

# 'Toxification' as a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation

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**Publication Date:**

2015

**DOI:**

<https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/2873>

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# **‘Toxification’ as a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation**

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A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Philosophy



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my outstanding supervisor, Toni Erskine, thank you for being an exceptional mentor, inspiration, and role model this early in my academic career.

To my wonderful friends, Alana, Bryce, Colin, Nikki, Hannah, Lisa, and for the final and most important mile, Amy, thank you for making Canberra a home away from home; making me laugh through my tears and insecurities; and making the experience of research all the more delightful. Here's to the PhD.

To my BFG, Tom Sellings, thank you for being my never-setting sunlight; for being my happiness and laughter; for knowing what to say, and when to say nothing at all.

To my greatest supporters, my parents, Paul and Corinne Neilsen, thank you for passing your passion for learning and discovery onto me.

You never let me lose sight of my ambitions,

And you never lost sight of me.

So, for the countless hours,

The countless papers,

And your love,

This is for you.

*Veni Vidi Amavi.*

## ABSTRACT

In the genocide-specific literature, dehumanisation is largely considered to be a reliable socio-psychological early warning sign for mass systematic killing. Yet, within the broader dehumanisation literature, dehumanisation is found to exist in a variety of instances that do not lead to violence or even aggression. This suggests that although dehumanisation is an important part of the genocidal process, a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide is needed. Some genocide scholars have acknowledged this; however, little movement has been made to conceptualise and operationalise such an early warning indicator. The purpose of this thesis is to introduce the concept of ‘toxification’ as a more precise socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation. Toxification is the portrayal of the victim group as not simply without human status, but as fundamentally lethal to one’s self or one’s society. While dehumanisation signals that killing the victim group may be perceived as *permissible*, toxification flags that extermination is portrayed as permissible and *necessary*.

Following a literature review of genocide early warning signs and dehumanisation, I introduce the conceptual framework of toxification and its two manifestations – ‘toxic to the ideal’ and ‘toxic to the self’. I then look at three twentieth century genocides to illustrate how toxification can operate in practice and highlight important aspects of the concept. Lastly, I refine the framework of toxification as an early warning sign for genocide in light of the illustrative examples.

## Introduction

### ‘Toxification’ as a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation<sup>1</sup>

There are few processes in this world that are so perplexing and horrific that their introduction is best kept brief. Genocide is something which continues to cause shock into the twenty-first century.<sup>2</sup> Emphasis has been placed on identifying early warning signs of genocide so that, in theory, preventative measures can be put into place to avert mass carnage. According to the United Nations (UN) Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide (SAPG), early warning is the ‘collection, analysis and communication of information about escalatory developments in situations that could potentially lead to genocide... far enough in advance for relevant UN organs to take timely and effective preventive measures’.<sup>3</sup> Fundamental to this early warning process is the identification of reliable early warning signs of genocide that can be collected, analysed and conceptualised. Examples of early warning signs include a history of genocide, state instability, and genocidal ideologies.<sup>4</sup> One early warning sign of genocide recognised almost universally by genocide scholars is dehumanisation – the portrayal of victims as less than human. It is with this early warning sign that I am centrally concerned, and it is from this point that I re-orient the focus of genocide early warning signs in this thesis.

Dehumanisation is defined in the genocide-specific literature and broader dehumanisation literature as the socio-psychological denial of an individual’s humanity and identity. It is the ‘psychological-symbolic removal of others from the classification of *human*’<sup>5</sup> wherein ‘they’ are expelled from what Helen Fein termed the ‘human

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<sup>1</sup> Parts of this thesis have been published as a peer-reviewed article in *Genocide Studies Prevention: An International Journal*. This paper was presented to the 2014 International Association of Genocide Scholars Conference in Winnipeg, Canada. Please see Rhiannon Neilsen, “Toxification as a More Precise Early Warning Sign for Genocide than Dehumanisation? An Emerging Research Agenda,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 9 (2015): 83–95.

<sup>2</sup> Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989): xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Lawrence Woocher, “Developing a Strategy, Methods and Tools for Genocide Early Warning: Prepared for Office of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide,” accessed 29 January, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/Woocher%20Early%20warning%20report,%202006-11-10.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “Developing a Strategy.”

<sup>5</sup> Original italics. Israel Charny, “Dehumanisation – “killing” the humanity of another”, in *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, ed. Israel Charny (ABC-CLIO: California, 1999), 55.

universe of moral obligation'.<sup>6</sup> The dehumanised individual is no longer included in the moral compact owed to other humans, or the meaningful social fabric that 'governs human relationships'.<sup>7</sup> Instead, the dehumanised is perceived as without human status: they are regarded as not deserving the same social recognition as humans, and are viewed as animals, barbarians or sub-humans.<sup>8</sup> Dehumanisation is a social psychological early warning sign, because it deals with how one individual perceives another, and this subsequently affects the individual's thoughts and behaviours.<sup>9</sup>

Despite this definitional consistency in the two literatures, there is a disparity regarding the consequences of dehumanisation. Within the broader dehumanisation literature, dehumanisation is thought to exist in instances that do not lead to aggression or violence, let alone genocide. In fact, some scholars go so far as to identify dehumanisation in subtle, everyday social perceptions and interactions.<sup>10</sup> Conversely, in the genocide literature, many scholars believe that dehumanisation is thought to be the

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<sup>6</sup> Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide* (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 4. See also Rowan Savage, "Disease Incarnate: Biological Discourse and Genocidal Dehumanisation in the Age of Modernity," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 20 (2007): 404–40; David Moshman, "Us and Them: Identity and Genocide," *An International Journal of Theory and Research* 7 (2007): 115–35.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanisations of Victims and Victimizers," *Journal of Social Issues* 29 (1973): 43. See also William Zartman and Mark Anstey, "The Problem: Preventing Identity Conflicts and Genocide," in *The Slippery Slope to Genocide*, eds. William Zartman, Mark Anstey and Paul Meerts (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 11; Johannes Lang, "Questioning Dehumanisation: Intersubjective Dimensions of Violence in the Nazi Concentration and Death Camps," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 24 (2010): 225–46.

<sup>8</sup> Susan Opatow, "Moral exclusion and injustice: An introduction," *Journal of Social Issues* 46 (1990): 1–20; Phillip Goff, et al., "Not Yet Human: Implicit Knowledge, Historical Dehumanisation, and Contemporary Consequences," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94 (2008): 292–306; Victoria Esses, et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanisation of Refugees," *Social Justice Research* 21 (2008): 4–25; Louis Winnifred, Victoria Esses and Richard Lalonde, "National identification, perceived threat, and dehumanisation as antecedents of negative attitudes towards immigrants in Australia and Canada," *Journal of Applied Social Science* 43 (2013): 156–65; Tendayi Viki, Daniel Osgood and Sabine Phillips, "Dehumanisation and Self-reported Proclivity to Torture Prisoners of War," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 49 (2013): 325; Laurie Rudman and Kris Mescher, "Of Animals and Objects: Men's implicit Dehumanisation of Women and the Likelihood of Sexual Aggression," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 38 (2012): 735; Samera Esmeir, "On Making Dehumanisation Possible," *Modern Language Association* 121 (2006): 1544–51; Heather Keith and Kenneth Keith, *Intellectual Disability: Ethics, Dehumanisation and a New Moral Community* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013); Lisa Haagensen and Marnix Croes, "Thy Brother's Keeper?: The Relationship between Social Distance and Intensity of Dehumanisation During Genocide," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 7 (2012): 225.

<sup>9</sup> Gordon Allport, "The Historical Background of Social Psychology," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, eds. Gardener Lindzey and Elliot Aronson. (New York: Random House, 1985), 3.

<sup>10</sup> Nick Haslam, et al., "Dehumanisation: A New Perspective," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 1 (2007): 409; Joris Lammers and Diedrick Stapel, "Power increases Dehumanisation," *Group Processes Intergroup Relations* 14 (2011): 114; Emanuele Castano, and Miroslaw Kofta, "Dehumanisation: Humanity and its Denial," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12 (2009): 695–96.

very ‘phase where the death spiral of genocide begins’,<sup>11</sup> and that ‘killing starts with the words disqualifying [the victims’] humanity’.<sup>12</sup> On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2014, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide remarked: ‘The Holocaust did not start with the gas chambers and the Rwandan genocide did not start with the slayings. It started with the dehumanisation of a specific group of persons.’<sup>13</sup> This understanding in the genocide literature (and, seemingly, within certain international organisations) is derived from the assumption that dehumanisation is a ‘virulent form of prejudice that promotes and justifies violence’.<sup>14</sup> Dehumanisation is thought by many genocide scholars to render empathy unachievable and silence the ‘universal human abhorrence of murder.’<sup>15</sup> However, the literatures examined here demonstrate that although dehumanisation is largely thought to be a reliable early warning sign for genocide, it is also thought to exist in the absence of abuse or conflict. Dehumanisation – like many other genocide indicia – is regarded as a necessary but insufficient early warning sign. Genocide is a ‘perfect storm’, which requires the coalescence of a myriad of factors. Yet, such an inconsistency between the two literatures calls into question the validity of dehumanisation as a *specific* and *reliable* early warning sign for genocide.<sup>16</sup> Importantly, some genocide scholars have noted the need for a more specific early warning sign than dehumanisation in the past.

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<sup>11</sup> Gregory Stanton, “Could the Rwandan genocide been prevented?” *Journal of Genocide Research* 6 (2004): 214.

<sup>12</sup> Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 39. For other scholars who make a similar argument, please see Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Uses in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 84-86; Manus Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 99; David Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide: Practical Steps Toward Early Detection and Effective Action* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2008), 22; Herbert Hirsch, *Genocide and the Politics of Memory: Studying death to preserve life* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 25 -37; Haagensen and Croes, “Thy Brother’s Keeper?,” 223–50; Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), 17 – 18; Ervin Staub, “The Roots and Prevention of Genocide and Related Mass Violence”, in *The Slippery Slope to Genocide: Reducing Identity Conflicts and Preventing Mass Murder*, eds. William Zartman, Mark Anstey and Paul Meerts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 35-52; William Donohue, “The Identity Trap: Managing Paradox in Crisis Bargaining,” in *The Slippery Slope to Genocide: Reducing Identity Conflicts and Preventing Mass Murder*, eds. William Zartman, Mark Anstey and Paul Meerts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012a), 55.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations News Centre, “Genocide begins with ‘dehumanisation’: no single country is immune from risk, warns UN official,” accessed 3 March, 2015, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49556>

<sup>14</sup> Haslam et al., “Dehumanisation,” 42.

<sup>15</sup> Gregory Stanton, “The Eight Stages of Genocide,” accessed 3 March 2015, <http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html>; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 49; Graham C. Kinloch, “The Possible Causes and Reduction of Genocide,” in *Genocide: Approaches, Case Studies and Responses*, eds. Graham Kinloch and Raj Mohan (New York: Algora Publishing, 2005), 17.

<sup>16</sup> Stanton, “Could the Rwandan genocide,” 214.



However, little movement has been made to offer a more *exact* socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide – until now.

This thesis provides a departure from the existing approaches to genocide early warning signs in two ways. First, it provides evidence to support the claim that dehumanisation is not an indicative early warning sign for genocide, as thought by many genocide scholars in the field. By extension, it argues that a more specific social psychological early warning sign than dehumanisation is needed. Second, this thesis moves to fill this gap by introducing the conceptual framework of toxification. I define toxification as the portrayal of a victim group as not only without human status, but as fundamentally lethal to the potential-perpetrators' lives and the potential-perpetrators' ideal society. I argue that while dehumanisation flags that killing is perceived to be *permissible*, toxification signals that killing is portrayed as not only allowed, but *necessary*. The latter, I submit, is more specific to forewarning genocide than dehumanisation.

Toxification is the portrayal of a group as inexorably lethal to one's ideal society, or to one's self: that is, as 'toxic to the ideal' and 'toxic to the self'.<sup>17</sup> The notion of toxic to the ideal is concerned with abstract conceptualisations of survival: the victim group is portrayed as toxic to the furtherance of the one's society or the progression of human civilisation. The concept of toxic to the self is the portrayal of victims as planning to kill members of one's group: it posits that one must 'kill before being killed'. One perceives the toxic group as immune to persuasion and reason; thus, extermination is regarded as the only means to eliminate the lethal presence. Indeed, dehumanisation signals that acts that would normally 'transgress the bounds of ethical conduct'<sup>18</sup> may to come to pass.<sup>19</sup> However I argue that toxification is a more specific early warning indicator for genocide than dehumanisation, because it signals when the extermination of the victim group is portrayed as *essential*, as well as allowed. By introducing toxification, this thesis reorients the focus of early warning signs from when killing is perceived as permissible, to when mass slaughter is seen as a necessity.

This research is underpinned by an interpretivist epistemology, which maintains that social phenomena are not directly observable, measurable or quantifiable, but

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<sup>17</sup> Neilsen, "Toxification," 83.

<sup>18</sup> Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 15.

