ulfelder and Benjamin Valentino, *Assessing Risks of State-Sponsored Mass Killing* (Washington, DC: Political Instability Task Force, 2008), 14.

21. Ibid., 15. The findings echo other quantitative research on mass killing and genocide. Matthew Krain argues "political opportunity structure," in particular armed conflict, is a significant predictor of mass political murder; Matthew Krain, "State-Sponsored Mass Murder: The Onset and Severity of Genocides and Politicides," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 3 (1997), 331–360. Harff (2003) (see note 11 above) emphasizes upheaval (including war), as well as five other factors (ranging from past atrocity, to autocratic rule, to low trade openness, to exclusionary ideology, and ethnic minority rule).

22. Martin Shaw, *War and Genocide: Organized Killing in Modern Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003); Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

23. Shaw 2007 (see note 22 above).

24. Manus Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 94.

25. Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide*, trans. by Cynthia Shoch (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

26. Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

27. Harff 2003 (see note 11 above).

28. Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 34.

29. Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

30. Ibid., 14.

31. Sémelin 2007 (see note 25 above), 22.

32. Ibid., 48.

33. Kiernan 2007 (see note 28 above), 21.

34. Mann 2005 (see note 8 above), 7.

35. Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1996); Kuper 1981 (see note 13 above).

36. An exception is Harff (2003) (see note 11 above), where autocracy remains significant in her multivariate analysis.

37. Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 2 vols.

38. Shaw 2003 (see note 22 above).

39. A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (London: Bergahn Books, 2008).

40. See Levene 2005 (see note 37 above), Mann 2005 (see note 8 above), Shaw 2007 (see note 22 above), Straus 2006 (see note 26 above), Valentino 2004 (see note 9 above).

41. James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil*

War (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); David Leonard and Scott Straus, *Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

42. Straus 2007 (see note 12 above), and Scott Straus, "Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 3, no. 3 (2001): 349–375.

43. For some recent examples from the literature on civil war and interstate violence, see Kalyvas 2006 (see note 41 above); Alexander Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); Jason Lyall, "Are Coethnics More Effective Counter-insurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War," *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 1 (2010): 1–20.

44. Kiernan 2007 (see note 28 above), 605.

45. Shaw 2007 (see note 22 above), 154.

46. Sémelin 2007 (see note 25 above), 382.

47. Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman, "One-Sided Violence against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 2 (2007): 233–246.

48. Gerlach 2010 (see note 10 above).

49. Including in my work, e.g., Straus 2001 (see note 42 above).

50. Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), 79–81.

51. Fein 1990 (see note 13 above) and Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

52. Elisabeth Wood, "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare," *Politics and Society* 37, no. 1 (2009): 131–162.

53. Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

54. Chalk and Jonassohn as well as Eck and Hultman capture this idea by conceptualizing genocide as "one-sided violence," but that formulation can be misleading in that genocidal violence generally occurs in multi-sided armed conflict.

55. Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat* (New York: Random House, 2006).

56. Kalyvas 2006 (see note 41 above); Ulfelder and Valentino 2008 (see note 20 above).

57. Browning 1992 (see note 53 above); Fujii 2009 (see note 6 above); Straus 2006 (see note 26 above).

58. Richardson 2006 (see note 55 above).

59. The point is consistent with Shaw's 2007 emphasis on seeing genocide as part of a broader pattern of conflict between groups and populations.

60. Kalyvas 2006 (see note 41 above).

61. Kalyvas 2006 (see note 41 above); Richardson 2006 (see note 55 above).

62. William Finnegan, "Silver or Lead," *New Yorker*, May 31, 2010, 39.

63. Daniel Chirot and Clark McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All? The Logic and Prevention of Mass Political Murder* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

64. I am pursuing this line of inquiry through an ongoing book-length study of cases of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa that did or did not result in mass genocidal violence.

65. Wood 2009 (see note 52 above).

66. For more on this question, see Scott Straus, "Retreating from the Brink: Theorizing Mass Violence and the Dynamics of Restrant," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (2012): 343–362.

67. James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

68. Kalyvas 2006 (see note 41 above); Stathis Kalyvas, "The Ontology of Political Violence," *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (2003): 475–494.

69. Donald Bloxham, *The Final Solution: A Genocide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Christopher Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

70. Robinson 2010 (see note 3 above); Fujii 2009 (see note 6 above); Sullivan 2010 (see note 7 above).

71. Bloxham 2005 (see note 5 above); Browning 2004 (see note 69 above); Valentino 2004 (see note 9 above); Mann 2005 (see note 8 above).