<sup>19</sup> Lasana Harris and Susan Fiske, "Dehumanized Perception: A Psychological Means to Facilitate Atrocities, Torture and Genocide?" *Journal of Psychology* 219 (2011): 175.

knowable only in connection with human subjectivity.<sup>20</sup> Further, owing to the nature of the research, deduction is utilised as the ideal type of reasoning. As such, this thesis may be subject to criticisms of ‘selection bias’, wherein only evidence that appears to validate the hypothesis is chosen.<sup>21</sup> Concerns regarding selection bias will be mitigated in this investigation by: cross-referencing, justifying the choice of cases, and triangulating.<sup>22</sup> As an inevitable consequence of using illustrative examples, it could be argued that toxification is a ‘narrow and idiosyncratic theory’,<sup>23</sup> which is valid only for the examples in this research.<sup>24</sup> This limitation brings into question the plausibility of generalising.<sup>25</sup> Many scholars have argued that it is unviable to extend an argument ‘beyond what is validly licenced by the data’<sup>26</sup> with any certainty, and that it is more appropriate to consider conclusions as ‘bound by their theoretical and methodological contexts’.<sup>27</sup> Countering this, the illustrative examples provided are only meant to *demonstrate* what I mean by toxification by using concrete historical empirical evidence. In doing so, the examples will highlight important aspects of the notions of toxic to the self and toxic to the ideal, therein further refining the conceptual framework. Nevertheless, the research is an iterative process and is subject to alteration and revision.<sup>28</sup> It is important to emphasise that I am not offering toxification as a *cause* for genocide. Determining whether toxification motivates perpetrators to participate in mass murder would be an interesting and valuable exercise because it would provide insight into *why people kill* in genocide. Although this was tempting to do in the first

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<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Grix, “Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research,” *Politics* 22 (2002): 182–83; Robert Burns, *Introduction to Research Methods*. (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1994), 238.

<sup>21</sup> Cameron Thies, “A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations,” *International Study Perspectives* 3 (2002): 335; Ian Lustick, “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias,” *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996): 606; Alexander George, *Propaganda Analysis: A Study of Inferences Made from Nazi Propaganda in World War II* (Westport: Greenwood Press 1973), 48.

<sup>22</sup> Thies, *A Pragmatic Guide*, 360.

<sup>23</sup> Kathleen Eisenhardt, “Building Theories from Case Study Research,” *Academy of Management Review* 14 (1989): 547.

<sup>24</sup> Eisenhardt, “Building Theories,” 547; Audie Klotz, “Case Studies,” in *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, eds. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 56.

<sup>25</sup> Burns, *Introduction to Research*, 13; Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. (London: Sage Publications, 1994), 243; Lioness Ayres, Karen Kavanaugh and Kathleen Knafl, “Within-Case and Across-Case Approaches to Qualitative Data Analysis,” *Qualitative Health Research*, 13 (2003): 872.

<sup>26</sup> Philip Bell, “Content Analysis of Visual Images” in *Handbook of Visual Analysis*, eds. Theo Van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt (London: Sage, 2001), 25 – 26.

<sup>27</sup> Bell, “Content Analysis,” 26; Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (London, Sage Publications, 1990), 404; Burns, *Introduction to Research*, 13.

<sup>28</sup> Ayres, Kavanaugh and Knafl, “Within-Case and Across-Case Approaches,” 872–73; Klotz, “Case Studies,” 56.

instance, such a causal analysis requires a depth and breadth of study for which space here does not allow. It is extremely difficult to identify causal links and, unless a large quantitative analysis was conducted, I would be in danger of making sweeping, unsubstantiated generalisations. Moreover, before it would be possible to even introduce the notion of toxification into such a study, it is necessary to clearly identify and define this proposed early warning sign. It is the purpose of this thesis to do just that.

Continuing to rely on dehumanisation as a reliable early warning sign for genocide has dangerous implications for preventing genocide. Because of the importance placed on dehumanisation, there is little differentiation between when violence *may* occur (because certain individuals no longer qualify as ‘human’) and when extermination is viewed as *compulsory* (because the individuals are portrayed as lethal). This research thus makes original normative and practical contributions to the field of inquiry. Conceptually, it clarifies the role of dehumanisation prior to genocide and encourages further thought into socio-psychological early warning signs that are specific to genocide. More crucially, this thesis offers a more reliable socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation. In doing so, it contributes to the field of genocide studies by attempting to refine our understandings of *if* and *when* genocide may occur. This, in turn, has significant practical implications for preventing genocide. The research here prompts a revision of existing early warning sign frameworks, such as the United Nations’ framework. It encourages a re-negotiation of genocide indicia by shifting the focus *away* from dehumanisation, and toward a concept like toxification. Moreover, as a new early warning sign for genocide, toxification can be thought of in terms of policy, operationalised along a scale of prevention. This may enhance institutions’ capabilities to recognise a situation at risk of genocide, and make timely, informed decisions regarding prevention.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In Chapter One, I discuss the importance of preventing genocide and discuss existing early warning signs to provide context for the investigation conducted here. I then provide a literature review of dehumanisation within the genocide-specific literature and the broader dehumanisation literature in Chapter Two. This serves to highlight the research problem, research question, and give credit to those genocide scholars who have also identified this discrepancy. In Chapter Three, I introduce the concept of toxification and its two manifestations as a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide

than dehumanisation. Three illustrative examples of toxification are provided in Chapters Four, Five and Six to highlight how the conceptual framework can operationalise in practice. These include the Nazi perpetrated genocides of 1933-1945, the Rwandan genocide of 1994, and the Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) genocides of 1975-1979. Attention will be given to identifying how toxification manifests in propaganda, policies, public speeches and the media prior to and during the genocide.<sup>29</sup> Each example was chosen on the basis that it effectively illustrates what I mean by toxification, and how it can appear as an early warning sign. I will then refine the conceptual framework of toxification in light of these illustrative examples in Chapter Seven. By way of conclusion, I identify ways in which this study of toxification has made significant contributions to the literature and opened avenues for future research.

If a minute of silence was had for each victim of mass murder in the twentieth century, the world would be silent for 241 years.<sup>30</sup> The twentieth century has been a theatre for genocide; in light of this, its prevention in the twenty-first century seems paramount. This research brings to the fore the limitations of dehumanisation as a reliable early warning for genocide, and seeks to ameliorate this deficiency by offering the concept of toxification. After all, 'there can be no more important issue, and no more binding obligation, than the prevention of genocide'.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> It is important to provide examples of how toxification manifests during the genocide as well, because it illustrates that the victims are still being portrayed as lethal and thus killing is unlikely to dissipate.

<sup>30</sup> This is based off the conservative estimate that 127 million individuals have died as a result of deliberate and directed mass murder, including through genocide by attrition. Daniel Goldhagen, *Worse than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009): 56.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations, "Genocide is a Threat to Peace Requiring Strong, United Action," accessed 13 March, 2014. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/SGsm9126.doc.htm>.

## Chapter 1

### ‘Never again’, again and again:

#### On the Early Warning Signs and Risk Factors of Genocide

As the details of the Nazi perpetrated genocides in World War Two came to the fore, the international community vowed ‘never again’.<sup>1</sup> This promise has been repeatedly broken since 1945, leaving millions victim to systematic slaughter. In this chapter, I discuss the importance of preventing genocide, as well as provide a review of early warning signs and risk factors of genocide. This serves to highlight the importance of the research conducted here, and to situate it within the context of the genocide early warning signs literature.

There are many different definitions of genocide in the literature and each has merit.<sup>2</sup> These definitions have varying degrees of disagreement regarding the identity of the perpetrators and victims; the scale of killing or harm caused; the strategies and techniques used; the question of intent; and qualifications of ‘harm’ and ‘destruction’.<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, genocide is defined as ‘the actualisation of the intent, however successfully carried out, to murder in its totality any national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, social, gender or economic group, as these groups are defined by the perpetrator, by whatever means’.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, while I believe that genocide does not necessarily have to be executed by the state, most genocides in the twentieth century were executed by a governing regime.<sup>5</sup> I elect to use the above definition of genocide

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<sup>1</sup> By ‘international community’ I mean the United Nations and all subsequent members which joined after 1945 and have ratified the 1948 Genocide Convention.

<sup>2</sup> For a thorough analysis of definitions of genocide, see Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 15–22.

<sup>3</sup> Jones, *Genocide*, 10–18. Though reviewing existing definitions of genocide toward excavating a more precise definition is an important exercise with scholarly and practical value, here is not the place to conduct such an exhaustive operation. Sketching a definition that could be universally accepted is often regarded as a semantic, Sisyphean pursuit.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen T. Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Context, Volume 1: The Holocaust and mass Death Before the Modern Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 131. It is interesting to note that Adam Jones revises this definition by including ‘the actualisation of intent... to murder *in whole or in substantial part*.’ Original emphasis, please see Jones, *Genocide*, 22. He removes Katz’s requirement of the intent to totally annihilate the group, and instead says that the intent to destroy a substantial part of the group can also constitute as genocide. I would posit that while the extermination of a substantial part of the group still constitutes as genocide (and Katz’s definition allows for this in his statement ‘however successfully carried out’), what makes genocide distinct is the intent to exterminate the *whole* group, even if this is not achieved. Please see Jones, *Genocide*, 22.

<sup>5</sup> Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1990), 23; Kurt Jonassohn and Karin Solweig Björnson, *Genocide and Gross Human Rights Violations: In Comparative Perspective* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 132.

for three reasons. Firstly, this definition articulates that there must be an intent to destroy the targeted group, and that this must be realised to some extent; although, I want to clarify here that I believe this needs to be achieved in substantial part for the murder of the group to qualify as genocide – a point made by other scholars, too.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, this definition does not only refer to the destruction of groups on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion and nationality: it is my view that an attempt to annihilate political, economic, social and gender group also constitutes genocide. Thirdly, this definition speaks explicitly to the physical destruction of the victim group.

Most notably, I have chosen not to use the United Nation's 1948 Genocide Convention definition of genocide.<sup>7</sup> I believe this definition to be too broad in terms of what acts actually constitute genocide; for example, the 'forcible transferal of children from one group to another,' and 'causing serious bodily and mental harm'.<sup>8</sup> While these are unacceptable human rights violations, I choose to regard genocide as the actual physical destruction of members of a group, by whatever means.<sup>9</sup> This is a position commonly adopted by genocide scholars in the literature, who wish to emphasise that the massive, systematic campaign mounted by the perpetrators to *murder* an entire group of individuals is definitional to genocide.<sup>10</sup> I also find the UN definition too exclusionary, because it only protects religious, ethnic, national and racial groups; it

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<sup>6</sup> Jones, *Genocide*, 18. By this, I mean to say that I would not consider the physical destruction of only ten individuals as 'genocide'. While this enters into the problematic realm of defining genocide in terms of quantity of lives lost, I believe there must be an articulated intent to destroy a substantial amount of the group members to be considered 'genocide'.

<sup>7</sup> Office of the UN Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG), "OSAPG Analysis Framework," accessed 14 February, 2015 [http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/osapg\\_analysis\\_framework.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/osapg_analysis_framework.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> "OSAPG Analysis Framework."

<sup>9</sup> I interpret Katz's inclusion of 'by whatever means' as allowing for the physical destruction of individuals however this may be achieved; that is, for example, via executions, death camps, forced and intentional starvation until death, and massacres intended to destroy an entire group. This is supported by other scholars; see Israel Charny, "The Definition of Genocide," in *The Genocide Studies Reader*, eds. Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop. New York: Routledge, 2009, 37; Goldhagen, *Worse Than War*, 29; Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, 8.

<sup>10</sup> Jones, *Genocide*, 21. The following scholars maintain that physical destruction is definitional to genocide: Peter Drost, *Genocide* (Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1959), cited in Jones, *Genocide*, 15; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "A Typology of Genocide," *International Review of Modern Sociology* 5 (1975): 201; Irving Louis Horowitz, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1976), 18; Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, 23; Helen Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*. (London: Sage Publications, 1993), 24; Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 8; Israel Charny, "Toward a Generic Definition of Genocide," in *Genocide: Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*, ed. George Andreopoulos (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 75; Roger W. Smith, "Human Destructiveness and Politics: The Twentieth Century as an Age of Genocide," in *The Genocide Studies Reader*, eds. Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop. New York: Routledge, 2009, 40; Helen Fein, "Defining Genocide as a Sociological Concept," in *The Genocide Studies Reader*, eds. Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop. New York: Routledge, 2009, 55–56.

fails to account for the attempted deliberate extermination of others who experience the same policies and horrors due to their membership in a political, economical and social group. Other genocide scholars also take this view: they maintain that the definition of genocide should not only protect ethnic or religious divisions, and instead favour a more liberal inclusion of victim groups.<sup>11</sup> The destruction of political and other groups was in fact included in the first draft of genocide, adopted in 1946 by the UN Genocide General Assembly: ‘genocide is a crime...committed on religious, racial, political or any other grounds.’<sup>12</sup> However, some states – specifically, the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics (USSR) as a permanent member of the UN Security Council – objected to the inclusion of other groups on the premise that it would allow for ‘external intervention in their domestic concerns,’ and that these groups are too transient, unstable and difficult to define in the absence of ‘objective characteristics’.<sup>13</sup> Ervin Staub states that ‘there is no reason to believe that the types of psychological and cultural influences differ in political and other group murders.’<sup>14</sup> That is, the intent to destroy an ethnic group is no different to the intent to destroy a political, economic, or class group. Furthermore, some scholars argue that other group affiliations can be just as rigid, permanent, and ‘objectively definable’ as ethnic or religious ties.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, political or social groups can be perceived ‘as significant a basis... for annihilation as racial, national, ethnic or religious differences.’<sup>16</sup> Alternatively, other genocide scholars submit that the true identity of the group (whatever it is) should be largely irrelevant in defining genocide, because the ‘group and membership in it are defined by the *perpetrator*,’ and are

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<sup>11</sup> Israel Charny, “Toward a Generic Definition of Genocide,” 75; Horowitz, *Taking Lives*, 18; Fein, *Genocide*, 24; Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology*, 23; Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 8; Dadrian, “A Typology of Genocide,” 201; Jones, *Genocide*, 21; Kuper, *Genocide*, 39.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, “United Nations General Assembly Resolution 91(1) 11 December 1946,” accessed 21 April 2015, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/033/47/IMG/NR003347.pdf?OpenElement>. See also Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 267.

<sup>13</sup> Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 8. See also Fein, *Genocide*, 23 and Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 105. It is speculated that the USSR advocated against the inclusion of political groups in 1948 so as not to be prosecuted for Josef Stalin’s own Great Purge policies; see Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, 267. Moreover, the sacrosanctity of the sovereign state and its historically assumed *carte blanche* within domestic borders has been questioned in the event of emerging norms such as the Responsibility to Protect. While this is a different discussion altogether, it is important to note that it is unlikely that this would stand as a valid counter-argument against the inclusion of political groups in the definition of genocide.

<sup>14</sup> Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Kuper, *Genocide*, 39; Nigel Eltringham, “The Blind Man and the Elephant: The Challenge of Representing the Rwandan Genocide,” in *The Ethics of Anthropology: Debates and Dilemmas*, ed. Pat Caplan (London: Routledge, 2003), 100; Drost, *Genocide*, 122–23.

<sup>16</sup> Kuper, *Genocide*, 16.

designated for extermination on this basis.<sup>17</sup> As put by Neil Eltringham, ‘in some cases, the perpetrators’ definition will be based on a group’s own, self-ascribed identity; in other cases group identity is merely a figment of each perpetrator’s imagination.’<sup>18</sup> Thus, it could be argued that genocide should be defined ‘according to the endogenous, situational definitions of the target groups as used by perpetrators, rather than by using some universal, abstract set of archetypes.’<sup>19</sup> It is for these reasons that I choose to use Katz’s definition of genocide for the purposes of this thesis.

### The importance of preventing genocide

The importance of genocide prevention is clear when we give consideration to the consequences of acts of omission, inaction, or intervention after killing has begun.<sup>20</sup> ‘Doing nothing’ in the face of mass atrocities, therein leaving genocidal destruction unabated, sees not only the loss of thousands or millions of innocent lives, but also the unquantifiable marring of livelihood.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the death toll, genocide has dire environmental, social, and economic consequences. For example, genocide can destabilise the region and trigger a mass spill over of refugees into neighbouring countries, causing malnutrition, sickness, and overcrowding as adjacent states grapple with an influx of populations fleeing persecution.<sup>22</sup> After the mass atrocity, psychological scarring and post-traumatic stress disorders are often pervasive, intergenerational problems; similarly, reconciliation, achieving justice and re-gaining trust are often long and costly processes.<sup>23</sup> Put bluntly, genocide leaves a bloodstained legacy of pain, mourning and guilt.<sup>24</sup> Action taken after genocidal killing begins – by way of military intervention, containment, sanctions, negotiations, or peace-restorative missions – is more favourable than inaction; yet, it too has limitations. Mounting a response is typically time consuming, requiring the navigation of bureaucratic processes

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<sup>17</sup> My emphasis, Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology*, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Eltringham, “The Blind Man,” 100.

<sup>19</sup> Eltringham, “The Blind Man,” 100.

<sup>20</sup> Ervin Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killings: Origins, Prevention, Healing and Reconciliation,” *Political Psychology* 21 (2000): 375; Nicolas Rost, “Will it happen again? On the possibility of forecasting the risk of genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 15 (2013): 41; Samantha Power, “Raising the Cost of Genocide,” in *The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention*, eds. Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 251.

<sup>21</sup> Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 71.

<sup>22</sup> Rost, “Will it happen again?,” 57.

<sup>23</sup> Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 2.

<sup>24</sup> Irrespective of the success of reconciliation measures, the horror caused by genocide is forever part of that state’s history.



and the coordination of response teams.<sup>25</sup> Intervention is also exceedingly arduous to implement, expensive, politically controversial, and – ultimately – unpopular, therein further obstructing ease and speed of action.<sup>26</sup> As a consequence, intervention is often too little, too late.

Genocide prevention refers to identifying and diffusing a situation that exhibits early warning signs or risk factors of genocide *prior* to the outbreak of killing.<sup>27</sup> It is premised on the assumption that ‘it is possible to predict, with a reasonable measure of accuracy, which situations may lead to genocide’.<sup>28</sup> This is because, despite its *means mala in se* nature,<sup>29</sup> genocide demands a ‘high degree of centralised authority and quasi-bureaucratic organisation’.<sup>30</sup> Genocide requires situational conditions conducive to gross human rights violations, *as well as* authoritative planning and preparation.<sup>31</sup> According to mass atrocity early warning scholars Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, ‘genocides do not just happen... policy decisions must be made, actions have to be planned, strategies and tactics must be enunciated to the executioners, and international acquiescence secured’.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, the intent to exterminate a group of people, as

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<sup>25</sup> Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 are testament to the fact that as each moment passes – due to the ‘necessity’ for paperwork to be filed and approved – more lives are terminated.

<sup>26</sup> Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 2; Samuel Totten, “The Intervention and Prevention of Genocide: Sisyphean or Doable?” *Journal of Genocide Research* 6 (2007): 246.

<sup>27</sup> Totten, “The Intervention,” 233; Craig Jenkins and Doug Bond, “Conflict-Carrying Capacity, Political Crisis, and Reconstruction: A Framework for the Early Warning of Political System Vulnerability,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 (2001): 4; David Carment, “The Ethnic Dimension in World Politics: Theory, Policy and Early Warning,” *Third World Quarterly* 15 (1994): 553; Israel Charny, “Genocide Intervention and Prevention” *Social Education*, 55 (1991): 125; Barbara Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment and Early Warning in the Prevention and De-Escalation of Genocide and other Mass Atrocities,” *Global Responsibility to Protect* 1 (2009): 522; Gavin Mount, “Diplomatic Applications of NGO Early Warning and Crisis Prevention Resources,” (paper presented at the Oceanic Conference on International Studies, Sydney, New South Wales, March 18-20, 2012); J. Reid Meloy et al., “The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment: An Exploration and Suggested Typology,” *Behavioural Sciences and the Law* 30 (2012): 256.

<sup>28</sup> Payam Akhavan, “Preventing Genocide: Measuring Success by What Does Not Happen,” *Criminal Law Forum* 22 (2011): 8.

<sup>29</sup> For genocide as *means mala in se*, see Rhiannon Neilsen, “Perfidy and *means mala in se*,” in *Key Issues in Military Ethics*, ed. Deane Peter-Baker (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2015), 169–73.

<sup>30</sup> Chalk and Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, 28. See also Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 7; Gregory Stanton, “Early Warning,” in *The Genocide Studies Reader*, eds. Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop (New York: Routledge, 2009), 317; Fred Gruenfeld and Anke Huijboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide In Rwanda: The Role of Bystanders*, (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007): 7; Kinloch, “The Possible Causes,” 18; Eric Markusen, “Genocide and Total War: A Preliminary Comparison,” In *Genocide and the Modern Age*, eds. Isidor William and Michael Dobkowski. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 117.

<sup>31</sup> Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 2; Linda M. Woolf and Michael R. Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide: Risk, Prevention and Intervention,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 7 (2007): 106; Alison Des Forges, “The Ideology of Genocide,” *A Journal of Opinion* 23 (1995): 44.

<sup>32</sup> Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, “Systematic Early Warning of Humanitarian Emergencies,” *Journal of Peace Research* 35 (1998): 568–69.

well as the preparations to do so are visible months or even years preceding carnage.<sup>33</sup> Critics maintain that there are simply no ‘hard and fast early warning signals,’<sup>34</sup> and that ‘the best one can expect from the early warning approach is a compilation of global hot spots...[which are], at best, educated guesswork.’<sup>35</sup> However, the majority of genocide scholars assert that although each case is bound by its own characteristics, genocides share discernable trends from which analysts can draw relatively sound conclusions.<sup>36</sup> As put by Gareth Evans, ‘had the world but eyes to see them, early warning signs were abundant for just about every one of the world’s worst cases of genocide and mass atrocity’.<sup>37</sup> Hence, it is indeed ‘possible to identify certain indicia as a basis for early warning’.<sup>38</sup>

Early warning signs of genocide are not intended to provide mathematical exactitude that genocide is inevitable.<sup>39</sup> Instead, the purpose of early warning signs is to flag that there is an increased risk of systematic killing, with enough notice to implement effectual preventative measures.<sup>40</sup> After all, ‘effective early warning does

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<sup>33</sup> Barbara Harff, “Recognising Genocides and Politicides,” in *The Genocide Studies Reader*, eds. Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop (New York: Routledge, 2009): 76; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 7, 10; Gruenfeld and Huijboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide*, 7; Rost, “Will it happen again?,” 42; Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 510; Elihu D. Richter, “Commentary: Genocide: Can We Predict, Prevent, and Protect,” *Journal of Public Health Policy* 29 (2008): 270; Barbara Harff, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955,” *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003): 58.

<sup>34</sup> Henry Huttenbach, “From the Editor: Can Genocide be Prevented? No! Yes? Perhaps,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, 7 (2005): 308; Aidan Hehir, “The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide: Adding Value to the UN’s Mechanisms for Preventing Intra-state Crises?” *Journal of Genocide Research* 13 (2011): 277.

<sup>35</sup> Henry Huttenbach, “From the Editors: Genocide Prevention: Sound Policy or Pursuit of a Mirage?,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 10 (2008): 471-2.

<sup>36</sup> William Easterly, Roberta Gatti and Sergio Kurlat, “Development, Democracy and Mass Killing,” *Journal of Economic Growth* 11 (2006): 132; Gareth Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and For All* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 84; Harff, “Recognising Genocides,” 30; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 7; Rost, “Will it happen again?,” 42; Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 101; Ervin Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killings: Origins, Prevention, Healing and Reconciliation,” *Political Psychology* 21 (2000): 369, 376.

<sup>37</sup> Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect*, 79.

<sup>38</sup> Akhavan, “Preventing Genocide,” 11.

<sup>39</sup> Jenkins and Bond, “Conflict-Carrying Capacity,” 4; Jonathan Whittall, “Humanitarian Early Warning Systems: Myth and Reality,” *Third World Quarterly* 31 (2011): 1239; Akhavan, “Preventing Genocide,” 11; Totten, “The Intervention and Prevention of Genocide,” 234.

<sup>40</sup> Albright, Madeleine and William Cohen, *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policy Makers*, (Washington DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008), 17; Rost, “Will it happen again?,” 59; Whittall, “Humanitarian Early Warning Systems,” 1237; Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 507; Ted Robert Gurr and Will H. Moore, “Ethnopolitical Rebellion: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the 1980s with Risk Assessments for the 1990s,” *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (1997): 1094; Israel Charny, “Requiem for the Prevention of Genocide in Our Time: Working toward an Improbably Possibility but Not Giving Up,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 7 (2012): 116; Meloy, et al., “The Role of Warning Behaviours,” 260; Akhavan, “Preventing Genocide,” 11.

not guarantee successful prevention, but if warning is absent, slow, inaccurate or indistinguishable from the ‘noise’ of regular reporting, failure is virtually guaranteed.’<sup>41</sup> With an efficient early warning sign system in place, the decision makers charged with the responsibility to prevent genocide are, in theory, better informed and better positioned to formulate coherent, proactive, and cost-effective strategies to diffuse the situation.<sup>42</sup> This can include prevention diplomacy, mediation, economic sanctions, deploying peacekeeping personnel, emissaries, and ‘capacity-building measures’ *prior* to the outbreak of killing.<sup>43</sup> Thus, it is important that attention is given to creating reliable risk assessments and identifying indicia for genocide.<sup>44</sup> To contextualise this thesis, I will provide a survey of existing early warning signs in the genocide literature.

#### Macro-Level early warning signs of genocide and risk factors

Many macro-level, state-centric early warning signs have been offered in the genocide literature. These include the type of political regime, the political climate (instability or upheaval), military expenditure/extremism, and the context of internal/civil warfare. In various investigations, Harff and Gurr concluded that genocides and ethno-political revolts typically occur in the context of autocratic rule, civil war, and tumultuous political terrain/state failure. Therefore, they state that revolutionary conflicts, rebellions, insurgencies, separatist conflicts, guerilla warfare, coups, and adverse regime

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<sup>41</sup> Albright and Cohen, *Preventing Genocide*, 17.

<sup>42</sup> I will come back to the point of who has this responsibility to prevent genocide later in this chapter. Donald Krumm, “Early Warnings: An Action Agenda,” in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, eds. John L. Davis and Ted R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 248; Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 508; Whittall, “Humanitarian Early Warning Systems,” 1237; Charny, “Genocide Intervention,” 125.

<sup>43</sup> John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr, “Preventive Measures: An Overview,” in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, eds. John L. Davis and Ted R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 1-15, 2; Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 508; Gurr and Moore, “Ethnopolitical Rebellion,” 1080.

<sup>44</sup> Albright and Cohen, *Preventing Genocide*, 17; Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 507, 523; Jenkins and Bond, “Conflict-Carrying Capacity,” 3; Henry Huttenbach, “From the Editor: Earlier Early Warning Signs,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 5 (2003): 502; Carment, “The Ethnic Dimension in World Politics,” 552-3; Sang Hoo Bae and Attiat F. Ott, “Predatory Behaviour of Governments: The Case of Mass Killing,” *Defence and Peace Economics* 19 (2008): 108; Matthew Krain, “State-Sponsored Mass Murder: The Onset and Severity of Genocides and Politicides,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (1997): 331-360; Jenkins and Bond, “Conflict-Carrying Capacity,” 6; Rost, “Will it Happen Again?,” 44; Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman, “One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data,” *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (2007): 235–40.

transitions constitute risk factors and early warning signs for genocide.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, Craig Jenkins and Doug Bond state that civil contention, state repression, and violence as a political tool are also early warning signs for genocide. They argue that as these archetypal qualities of authoritarianism increase, the state's capacity to regulate intense internal conflict wanes, and genocide becomes a more viable option for dictatorial leaders.<sup>46</sup> Drawing conclusions from an analysis of 147 mass killings from 1945 to 2000, Benjamin Valentino, Paul Huth and Dylan Balch-Lindsay identify that genocide is a military tactic used by oppressive regimes to crush guerrilla insurgencies which are supported by local populations, or which pose a significant threat to the vitality of the authoritarian regime. As such, the authors maintain that the presence of major guerrilla insurgents forewarns the potential for genocide.<sup>47</sup> Using a comprehensive data set from 1820 to 1998, William Easterly, Roberta Gatti and Sergio Kurlat confirm that dictatorial regimes are a crucial early warning for mass killing, while many apparent 'democratic' empires were also engaged in colonial genocides in the nineteenth century.<sup>48</sup> Put most succinctly by Rudolph Rummel following a preliminary synthesis of 8200 instances of democide in the twentieth century: <sup>49</sup> 'power kills, and absolute power kills absolutely'.<sup>50</sup>

Many genocide scholars also stress political grievances as a risk factor and early warning sign for the onset of state-sponsored mass killing. These include openings in political opportunity structures; regime change 'outside of an electoral or constitutionally sanctioned process';<sup>51</sup> riots, assassinations, anti-government demonstrations; transitions *toward* democracy; insecure leaders in political turmoil or on the losing end of war attempting to remain in power; free flows of arms and high military expenditure, and the existence of regional warlords. Although these factors may be present prior to the onset of genocide, they fall short of indicating the *likelihood* and *proximity* of mass organised extermination. That is, these situational factors do not

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<sup>45</sup> Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases Since 1945," *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (1988): 359–68; Harff, "How to Use Risk Assessment," 506; Gurr and Moore, "Ethnopolitical Rebellion," 1094.

<sup>46</sup> Jenkins and Bond, "Conflict-Carrying Capacity," 4.

<sup>47</sup> Benjamin Valentino, Paul Huth and Dylan Balch-Lindsay, "'Draining the Sea': Mass Killing and Guerilla Warfare," *International Organisation* 58 (2004): 375.

<sup>48</sup> Easterly, Gatti and Kurlat, "Development, Democracy and Mass Killing," 146.

<sup>49</sup> Rummel elects to use 'democide' to encompass genocides and political mass murders. See Rudolph J. Rummel, "Power, Genocide and Mass Murder," *Journal of Peace Research* 31 (1994): 1; Rudolph J. Rummel, "Democracy, Power, Genocide and Mass Murder," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39 (1995): 4.

<sup>50</sup> Rummel, "Power, Genocide and Mass Murder," 1.

<sup>51</sup> "OSAPG Analysis Framework."

indicate that genocide is forthcoming, but rather that it has a *greater possibility* of occurring. Consequently, the above conditions are better understood as ‘red flags’ to be monitored: they do not signal the beginning phases of the lead up to genocide or that there is an *imminent* risk of killing.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, such state-centric factors are useful for identifying situations that *may* become genocidal.

#### Economic early warning signs and risk factors

Economic conditions are also cited as indicia for genocide.<sup>53</sup> For example, determining whether the mass killings and genocides in African nations from 1989 to 2005 were motivated by greed or grievance, Chyanda Querido concludes that ‘violence against civilians is the outcome of a rational decision-making process’.<sup>54</sup> Specifically, high levels of per-capita military expenditure and a desire to gain a monopoly of valuable resources (in this case, on onshore oil and lootable diamonds) increased the likelihood of killing and can be regarded as factors that forewarned the intention to mass systematically kill. Joan Esteban, Massimo Morelli and Dominic Rohner also point to resource wealth, in combination with low productivity of labor and the dominance of a particular ethnic group, as forewarning strategic mass killing.<sup>55</sup> Ted Gurr and Will Moore consider spikes in inflation rates, unequal economic growth and disparities in economic demography, wherein certain groups are excluded from or limited in economic participation, as early warning indicators for ethno-political rebellion and mass extermination.<sup>56</sup> Conversely, Ervin Staub turns to the experiences of the wider population; specifically, he cites ‘difficult life conditions’ that give rise to scapegoating and in/out-group animosities as precipitating mass killing and thus being an early warning sign for genocide.<sup>57</sup> Claiming that stressed living environments is too simplistic (as many groups are subject to harsh conditions without executing mass murder), the

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<sup>52</sup> While early warning and risk assessment are terms used fairly interchangeably in the genocide literature, a distinction is made by Harff, “How to Use Risk Assessment,” 506; Gurr and Moore, “Ethnopolitical Rebellion,” 1094; Jenkins and Bond, “Conflict-Carrying Capacity,” 3-4.

<sup>53</sup> “OSAPG Analysis Framework.”; Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killings,” 367; Akhavan, “Preventing Genocide,” 11; Ervin Staub, “The Roots and Prevention of Genocide,” *Zygon* 47 (2012): 821.

<sup>54</sup> Chyanda M. Querido, “State-Sponsored Mass Killing in African Wars – Greed or Grievance?” *International Advances in Economic Research* 15 (2009): 351, 357.

<sup>55</sup> Joan Esteban, Massimo Morelli and Dominic Rohner, “Strategic Mass Killing,” Accessed 20 November 2014, [http://econ.columbia.edu/files/econ/emr\\_2012july1.pdf](http://econ.columbia.edu/files/econ/emr_2012july1.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Gurr and Moore, “Ethnopolitical Rebellion,” 1084, 1094.

<sup>57</sup> Ervin Staub, “The Origins and Prevention of Genocide, Mass Killing and Other Collective Violence,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 5 (1999): 303.

effect of regional instability has also been cited as a risk factor for genocide. This includes tensions ‘over sovereignty of land and resources...[and] disparate allocation of and access to power and resources’.<sup>58</sup> Both of which apparently frustrate needs and wants, and can lead to gross killing. In their regression-model analysis of the predatory behavior of governments in the twentieth century, Sang Bae and Attiat Ott posit that mass killing is advanced by leaders with a concentration of power (measured by longevity executive tenure), motivated by the expectation of monetary or resource gains.<sup>59</sup>

Political early warning signs flag a possible genocide, which could serve as a *security* device: they act as a means for political elites to maintain or ascertain absolute authority. In contrast, the above economic early warning indicators signal that the consequences of genocide are portrayed as a *gain*. Thus, potential perpetrators are presented with a logic, which assumes that ‘reducing the population size of the opponent group – by extermination... allows for the perpetrator to obtain a larger share in the future distribution of surplus’.<sup>60</sup> Rather than signaling genocide as a vehicle to solidify political autonomy, economic early warning signs indicate that members of the population are led to believe they will gain financially or resourcefully, or see the betterment of living conditions via the extermination of a group. Consequently, both political and economic early warning signs can assist in determining whether genocide prevention should be geared toward quelling political frustrations or managing economic considerations.

#### Historical early warning signs and risk factors

Scholars identify recent genocides, grieving populations, ‘group cultural history’, and mass human right violations as early warning indicators of genocide. Firstly, a recent history of genocides against a particular group is thought to be a salient early warning signal for future outbreaks.<sup>61</sup> This is because it thought to set the scene for the continuation of violence and fuels tensions between groups, therein stimulating the desire for retaliation by kin of victims of earlier genocides. Building atop of this, denial of past genocides, and the subsequent impunity of killers, is regarded as ‘among the

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<sup>58</sup> Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 105.

<sup>59</sup> Bae and Ott, “Predatory Behavior of Governments,” 108, 134.

<sup>60</sup> “Strategic Mass Killing,” 3.

<sup>61</sup> Richter, “Commentary: Genocide,” 270.

surest indicators of further genocidal massacres’,<sup>62</sup> as it inhibits genuine reconciliation, and the realisation of justice for crimes committed. Instead, past and potential perpetrators – both *internal* and *external* to the country in which genocide occurred – are assured of their exemption from systems of justice, and thus believe genocide to be repeatable without accountability.<sup>63</sup> Failing to acknowledge, accept, and reconcile past genocides can be regarded as a risk factor and early warning sign for future genocides. Secondly, grievances held by a large portion of the population can often forewarn genocides. Grief could be a result of a loss of identity or state autonomy, external repression or interference via colonialism or invasion, effects of post-colonialism, or defeats in warfare. What is more, if these factors ferment, feelings of frustration among members of the populations can magnify.<sup>64</sup> Thirdly, some scholars cite a culture’s history of conflict, aggression or glorification of violence as an early warning for genocide. Linda M. Woolf and Michael R. Hulsizer look to ‘group cultural history’ as predictors for forms of mass killing. They maintain that within a ‘culture of violence’, an individual’s sense of normativity in relation to morality and relationships are skewed in such a way whereby violence is more tolerable and likely.<sup>65</sup> By ‘violent cultures’, Woolf and Hulsizer mean groups who: look to aggression as a primary problem-solving mechanism, are antipathic and conflict-orientated toward perceived threats, and reject diversity in favour of cultural homogeneity.<sup>66</sup> Other scholars suggest that cultures which are not just ethnically fractionalised, but also ethnically intolerant and are at risk of genocide and thus should be monitored. This is especially the case if the minorities or the target group are portrayed as having an elite social or economic status.<sup>67</sup> Finally, in their Analysis Framework, the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide cites ‘serious discriminatory practices’, or gross human right violations as an early warning sign for genocide.<sup>68</sup> Left unaddressed, human right violations have a tendency to escalate, as authorities may progressively feel more comfortable with the levels of oppression. By the same token, explicit references to

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<sup>62</sup> “The 8 Stages of Genocide.”

<sup>63</sup> This is illustrated by Hitler’s 1939 speech, wherein – speaking of the necessity to exterminate Polish men, women and children in the interests of *Lebensraum* – he asserted, ‘who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?’ Quoted in Louis P. Lochner, *What About Germany?* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1942), 1-4.

<sup>64</sup> “OSAPG Analysis Framework.”; Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 105.

<sup>65</sup> Charny, “Genocide, Intervention and Prevention,” 126.

<sup>66</sup> Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 102.

<sup>67</sup> Carment, “The Ethnic Dimension in World Politics,” 575.

<sup>68</sup> “OSAPG Analysis Framework.”

members of the potential perpetrator group being victim to past human right violations (whether fictitious or factual) are often used as incitements to commit genocide and thus also serve as an early warning sign. This is because past, collective suffering experienced by a group is often harnessed and used as a justification for ‘punishing’ the targeted collective.<sup>69</sup>

The above early warning signs are contextually focused, insofar that they stress the country’s particular circumstances in terms of warfare or being subject to colonialism, ethnic hetero/homogeneity, pre-existing tensions/grievances or genocides. Therefore, a relatively comprehensive database regarding a state’s history and current affairs is required to successfully monitor whether genocide is likely. While this is not unviable – albeit time consuming and presumably costly – it may allow for discrepancies, which could go dangerously unnoticed. If, for example, particular tensions between ethnic groups are not documented or known, it would be difficult to identify an escalation in relational-hostilities as an early warning sign for genocide. More crucially, such early warning signs raise concerns about measurement: how do we measure if a group is ‘culturally’ or ‘historically’ violent? What are the criteria for a group to qualify as culturally or historically violent? How far into history do we give consideration as to whether certain groups fulfill the requirements of being ‘violent’? Against whom? *Who* determines which groups are violent, and thus warrant monitoring? In terms of genocides or grievances committed by one group against another, what constitutes ‘recent’? What severity of ‘human rights violations’ or grievances? And so on.

#### Micro-level early warning signs and risk factors

Socio-psychological factors and ideologies have been offered as important indicators for the onset of genocide. Ideology is understood as ‘a distinctive system of normative, semantic and/or reputedly factual ideas, typically shared by members of groups or societies, which underpins their understandings of their political world and shapes their political behaviour.’<sup>70</sup> As such, a genocidal ideology formulates certain convictions – to which members of a group subscribe – that warrant the destruction of a collective. It

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<sup>69</sup> “OSAPG Analysis Framework.”

<sup>70</sup> Malcom B. Hamilton, “The Elements of the Concept of Ideology,” *Political Studies* 35 (1987): 38; Cited in Jonathan Leader Maynard, “Rethinking the Role of Ideology in Mass Atrocities,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26 (2014): 824.



presents genocide as a feasible, required and (possibly) attractive pursuit. Genocide ideologies initially emphasised contextual or political aspects. Anti-Semitism, Nazism, racism, and superiority complexes (which artificially inflates self-esteem, and is ‘highly predictive of aggressive behavior in the event of such egoism...being threatened’) are often considered reliable early warning signs for genocide.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, extreme nationalism, patriarchal domination, and religious fundamentalism or fanaticism, are ideologies cited by scholars as early warning signs for genocide.<sup>72</sup> Fascism, social-Darwinism/Gobineau (which is an ideology animated by the betterment or furtherance of society), or metaphysical fixations with cleanliness, hygiene, purity and societal perfectionism are also thought to be early warning indicators for killing.<sup>73</sup> Themes of exclusionism, eliminationism, ancient tribal animosities<sup>74</sup> and disgrace/humiliation,<sup>75</sup> and ideological commitments to imperialism, conquest, domination and power are also regarded as early warning signs for genocide. In each of these cases these ideologies are considered to disseminate convictions that encourage destructive/genocidal acts.<sup>76</sup> However, arguments have been made that such ideologies tend to be theoretically underdeveloped.<sup>77</sup> In terms of early warning signs, while the presence of genocidal ideologies alone warrants concern, alarm is intensified when these sentiments come from figures that are perceived to be legitimate and authoritative. That is, ideological narratives gain verisimilitude – and consequently merit greater concern – when they emanate from ‘credible’ institutions, ‘deemed trustworthy by members of a social group’.<sup>78</sup> According to some scholars, the population must also have either a history of submission/obedience to authority, or be at least receptive to such ideologies.<sup>79</sup> Additionally, genocidal ideologies encompass the archetypal trends specific to genocide, and contextual idiosyncrasies (such as history, mythology, religion), which contour the manifestation of the ideology.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, ideologies that locate genocide policies at the heart of their convictions are considered important early warning signs

<sup>71</sup> Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 103.

<sup>72</sup> Gilberto Arriaza, “Overview: The Intersection Of Ideologies of Violence,” *Social Justice* 30 (2003): 1.

<sup>73</sup> John Cox, “Racial Ideology, Imperialism and Nazism,” *Global Dialogue* 15 (2013): 118–20.

<sup>74</sup> This was mostly used specifically in relation to African genocides, wherein there was a distinct lack of understanding of dynamics and relations across the colonial European artificially constructed borders.

<sup>75</sup> Harff and Gurr, “Toward Empirical Theory,” 361; “OSAPG Analysis Framework.”

<sup>76</sup> Cox, “Racial Ideology, Imperialism and Nazism,” 118, 128; Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 38–39.

<sup>77</sup> Maynard, “Rethinking the Role of Ideology,” 3.

<sup>78</sup> Maynard, “Rethinking the Role of Ideology,” 7.

<sup>79</sup> Woolf and Hulsizer, “Psychosocial Roots of Genocide,” 106.

<sup>80</sup> Des Forges, “The Ideology of Genocide,” 44; Easterly, Gatti and Kurlat, “Development, Democracy and Mass Killing,” 132; Harff, “Recognising Genocides and Politicides,” 30.

for genocide, because they construct certain ideas, influence the internalisation of such ideas, and pressure individuals to act in accordance with those ideas.

Social psychological early warning signs of genocide refer to how the presence of others (real, fictitious or implicit) affect an individual's beliefs, emotions and behaviours in a social context, specifically in relation to forewarning genocide. This is discussed often in conjunction with the role of language and tropes<sup>81</sup> as vehicles that condition populations to be conducive to genocide.<sup>82</sup> These include classification, the discrimination between 'us' and 'them'; symbolisation, the assignment of symbols to 'them'; and dehumanisation, the denial of an individual's status as human.<sup>83</sup> Dehumanisation in particular is considered by some scholars to 'mark the onset of the death spiral toward genocide',<sup>84</sup> because it sees the development stages of mass killing and has great potential for early prevention.<sup>85</sup> This is something I will return to in Chapter Two. William Donohue cites the paradoxical 'identity trap',<sup>86</sup> wherein the one's social identity is depicted as favourable, and the enemy's social identity is depreciated or detestable. This in-group, out-group socio-psychological dynamism is described in psychology as 'infrahumanisation'.<sup>87</sup> Additional socio-psychological early warning signs include: conflated mistrust of a group among the population; a desire to reaffirm purpose; alienation or unacknowledged feelings of humiliation and shame due to societal circumstances; scapegoating; little value of human worth; and legitimisation of victimising others by elites as early warning signs that describe social relations/contexts in which individuals may be disposed to commit genocide.<sup>88</sup> Rather than describing the dynamics that operate at the macro-level, socio-psychological early

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<sup>81</sup> That is, the use of irony, synecdoche, irony and metaphors

<sup>82</sup> William Donohue, "The Identity Trap: The Language of Genocide," *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 31 (2012b): 13, 25.

<sup>83</sup> Stanton, "Early Warning", 317–19; "The 8 Stages of Genocide."

<sup>84</sup> Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 14.

<sup>85</sup> Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 14.

<sup>86</sup> Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 13.

<sup>87</sup> This is a point I return to in Chapter Two. For studies on the role of infrahumanisation in violence, please see: Jacques-Philippe Leyens et al., "The Emotional Side of Prejudice: the Attribution of Uniquely Human Emotions to Ingroups and Outgroups," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 31(2002): 395–411; Jeroen Vaes et al., "We are Human, They are Not: Driving Forces behind Outgroup Dehumanisation and the Humanization of the Intergroup," *European Review of Social Psychology* 23 (2012): 103; Stéphanie Demoulin et al., "Emotional Prejudice can Lead to Infra-humanisation," *European Review of Social Psychology* 15(2004): 259–96; Matt Motyl, Joshua Hart and Tom Pyszczynski, "When Animals Attack: The Effects of Mortality Salience, Infrahumanisation of Violence, and Authoritarianism on Support for War," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 46(2010): 201.

<sup>88</sup> Meloy et al., "The Role of Warning Behaviours," 256; Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 16; Carment, "The Ethnic Dimension," 556; Thomas J. Scheff, "Social-emotional Origins of Violence: A Theory of Multiple Killing," *Aggression and Violent Behaviour* 16 (2011) 453, 455–56; Charny, "Genocide Intervention and Prevention," 125–27.

warning signs describe the conditions in which the killers operate. For this reason, socio-psychological early warning indicators provide valuable insight into how viable mass killing seems to be for certain individuals, and into the potential proximity of outbreak. It is important to note that although certain early warning signs may be more visible in various instances, they do not exist in isolation of one another. For genocides to occur a number of factors *must* be present; it is insufficient to state that because only one factor is present, genocide will occur. Thus, situations that could ‘go genocidal’ will exhibit multiple early warning signs.

This approach to prevention notwithstanding, recent movements have been made to shift concentration away from ‘what went wrong’, to what went *right* for genocide to be effectively prevented. Stephen McLoughlin calls for the structural prevention of mass atrocities to move beyond simply identifying early warning signs or ‘root causes’, because it erroneously assumes a linear inevitability between cause and outcome.<sup>89</sup> Instead, concentration should be directed toward identifying what factors foster peace and resilience in instances that exhibit early warning signs, and to promote these conditions in at-risk countries.<sup>90</sup> Such an approach is deeply valuable for genocide prevention. Yet, value is still to be found in identifying the early warning signs for what went ‘wrong’, because this allows for policy makers to determine whether a country is at risk. If a situation exhibits early warning signs of mass atrocities, it would then be appropriate to implement mechanisms of resilience, as identified by McLoughlin.

Merely identifying early warning signs is not enough for effective genocide prevention: what is required is early *action* by certain actors.<sup>91</sup> The final sentiment expressed by Romeo Dallaire in his autobiographical account of the Rwandan genocide, ‘*Peux ce que veux. Allons-y.*’<sup>92</sup> However, this draws into the discussion addressing *who* is responsible for responding to mass atrocities, and *why* response has failed to eventuate or fallen short in the past.<sup>93</sup> These questions have received considerable

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<sup>89</sup> Stephen McLoughlin, *The Structural Prevention of Mass Atrocities: Understanding Risk and Resilience*, (New York: Routledge, 2014), 3.

<sup>90</sup> McLoughlin, *The Structural Prevention*, 7; Scott Straus, “Retreating from the Brink: Theorizing Mass Violence and the Dynamics of Restraint,” *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2012): 343.

<sup>91</sup> Gruenfeld and Huiboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide*, 15; Rost, “Will it Happen Again?,” 41; Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killing,” 376; Hahir, “The special adviser,” 281; Dieter Janssen, “Humanitarian Intervention and the Prevention of Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 10 (2008): 301.

<sup>92</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (London: Arrow Books, 2003), 552.

<sup>93</sup> Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killing,” 375–76.

traction in recent years, and important developments have been made in their regard.<sup>94</sup> Unfortunately, giving attention to these questions falls outside the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the research conducted here aims to contribute to the prevention of genocide by building toward a more detailed early warning sign framework. In doing so, it attempts to provide more accurate information regarding whether and when prevention is necessary. Without an authoritative knowledge base of genocide indicia, which traces the nascent development stages of mass atrocities, it will be difficult to discern not only whether preventative measures are needed, but *which, how urgently,* and *who* is the most appropriate agent to implement them. As poignantly stated by Samuel Totten and Paul Bartop, ‘early warning is meaningless without early response. But early warning is the necessary first step toward prevention’.<sup>95</sup> This thesis is thus concerned with *savior pour prévoir et prévoir pour pouvoir* – knowledge for prediction, prediction for power.<sup>96</sup>

Having discussed existing indicia of genocide, Chapter Two moves to critically discuss dehumanisation as a socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide. It will do so by reviewing dehumanisation in the broader dehumanisation literature and the genocide-specific literature.

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<sup>94</sup> For interesting discussions on discharging this notion of the responsibility to protect vulnerable populations from mass atrocities, and *who* can be reasonably charged with this duty (and therefore accountable for inaction), please see Toni Erskine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Duties to Strangers and Enemies in a World of “Dislocated Communities”* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Toni Erskine, ““Blood on the UN’s Hands”? Assigning Duties and Apportioning Blame to an Intergovernmental Organisation,” *Global Society* 18(2010): 21–42; Toni Erskine, “Coalitions of the Willing and Responsibilities to Protect: Informal Associations, Enhanced Capacities and Shared Moral Burdens,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 28(2014): 115–45.

<sup>95</sup> Stanton, “Early Warning,” 319.

<sup>96</sup> Thomas Cushman, “Is Genocide Preventable? Some Theoretical Considerations,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 5 (2003): 527.

## Chapter 2

### Dehumanisation as an Unreliable Early Warning Sign for Genocide

As seen from the previous chapter, a variety of factors can forewarn the onset of genocide. One socio-psychological early warning sign that has received considerable attention in the genocide literature is dehumanisation. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate that, contrary to the belief of many genocide scholars, dehumanisation is not a reliable early warning sign for genocide. It will do so by providing a literature review of dehumanisation in the genocide-specific literature and the broader dehumanisation literature. Dehumanisation is considered by many in the genocide specific literature as the very stage at which genocide begins; indeed, dehumanisation was credited with this by the UN Secretary General's Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide in last year's 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the 1948 Genocide Convention.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in the broader dehumanisation literature, dehumanisation is found in a variety of instances that are unrelated to conflict, violence or even aggression – let alone mass killing. Dehumanisation is a part of the genocidal process, however owing to its presence in a variety of instances outside of mass atrocities, I claim that it can not be considered an important early warning sign for genocide specifically. Importantly, I also identify genocide scholars who have also acknowledged the insufficiency of dehumanisation as an early warning sign for genocide, thereby reinforcing the argument made here. Via this literature review, I clarify the role of dehumanisation prior to genocide, and conclude that a more specific socio-psychological genocide early warning indicator than dehumanisation is needed.

#### The definitional consistency of dehumanisation

In the genocide literature and broader dehumanisation literature, scholars share the same definition of dehumanisation. Dehumanisation is defined as the 'psychological-symbolic removal of others from the province or group of classification of *human*'.<sup>2</sup> By

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<sup>1</sup> "Genocide begins with 'dehumanisation'. I return to this point later in the chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Original italics, Charny, "Dehumanisation—'Killing'," 155. See also Caroline Tipler and Janet Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanisation: Non-human Metaphors of Out-groups," *Social and Personal Psychology Compass* 8 (2014): 214-248; Lang, "Questioning Dehumanisation," 228-29; Haslam et al., "Dehumanisation," 410; Lammers and Stapel, "Power increases Dehumanisation," 115; Opatow, "Moral Exclusion and Injustice," 1.

stripping an individual of individuality, identity, and humanity, they are ejected from what Helen Fein terms the ‘human universe of moral obligation’.<sup>3</sup> That is, the dehumanised individual is no longer included in the moral sphere of rights afforded to humans *on the basis of being human*, nor are they included in the meaningful social fabric that governs relationships.<sup>4</sup> Thus, dehumanisation is the ultimate estranging and ‘othering’ process: it is the ‘activity of repressing, subjugating, annihilating the similarities between the self and others, and the ways in which the other is known and understood’ to such an extent that the person is deemed without human status.<sup>5</sup> According to neuro-scientific accounts of dehumanisation, the dehumaniser subconsciously deactivates ‘the brain region that is responsible for attributing mental states to other people (i.e. the medial frontal cortex)’.<sup>6</sup> This entails a cognitive stripping of the individual’s capacity to experience, to ‘feel pleasure and pain’, and to have agency, the capacity to ‘plan, intend and exert choice’.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is understood as the ‘denial of the distinctively human mind to another person.’<sup>8</sup> As aforementioned, dehumanisation is qualified as a social psychological early warning sign, because it deals with how one individual perceives another, and the effect this has on the individual’s thoughts and actions.<sup>9</sup>

The above conceptualisations of dehumanisation present an absolutist denial of a person’s humanity and individuality. In contrast to these accounts, Harvey Peskin emphasises that *any* loss of personal credibility or assignment of anonymity is dehumanisation, ‘rather than only the exceptionality of humans reduced to subhuman’.<sup>10</sup> While this is not discussed in the genocide literature, this touches on the notion of *infra-*

<sup>3</sup> Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 43; Zartman and Anstey, “The Problem,” 11; Lang, “Questioning Dehumanisation,” 225–24; Moshman, “Us and Them,” 115; Haagensen and Croes, “Thy Brother’s Keeper?,” 225; Keith and Keith, *Intellectual Disability*; Kuper, *Genocide*, 86; Hans Ladegaard, Hans, “Beyond the Reach of Ethics and Equity? Depersonalisation and Dehumanisation in Foreign Domestic Helper Narratives,” *Language and Intercultural Communication* 13(2013): 54; Daniel Bar-Tal, “Causes and Consequences of Delegitimisation: Models of Conflict and Ethnocentrism,” *Journal of Social Issues* 46 (1990): 65–73.

<sup>5</sup> Farhad Dalal, “Racism: Processes of Detachment, Dehumanisation, and Hatred”, *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 75 (2006): 158.

<sup>6</sup> Viki, Osgood and Phillips, “Dehumanisation”, 325.

<sup>7</sup> Haque, Omar and Adam Waytz, “Dehumanisation in Medicine: Causes, Solutions and Functions,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 7 (2012): 177, 178; Susan Fiske, “From Dehumanisation and Objectification to Rehumanization: Neuroimaging Studies on the Building Blocks of Empathy,” *Values, Empathy and Fairness across Social Barriers* 1167 (2009): 31–34; Harris and Fiske, “Dehumanising the lowest,” 847–53.

<sup>8</sup> Haque and Waytz, “Dehumanisation in Medicine”, 176; Stollznow, “Dehumanisation in language,” 190.

<sup>9</sup> Allport, “The historical background of social psychology,” 3.

<sup>10</sup> Harvey Peskin, “‘Man is a Wolf to Man’: Disorders of Dehumanisation in Psychoanalysis”, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues: The International Journal of Relational Perspectives* 22 (2012): 190.

humanisation. Infrahumanisation is the process of assigning *more* humanity to one's self and in-group than to members of the out-group; as a consequence, members of the out-group are implicitly ascribed '*less* humanity', but are nonetheless still regarded as human.<sup>11</sup>

The broader dehumanisation literature discusses two ways the process occurs: both describe individuals as without human status, but they do so by prescribing different characteristics that portray an individual as no longer being human. The first is animalistic dehumanisation, which is the denial of 'uniquely human attributes'<sup>12</sup>, such as moral awareness and sensibility, emotional depth and empathy, civility and rationality.<sup>13</sup> The dehumanised is attributed the antithesis of these qualities: they are considered impulsive, 'uncultured', devoid of reason and ethics, and governed by the satisfaction of basic needs, like animals.<sup>14</sup> According to Jeroen Vaes et al., the process of dehumanising an individual by using animal metaphors can be differentiated further when looking to the specific animal cited. For example, they state that labelling individuals as dogs and apes emphasise that they have less ethical worth than humans, whereas terms such as 'snake, rats, and leeches...convey the idea of depravity *and* moral disgust, and are judged as offensive' in addition to less morally deserving.<sup>15</sup> Equating an individual to a rat not only awards them less moral worth than humans, but also connotes revulsion and aversion.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Leyens et al., "The Emotional Side of Prejudice," 398-407; Demoulin et al., "Emotional prejudice," 259-96. Naria Delgado et al., "Priming Effects of Violence on Infrahumanisation," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12(2009): 700; Paul Bain, et al., "Attributing Human Uniqueness and Human Nature to Cultural Groups: Distinct forms of Subtle Dehumanisation," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12 (2009): 789-805; Nick Haslam et al., "Subhuman, Inhuman and Superhuman: Contrasting Humans with Nonhumans in Three Cultures," *Social Cognition* 26 (2008): 249.

<sup>12</sup> Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 414.

<sup>13</sup> Nick Haslam et al., "More Human Than You: Attributing Humanness to Self and Others," *Journal of Psychology and Social Psychology* 89 (2005): 937-48; Nick Haslam, "Attributing and Denying Humanness to Others," *European review of social psychology* 19 (2008): 55-78; Mariana Miranda, Maria Gouveia-Pereira and Jeroen Vaes, "When in Rome... Identification and Acculturation Strategies among Minority Members Moderate the Dehumanisation of the Majority Outgroup," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 44 (2014): 327-36; Vaes et al., "We are human, they are not," 69.

<sup>14</sup> Rico Martinez, Rosa Rodriguez-Bailon and Miguel Moya, "Are they Animals or Machines? Measuring Dehumanisation," *The Spanish Journal of Psychology* 15 (2012): 1110; Daniel Livingstone Smith, *Less than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave and Exterminate Others* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2011), 158; Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 43; Victoria Esses et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanisation of Refugees," *Social Justice Research* 21 (2008): 6-7.

<sup>15</sup> My emphasis, Vaes, et al. "We are human, They are Not," 71.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*. (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2007), 313.

The second is mechanistic dehumanisation, which is the denial of *sentience* – that is, the ability to feel, perceive and be conscious.<sup>17</sup> Via mechanistic dehumanisation, the individual is regarded as a machine, impervious to pain and pleasure, incapable of warmth or empathy, and thus undeserving of empathy or compassion.<sup>18</sup> Hence, the former dehumanises the individual by equating them to barbarians or animals – erratic, easily amused or satisfied, and incapable of the higher order, rationalised thinking considered to be distinctly human. This form of dehumanisation denies an individual their status of human by viewing him/her as a machine – an insentient being, completely without the capacity to feel and thus not afforded the same sensitivity as humans. In both instances of dehumanisation, individuals are considered to be unsophisticated and treated as ‘a means to an end, rather than an end in themselves’.<sup>19</sup>

Whether writing about dehumanisation as an early warning sign for genocide, or in broader contexts, scholars accept a consistent definition of dehumanisation. It is accepted to be ‘the central construct in our understanding of ‘man’s inhumanity to man’’.<sup>20</sup> According to both the genocide and broader dehumanisation literatures, dehumanisation incorporates a loss of credibility, an assignment of anonymity, and the disempowerment of a person as ‘independent and distinguishable from others’:<sup>21</sup> individuals are no longer thought to qualify as human.<sup>22</sup> Dehumanisation involves excluding individuals from the sphere of human moral obligation, and perceiving the individual as un- or sub-human.<sup>23</sup> In short, the same understanding of dehumanisation is used within the genocide literature and in the broader dehumanisation literature.

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<sup>17</sup> While ‘the denial of sentience’ is phrasing that I have chosen to use here, the initial distinction made is to be credited to Tobias Greitemeyer and Neil McLatchie, “Denying Humanness to Others: a Newly Discovered Mechanism by which Violent Video Games Increase Aggressive Behavior,” *Psychological Science* 22 (2011): 659–56, 661, 663. For similar discussions regarding the denial of sentence, see Nick Haslam, “Dehumanisation: An integrative review,” *Personality and Social Psychology* 89 (2006): 252–64; Martinez, Rodriguez-Bailon and Moya, “Are they Animals or Machines?,” 1110; Tendayi, Osgood and Phillips, “Dehumanisation,” 326; Rudman and Mescher, “Of Animals and Objects,” 734; Vaes et al. “We are human, They Are Not,” 69.

<sup>18</sup> Haque and Waytz, “Dehumanisation in Medicine,” 177; Stollznow, “Dehumanisation in Language,” 180.

<sup>19</sup> Haque and Waytz, “Dehumanisation in Medicine,” 178.

<sup>20</sup> Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect*, 307.

<sup>21</sup> Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 48.

<sup>22</sup> Peskin, “Man is Wolf to Man,” 190–91; Philip Goff et al., “Not Yet Human: Implicit Knowledge, Historical Dehumanisation, and Contemporary Consequences,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94 (2008): 294; Esses et al., “Justice, Morality and the Dehumanisation,” 6; Winnifred Louis, Victoria Esses and Richard Lalonde, “National Identification, Perceived Threat, and Dehumanisation as Antecedents of Negative Attitudes Toward Immigrants in Australia and Canada,” *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 43 (2013): 157; Opatow, “Moral Exclusion and Injustice,” 2; Albarello Flavia and Monica Rubini, “Reducing Dehumanisation Outcomes Towards Blacks: The Role of Multiple Categorisation and of Human Identity,” 42 (2012): 876.

<sup>23</sup> Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect*, 312.



However, there are considerable differences regarding the consequences and role of dehumanisation in the two bodies of literature.

#### A review of dehumanisation in the broader dehumanisation literature

In the broader dehumanisation literature, dehumanisation is not always understood as raising alarm bells for the onset of mass atrocities or crimes against humanity. Vaes et al. highlight that dehumanisation is understood mostly in relation to ‘extreme reactions of aggression and hatred, and seen as a destructive process in violent conflict situations’.<sup>24</sup> Yet, there is a breadth of (increasing) literature that finds dehumanisation in a variety of social interactions, operating at a more subtle and indiscrete level.<sup>25</sup> For instance, Nick Haslam et al. write that dehumanisation ‘occurs in everyday social perception, and can occur in the absence of intense conflict or aggression...such as the experiences of women, immigrants, refugees, the homeless, African Americans, and other stigmatised groups.’<sup>26</sup> Feminist studies and psychological studies frequently assert that women are dehumanised as tools or instruments to satisfy a goal, in everyday society by both men and women.<sup>27</sup> Laurie Rudman and Kris Mescher cite the implicit dehumanisation of women by men, insofar that they are considered to be ‘primitive constructs’, without agency or self-assertion, and are equated with tools or animals to be controlled.<sup>28</sup> Using the neuroimaging of Princeton University undergraduate students, Susan Fiske and Lasana Harris found that extreme out groups (such as poor people, the

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<sup>24</sup> Vaes et al., “We are Human, They Are Not,” 66.

<sup>25</sup> Miranda, Gouveia-Pereira and Vaes, “When in Rome,” 327; Lammers and Stapel, “Power Increases Dehumanisation,” 114; Martinez, Rodriguez-Bailon and Moya, ““Are They Animals or Machines?,”” 1119; Stollznow, “Dehumanisation in Language,” 177–200; Jeroen Vaes, Paola Paladino, and Elsa Puvia, “Are Sexualized Women Complete Human Beings? Why Men and Women Dehumanize Sexually Objectified Women,” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 41 (2011): 775; Castano and Kofta, “Dehumanisation,” 696; Tipler and Ruscher, “Agency’s Role in Dehumanisation,” 219–23.

<sup>26</sup> Haslam et al., “Dehumanisation,” 410, 420.

<sup>27</sup> Jamie Goldenberg et al., “Of Mice and Men, and Objectified Women: A Terror Management Account of Infradehumanisation,” *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12 (2009): 763–72; Stollznow, “Dehumanisation in language,” 192; Vaes, Paladino and Puvia, “Are Sexualised Women Complete Human Beings?,” 784.

<sup>28</sup> Rudman and Mescher, “Of Animals and Objects,” 734–46. Rudman and Mescher find a correlation between such dehumanisation and sexual aggression or rape. On this point, in his book *Less than Human*, Daniel Livingstone Smith states that process is to equate dehumanisation with objectification. He rejects the statement that these women are dehumanised on basis that dehumanisation is to regard an individual as *subhuman*: ‘treating someone as only a means to a sexual end is not the same as regarding them as subhuman.’ However, he also states that ‘when women are objectified, their humanity is disregarded. They are treated as instruments of sexual pleasure rather than as human subjects.’ If we are to accept that dehumanisation is to no longer regard an individual as having human status, then this is to dehumanise women, and Smith’s conceptualisation is problematic. Quotes from Smith, *Less Than Human*, 27–28.

homeless, and drug addicts) were dehumanised to such an extent that they did not register in the participants' medial frontal cortex<sup>29</sup> as social beings.<sup>30</sup>

Dehumanisation is also discussed in relation to individuals who have mental and/or physical disabilities. In this instance, the individual may be considered less than a 'full-human', or like a 'vegetable', thus socially discredited, 'tainted' and considered a 'second-rate' citizen.<sup>31</sup> An interesting example of this is Kerry Nearle's work on the perception of World War I veterans with facial disfigurement.<sup>32</sup> Irrespective of the dehumanised view of these veterans as 'creatures' or 'gargoyles', exhaustive attempts were made by surgeons to 're-humanise' the soldiers to ease their reintegration into society by reconstructing their faces. Another report on dehumanisation in the medical industry finds that 'physicians refer to patients by their diseases, not by their names'.<sup>33</sup> The report suggested that the physicians were not regarding their patients as *people*, but rather *being* their illnesses.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, there is extensive literature on the historical dehumanisation of Black slaves as 'baboons',<sup>35</sup> existing 'somewhere between the deformed and the simian',<sup>36</sup> or as 'parrot[s] who speak a few words plainly'.<sup>37</sup> A study by Phillip Goff et al. illustrated that Blacks are still dehumanised today as being apelike, and that this correlates with a higher endorsement of violence (indeed, capital punishment) against this group in the United States.<sup>38</sup> Mariana Miranda, Maria Gouveia-Pereira and Jeroen Vaes go against the grain of dehumanisation literature by studying the dehumanisation of the *majority* group by minorities. They found that when minority groups assimilate into the majority group, they are less likely to dehumanise the majority group. This is

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<sup>29</sup> This is the region of the brain responsible for recognising and attributing a mental presence to others.

<sup>30</sup> Susan Fiske, "From Dehumanisation and Objectification," 31–34; Harris and Fiske, "Dehumanising the Lowest of the Low," 847–53.

<sup>31</sup> Keith and Keith, *Intellectual Disability*; Tipler and Ruscher, "Agency's Role in Dehumanisation," 214–28.

<sup>32</sup> Kerry Nearle, "'Without the Faces of Men': Disfigured Great War Veterans of Britain and the Dominions" (PhD diss., University of New South Wales, 2015).

<sup>33</sup> Bonnie Smith, "From an Observer," *Annals of Internal Medicine* 122 (1995): 628–29.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, "From an Observer," 29.

<sup>35</sup> John Bridgman and Leslie Woley, "Genocide of the Hereros," in *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, eds. Totten, Samuel, William S. Parsons, and Israel Charny (New York: Routledge, 2004), 20.

<sup>36</sup> Goff et al., "Not Yet Human," 293.

<sup>37</sup> David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political, Literary* (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd, 1777), 152–53.

<sup>38</sup> Goff, et al. "Not Yet Human", 292; Vaes et al., "We are Human, They are Not," 71.

compared with minority groups who choose not to assimilate, and have a higher tendency to dehumanise the majority group.<sup>39</sup>

Robert Fine looks at the dehumanisation of the dehumanisers. He cites Hannah Arendt's labelling of Eichmann as *hostis generis humani* (enemy of the species) as an example of this, and argues that the dehumanisation of perpetrators is ultimately unhelpful for justice.<sup>40</sup> By dehumanising the perpetrator, Fine states that it dismisses their rationality and responsibility.<sup>41</sup> It is *because* of the perpetrator's humanity, Fine continues, that their actions are deemed unacceptable and so they must be tried and judged accordingly. Otherwise, 'justice' looks more like sentencing an 'animal who [sic] has mauled a child...[to] be slaughtered, [rather] than a responsible human being who must be punished'.<sup>42</sup>

Lastly, a lot of recent literature has discussed the apparent dehumanisation of asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants, foreign domestic workers and employees,<sup>43</sup> and internally displaced peoples.<sup>44</sup> A topical example of this is Roland Bleiker et al.'s analysis of the visual dehumanisation of refugees as faceless masses in Australian media. By emphasising refugees' anonymity, this depiction of individuals makes it difficult for viewers to relate or sympathise with refugees' hardship, Bleiker et al. find that such a dehumanising representation of refugees is therefore unlikely to elicit

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<sup>39</sup> Miranda, Gouveia-Pereira and Vaes, "When in Rome," 334.

<sup>40</sup> Robert Fine, "Dehumanising the Dehumanisers: Reversal in Human Rights Discourse," *Journal of Global Ethics* 6 (2010): 179–90. Richard Koenigsberg makes a similar point by stating that, when confronted with the atrocity of genocide, people like to think of the perpetrators as separate from the human race. There is a temptation to posit them as unhuman – as monsters, bloodlusts and psychopathic anomalies – so that we can draw an explicit distinction between ourselves as human, and those who perpetrate 'the unbelievable'. Richard Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill: Hitler, the Holocaust and War* (New York: Library of Social Science, 2009), 79. For similar statements, please see Smith, *Less Than Human*, 133; Leonard Newman, "What is a 'Social-Psychological' Account of Perpetrator Behavior? The Person Versus the Situation," in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, eds. Leonard Newman, and Ralph Erber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 43–67; Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), 212.

<sup>41</sup> Fine, "Dehumanising the Dehumanisers," 180.

<sup>42</sup> Fine, "Dehumanising the Dehumanisers," 186.

<sup>43</sup> Groups of this sort are often dehumanised to be merely a 'cog in the machine', rather than human beings. Stollznow, "Dehumanisation in Language," 192. For an analysis of the dehumanisation of these groups, see Ladegaard, "Beyond the Reach of Ethics and Equity?," 44–59.

<sup>44</sup> Esses, et al., "Justice, Morality and the Dehumanisation of Refugees," 4–25; Winnifred, Esses and Lalonde. "National Identification," 156–65; Roland Bleiker, David Campbell, Emma Hutchinson and Xzarina Nicholson, "The Visual Dehumanisation of Refugees," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48 (2013): 398–419; Gordon Hodson and Kimberly Costello, "Interpersonal Disgust, Ideological Orientations, and Dehumanisation as Predictors of Interpersonal Attitudes," *Psychological Science* 18 (2007): 693.

compassion from the audience, and instead reinforces a ‘politics of fear’.<sup>45</sup> Making a bold claim, Joris Lammers and Diedrick Stapel even go so far as to suggest that dehumanisation ‘should not be seen as an exclusively negative force’, as it better enables political authorities to make ‘difficult decisions’ in regard to sanctioning the death of civilians – both own and enemy – in certain circumstances.<sup>46</sup>

It would appear that in each case reviewed here, the dehumanised individuals are expelled from what Susan Opatow describes as ‘the boundaries in which moral values, rules and considerations of fairness apply’ to other humans.<sup>47</sup> They are regarded as ‘nonentities, expendable, or undeserving’<sup>48</sup> of human status, and so, in many instances, ‘harming or exploiting them appears to be appropriate, acceptable or just’.<sup>49</sup> These dehumanised individuals face prejudice, persecution and violence, and so the severity of their experiences is not to be dismissed. However, what this literature review reveals is that in the broader dehumanisation literature, ‘dehumanisation is a pervasive phenomenon in interpersonal and intergroup contexts that occurs in a large variety of social domains’.<sup>50</sup> In the genocide specific literature, however, the presence of dehumanisation is loaded with much more serious connotations.

#### A review of dehumanisation in the genocide-specific literature

There are two dominant approaches to dehumanisation in the genocide literature. First, dehumanisation is regarded by many scholars as an important early warning sign for mass systematic slaughter, because it is a psychological-coping device for individuals to commit acts that they consider axiomatically immoral.<sup>51</sup> According to genocide scholars, the dehumanisers undergo a ‘disengagement of moral self-sanctions from

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<sup>45</sup> Bleiker et al., “The Visual Dehumanisation of Refugees,” 398–408; Anthony Burke, “Borderphobias: the politics of insecurity post 9/11,” accessed 10 May, 2014

[http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol1no1\\_2002/burke\\_phobias.html](http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol1no1_2002/burke_phobias.html).

<sup>46</sup> Lammers and Stapel, “Power increases Dehumanisation,” 116.

<sup>47</sup> Opatow, “Moral Exclusion and Injustice,” 1.

<sup>48</sup> Opatow, “Moral Exclusion and Injustice,” 1.

<sup>49</sup> Ladegaard, “Beyond the Reach of Ethics and Equity?,” 54.

<sup>50</sup> Vaes et al., “We Are Human, They Are Not,” 65.

<sup>51</sup> Hirsch, *Genocide and the Politics of Memory*, 105; Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 48; Kuper, *Genocide*, 84; Stanton, “Could the Rwandan Genocide,” 214; John Hagan and Wenona Rymond-Richmond, “The Collective Dynamics of Racial Dehumanisation and Genocide Victimisation in Darfur,” *American Sociology Review* 73 (2008): 877; “The 8 Stages of Genocide”; Fine, “Dehumanising the Dehumanisers,” 179; Markusen, “Genocide and Total War,” 111; James Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia: Geography, Genocide and the Unmaking of Space* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008): 129; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 36.

inhumane conduct' via the dehumanisation of victims, therein numbing moral hesitations against slaughter.<sup>52</sup> This exclusion of the dehumanised victim from one's moral realm constitutes a cognitive reconstruction of the individual's behaviour.<sup>53</sup> Individuals typically seek to avoid acts that violate their moral convictions, because what follows is (usually) self-devaluation or self-condemnation.<sup>54</sup> As such, according to Albert Bandura, 'people do not ordinarily engage in harmful conduct until they have justified to themselves the morality of their actions',<sup>55</sup> or – as I would contend – the *moral neutrality* of their actions. Dehumanisation does not manipulate one's perspective of morality: the *a priori* conviction that butchering other humans is immoral is unchanged. Instead, it portrays the moral status of the *victim* as disfigured so as to allow for their murder. As Edward Day and Margaret Vandiver report:

Committing atrocities against a dehumanised group clearly does not cause many perpetrators to abandon all conventional perceptions of morality. Behavioural norms have not been replaced. A targeted group has simply been removed from the sphere in which those norms are applied.<sup>56</sup>

Via dehumanisation, individuals are thought to disconnect 'their moral self sanctions, thereby relieving themselves of feelings of guilt'<sup>57</sup> that would be incurred from slaughtering another human.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, in the genocide literature, dehumanisation is considered to dilute the 'universal human abhorrence of murder', and thus allows one to 'kill with impunity'.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Albert Bandura, "Moral Disengagement in the Perpetration of Inhumanities," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 3(1999): 193.

<sup>53</sup> Bar-Tal, "Causes and Consequences of Delegitimisation," 65; Kelman, "Violence without Moral Restraint," 25, 49; Opatow, "Moral Exclusion and Injustice," 5; Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbours: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (New York: Cornell University, 2009), 3; Newman, "What is a 'Social-Psychological' Account," 56.

<sup>54</sup> Bandura, "Moral Disengagement," 194; Newman, "What is a 'Social-Psychological' Account," 55.

<sup>55</sup> Bandura, "Moral Disengagement," 194.

<sup>56</sup> Edward Day and Margaret Vandiver, "Criminology and Genocide Studies: Notes on What Might Have Been and What Still Could Be," *Crime, Law and Social Change* 34(2000): 52.

<sup>57</sup> Greitemeyer and McLatchie, "Denying Humanness to Others," 659.

<sup>58</sup> Delgado et al., "Priming Effects of Violence on Infrhumanization," 699.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted from "The 8 Stages of Genocide." For further statements regarding dehumanisation silencing moral inhibitions against murder, see Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak* (New York: Picador, 2003), 145; Donohue, "The Identity Trap," 13; Erin Bucknells and Paul Trapnell, "Disgust Facilitates Outgroup Dehumanisation," *Group Processes Intergroup Relations* 16(2013): 771; Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 21; Haagensen and Croes, "Thy Brother's Keeper?," 225; Kinloch, "The Possible Causes and Reduction of Genocide," 17; Stanton, "Could the Rwandan Genocide," 214; Janine Clark, "Learning from the Past: Three Lessons from the Rwandan Genocide," *African Studies* 68 (2009): 7; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 39.

Accordingly, dehumanisation is thought by many genocide scholars to constitute a reliable early warning sign for genocide. As one scholar put it, ‘dehumanisation is a greasy pole, and once you are on it you can slide down into the pit of mass murder very quickly’.<sup>60</sup> According to Gregory Stanton’s renowned Eight (now Ten) Stages of Genocide, which outline the various factors preceding genocide, dehumanisation is the very ‘phase where the death spiral of genocide begins’.<sup>61</sup> Echoing this, Jacques Sémelin writes that ‘the killing begins with words disqualifying his [the victims’] humanity’, because it numbs moral inhibitions against murder.<sup>62</sup> Citing essentialisation, the crystallisation of difference, Alexander Hinton argues that seeing another individual as less than fully human an urgent ‘hallmark of genocide’.<sup>63</sup> This is because individuals are ‘depicted as legitimate targets of violence whose execution should not pose a moral dilemma. Killing them is not murder, but rather the slaughter of a lowly animal.’<sup>64</sup> As aforementioned, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2014, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide claimed that the Holocaust and Rwandan genocide of 1994 ‘did not start with the slayings. It started with the dehumanisation of a specific group of persons.’<sup>65</sup>

Without re-conditioning their moral convictions about the ‘wrongness’ of murdering another human, one can decommission moral objections to killing *these victims in particular* because, from one’s perspective, they no longer qualify as humans.<sup>66</sup> Dehumanisation can be problematic even for reconciliation: some scholars identify that victims often continue to be dehumanised by the perpetrators of the genocide *after* the fact, because it serves as a psychological coping mechanism for the perpetrators.<sup>67</sup>

Crucially, and to their credit, some genocide scholars recognise the discrepancy highlighted in this literature review, therein supporting the claim made here that it is *not* a reliable early warning sign for genocide. This constitutes the second approach to

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<sup>60</sup> Anne-Marie Beukes, “‘The Greasy Pole of Dehumanisation’: Language and Violence in South Africa,” *Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Africa* 43 (2012): 140.

<sup>61</sup> Stanton, “Could the Rwandan Genocide”, 214.

<sup>62</sup> Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 38.

<sup>63</sup> Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill? Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 284-285

<sup>64</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 284–85.

<sup>65</sup> “Genocide Begins with ‘Dehumanisation’”

<sup>66</sup> Newman, “What is a ‘Social-Psychological’ Account,” 59.

<sup>67</sup> Sabina Cehajic, Rupert Brown, and Roberto Gonzalez, “What do I Care? Perceived Ingroup Responsibility and Dehumanisation as Predictors of Empathy Felt for the Victim Group,” *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 12(2009): 716.

dehumanisation in the genocide literature. For instance, Rowan Savage writes that dehumanisation is found outside the field of genocide studies, and by ‘no means causes massacre, or always has massacre as a result; indeed, some level of dehumanisation may be obligatory for the functioning of modern societies.’<sup>68</sup> In a parallel vein, although James Waller identifies that dehumanisation facilitates violence, he also highlights the question of malevolent intent: he cites the need for something more profound and sinister than dehumanisation to mobilise (and, by extension, forewarn the intent of) people to kill.<sup>69</sup> Building the foundation for the argument made here, Israel Charny states that, ‘the process that makes genocide possible does not stop at dehumanisation...what needs to be added is to justify taking people’s lives...the proof that the other is also a terrible threat to our lives and it is *their intent to take our lives away from us unless we stop them*.’<sup>70</sup> These observations made by some genocide scholars within the genocide literature point to the need for a socio-psychological concept that moves beyond the portrayal of victims as without human standing. ‘Dehumanisation leaves only a void’:<sup>71</sup> it does not *necessitate* action, but rather allows for a space of *possibility*.

It is important to note that most genocide scholars regard dehumanisation as a *necessary but insufficient* factor in genocide. I am not contesting this argument. I do, however, disagree with the perspective that dehumanisation is an important and reliable early warning sign for genocide. The scholars who assume this position neglect to realise that dehumanisation also occurs in a variety of instances outside of mass atrocities, and so its existence is not helpful for forewarning genocide. In this thesis, I join the scholars cited above who challenge the notion that dehumanisation is a reliable early warning, and suggest that there is something else that is more specific to genocide than dehumanisation, which can better signal its possible onset.

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<sup>68</sup> Rowan Savage, “Vermin to be Cleared off the Face of the Earth: Perpetrator Representations of Genocide Victims as Animals,” in *Genocide Perspectives III: Essay on the Holocaust and other Genocides*, eds. Colin Tatz, Peter Arnold and Sandra Tatz (Sydney: Brandl and Schlesinger, 2006), 20–21.

<sup>69</sup> James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 245.

<sup>70</sup> Original italics, Charny, “Dehumanisation – ‘Killing’ the Humanity of Another,” 156.

<sup>71</sup> Lang, “Questioning Dehumanisation,” 228.

## Dehumanisation prior to genocide: a sphere of permissibility, not necessity

This chapter identifies that both the literatures reviewed here share the same definition of dehumanisation, however there is a disparity regarding the consequences of dehumanisation. The broader dehumanisation literature highlights that dehumanisation occurs in a number of circumstances in society – many of which may be connected to violence, but many are not. Conversely, many scholars in the genocide literature consider dehumanisation as a reliable and significant early warning sign for genocide, because it is a psychological coping device for people to kill. As aforesaid, the argument that dehumanisation is a coping mechanism for killers is not contested; however, I contest its usefulness as an important early warning sign for genocide. Dehumanised individuals are not afforded the same rights as humans and so no longer exist in the human ‘sphere of equal moral standing’.<sup>72</sup> Therefore they *may* be treated in a way that would be considered unacceptable for humans. In other words, I clarify that dehumanisation signals when the discrimination, aggression, violence or killing of a victim group is perceived as more *tolerable*. In all instances involving dehumanisation, this opens a sphere of *permissibility* of mistreatment, subjugation, or violence; however, in no way does it *necessitate* killing. There is no compulsion or requirement to eliminate a presence that is not human; it merely signals that the murder of the victim is allowed. While abuse and killing is thus (arguably) made morally easier by dehumanisation, it does not signal that abuse and killing is perceived to be necessary. Dehumanisation is being misinterpreted as a reliable socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide because in the genocide literature, there is little distinction between when killing is portrayed as permissible (as per dehumanisation), and when it is depicted as an *absolute necessity*. The latter, I contend, is more specific to genocide. Hence, more specific socio-psychological indicator for genocide than dehumanisation is needed. Importantly, other genocide scholars have recognised that dehumanisation is problematic as an important early warning sign for genocide. Each hint at the need for a process that signals more than the permissibility of killing, thereby supporting the argument made here. In the next chapter, I conceptualise and operationalise such an early warning sign for genocide.

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<sup>72</sup> Erskine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism*, 40.



### Chapter 3

#### To Be Portrayed as Poison:

#### Introducing the Conceptual Framework of Toxification

The chapter introduces the conceptual framework of toxification. Toxification is the portrayal of the victim group as fundamentally lethal to one's ideal society or to one's self. The argument that the victim group is depicted as threatening or lethal in propaganda is not an anomaly in the genocide literature.<sup>1</sup> Yet, little movement has been made toward operationalising an alternative early warning sign that better signals the onset of genocide than dehumanisation. Instead, attention remains with dehumanisation as 'a virulent form of prejudice that promotes and justifies violence'.<sup>2</sup> I argue that the depiction of the victim group as toxic is a more accurate early warning sign than dehumanisation, because it marks the shift from when killing the victims is portrayed as permissible,<sup>3</sup> as per dehumanisation, to when it is seen as a necessity. This chapter begins by outlining why I choose to regard toxification as a *socio-psychological* early warning sign. It then describes toxification and its two classifications: the notions of 'toxic to the ideal' and 'toxic to the self'. I then review other concepts that could also be interpreted as better early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation, discussing their strengths and weaknesses relative to toxification. Lastly, I examine the dynamic between toxification and dehumanisation as early warning signs for genocide.

#### Toxification as a socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide

I regard toxification as a socio-psychological early warning sign because it alludes to a social perception and subsequent interaction between individuals. Saul Brehm and Steven Kassin define social psychology as 'the scientific study of the way individuals think, feel, desire and act in social situations';<sup>4</sup> it examines how the implied, actual or

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<sup>1</sup> Semelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Haslam et al., "Dehumanization," 412.

<sup>3</sup> Or, perhaps more accurately, individuals regard killing members of the dehumanised group as *more* permissible. This does not mean that such dehumanised individuals are excluded entirely from the universe of morality, and so the dehumaniser may feel the dehumanised is owed some, albeit less, moral obligations. Nevertheless, killing the dehumanised is regarded as more tolerable than killing an individual who is afforded the same moral status as fellow humans.

<sup>4</sup> Saul S Brehm and Steven Kassin, *Social Psychology* (Geneva: Houghton, 1996), 6, cited in Newman, "What is a 'Social-Psychological' Account," 44.

imagined presence of others affects an individual's behaviour, attitude, emotions and thoughts. By portraying an individual as lethal, and depicting killing this individual as permissible and necessary, toxification constitutes a socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide. Hence, whereas authoritarian regimes and adverse regime transitions are cited as early warning signs for genocide, they are not *socio-psychological* genocide early warning signs.<sup>5</sup> Seminal works on social psychological factors in genocide cite processes of obedience/submission (especially to authority), conformity, peer pressure and group-think, conventionalism (a strict adherence to conventional values), cognitive dissonance, disassociation and 'doubling',<sup>6</sup> passivism, inferiority complexes, 'thoughtlessness', and the bidirectional process of people and situation.<sup>7</sup> Because toxification refers to how group A cognitively regards (that is, thinks and feels about) group B, and this influences how group A acts toward group B in a particular social situation, I regard toxification as a social psychological early warning indicator for genocide.

Previous chapters have unveiled that dehumanisation is an important early warning sign for genocide, because it serves as a psychological coping device for individuals to kill. However, it is also found to occur in a variety of instances that do not lead to crimes against humanity, mass killing, violence or even aggression;

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<sup>5</sup> As discussed in Chapter One, see Harff and Gurr, "Toward Empirical Theory," 359–71, and Gurr and Moore, "Ethnopolitical Rebellion," 1094.

<sup>6</sup> Writing on a disassociation process specific to Nazi doctors, Robert Lifton defines doubling as the 'division of the self into two functioning wholes, so that a part-self acts as an entire self' (see Robert Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 418. Lifton maintains that doubling is a psychological vehicle through which the self can engage in killing by creating another self to fulfill the 'evil-doing'. For the purposes of this thesis, one characteristic of doubling has particular importance: the 'life-death dimension'. That is, 'an evil-doing self is created on behalf of what one perceives as one's own healing or survival. Doubling protects the perpetrator from his or her own death anxiety'. Quote from Waller, *Becoming Evil*, 119–20. Whereas toxification is the socio-psychological process of portrayal of an individual as a lethal threat, Lifton observes that doubling is a *response* to this perception.

<sup>7</sup> Newman, "What is a 'Social-Psychological' Account," 48; Ervin Staub, "The Psychology of Bystanders, Perpetrators, and Heroic Helpers," in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, eds. Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 16–20; Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996), 375, 381, 384; Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 159; Steven K. Baum, *The Psychology of Genocide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 118, 169; Berkeley, "Road to Genocide," 108; Blass, Thomas, "Perpetrator Behavior as Destructive Obedience," in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, eds. Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 96; Richard Morrock, *The Psychology of Genocide and Violent Oppression: A Study of Mass Cruelty from Nazi Germany to Rwanda*, (London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010) 14, 19; Paul A. Roth, "Social Psychology and Genocide," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, eds. Donald Bloxham and Dirk A. Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 201, 204–05, 210; Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 193–203; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 43–45; Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect*, 258–96.

therefore, a more indicative socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation is needed. To this, I offer the concept of toxification.

Toxification: the portrayal of an individual as fundamentally lethal

Toxification is the portrayal of individuals as irreconcilably lethal to oneself and one's ideal society. In this sense, the target group is portrayed to be not simply outside the 'sphere of equal moral standing',<sup>8</sup> but as malignant pests that must be cauterised and destroyed for the sake of one's survival. Toxification assigns more to the portrayal of victims than what Julia Kristeva describes 'the abject': the human reaction of horror, exile and disgust in the face of the disintegration of the meaningful difference between the self and the other.<sup>9</sup> The victim's toxicity is immutable and irreconcilable, suggesting that there is no viable alternative other than to annihilate the noxious threat. There are two strains of toxification that manifest preceding and during genocide: toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self.

The notion of toxic to the ideal refers to the depiction of the victim group as deadly to one's ideational utopia, society and the progression of civilisation as the members of one's group regard it. According to Simon Norfolk and Michael Ignatieff, genocide is 'a kind of longing for utopia, a blood sacrifice in the worship of an ideal paradise...A world safe from the deadly contaminations'.<sup>10</sup> The portrayal the victim group as existentially lethal to the envisaged society thereby depicts the slaughter of the victim group as necessary. Rhetoric of toxic to the ideal often draws on quasi-medical terminology that stresses that the victim group constitutes a form of sickness, epidemic or contamination in relation to one's community. Biological discourses, which describe victims as pathologies, cancerous growths, viruses, and diseases, such as bacilli, leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis and microbes, are also highly demonstrative of toxification as toxic to the ideal. What is crucial to note here, is that the victim group is assigned an element of lethality that moves them beyond being impure, unhygienic, or

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<sup>8</sup> Erskine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism*, 40.

<sup>9</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). For an analysis of how toxification engages with Kristeva's theory of the abject and horror, see Neilsen, "Toxification," 85–86.

<sup>10</sup> While I am inclined to think this is a little dramatised, effectively articulates the notion of toxic to the ideal. Simon Norfolk and Michael Ignatieff, "The Scene of the Crime," *Granta* 63 (1998), 125.

horrific. Victims are not just a ‘matter out of place,’<sup>11</sup> which stimulates a desire to re-negotiate patterns of existence to ensure uniformity, giving ‘form to formlessness.’<sup>12</sup> Instead, the victim group is described as fundamentally toxic to the one’s ideal society or plan of progression.<sup>13</sup> As pointed out by Rowan Savage, quoting Susan Sontag, ‘Nothing is more putative than to give disease a meaning’<sup>14</sup> – ascribing victims as toxic connotes their necessary and urgent removal.<sup>15</sup> In addition to drawing upon fatalistic medical terminology, the concept of toxic to the ideal also manipulates one’s views of his/her society’s fate, fortune and future. Such discourse depicts the victim group as terminal to realising a utopian ideal or aspiration for the future. Individuals are portrayed as unwanted, irremediable obstructions to the one’s envisaged society; propaganda describes the victims’ presence as catalysing a regression in, or end to, one’s society. In short, the classification of toxic to the ideal depicts individuals as incurably poisoning or impeding a desired future or ideal society. A variety of different mechanisms – as listed above – can be employed to achieve this portrayal.

In contrast, the manifestation of toxic to the self asserts that the victim group will, if given the opportunity, kill members of one’s own group. Victims are described as death-dealing agents or as particular entities that *necessarily* have lethal connotations, such as animals that transmit diseases or are often thought to be poisonous. Alternatively, propaganda that uses the concept of toxic to the self alleges that the victim group is planning to kill members of one’s group. The notion of toxic to the self projects a kill-before-being-killed logic: individuals are encouraged to believe that there is no alternative but to exterminate the victim group before *they themselves* are exterminated. Toxic to the self manipulates themes of self-defence and preventative action, therein attempting to convince individuals that if they want to survive, they have to kill first. There is no other viable choice. Thus, whereas toxic to the ideal emphasises

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<sup>11</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36, 165.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1966), 2, 6. Douglas provides an interesting analysis of pollution, wherein she argues that ‘dirt is essentially disorder’. So, if a group is seen to be spoiling patterns that a group wishes to preserve or achieve, the urge is to eliminate this so as to maintain consistency. For a brief analysis of how Douglas’ analysis integrates into the concept of toxification, please see Neilsen, “Toxification,” 86.

<sup>13</sup> The depiction of killing as necessary by portraying victims as lethal is articulated by Herman Goering, who stated, ‘All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and [for] exposing the country to danger.’ Cited in Baum, *The Psychology of Genocide*, 169.

<sup>14</sup> Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* (London, Penguin Press: 2002), 59, quoted in Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 404.

<sup>15</sup> Colin Tatz, *With Intent to Destroy* (London: Verso, 2003), 76.

abstract conceptualisations of death of one's livelihood, the concept of toxic to the self asserts that one's survival is in legitimate jeopardy by depicting the victim group as killers. In both instances, these forms of toxification depict the victim group as irreconcilably lethal.

I submit that toxification is a more indicative genocide indicia than dehumanisation because the portrayal of an individual as toxic prompts a movement toward removing that threat. Not removing a toxic presence is to allow its noxiousness to permeate and, if submitted to prolonged exposure, eventually results in death. Consequently, the presentation of an individual as toxic or lethal stimulates two of the most basic human emotions: fear and the survival instinct. It portrays individuals' view of their existence as a zero-sum game, whereby their survival – or their ideal society – can only be guaranteed if the toxic presence is removed. This is not to suggest that toxification causes genocide; such an argument would require a different investigation entirely. Yet, depicting individuals as toxic implies that it is not tolerable for the toxic presence to remain without causing death. Following this logic, whereas dehumanisation may render killing more acceptable, toxification suggests that the killer has *reason* – at least from their perspective – for the killing to take place. By portraying a group as lethal, toxification depicts extermination as legitimate and urgent in the eyes of the potential perpetrators.

The argument that the victim group was portrayed as dangerous or lethal prior to genocide is not unusual in the genocide-specific literature. But there has been little effort to operationalise a socio-psychological concept such as toxification that coherently articulates this process. Thus, these observations that the victim group is considered dangerous in the genocide literature simply reinforce the claim made here that a more specific early warning sign is needed, and that it should signal when killing the victim group is presented as necessary not only tolerable.

Concepts that articulate how the perpetrators perceived the victims prior to genocide can be considered as similar to toxification. However, these were not offered as early warning signs for genocide, let alone as a more specific early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation. They were instead offered as insights into how the perpetrators *viewed* their victims, thereby seeking to explain *why* people killed. Moreover, each prefers to emphasise the use of *specific* analogies that could facilitate or allow for killing and overlook the portrayal of victims as lethal. This is problematic

because, if we were to operationalise these concepts as early warning signs (which the authors themselves do not do), they would constitute very narrow portrayals of extermination being necessary. Nonetheless, such concepts make valuable contributions to understanding how the perpetrators of genocide view their victims, and so a review of their strengths and weaknesses is deserving of attention.

### Alternative concepts

In his chapter ‘Vermin to be cleared off the face of the Earth’, Rowan Savage argues that ‘eliminationist animalisation’ is as an important part of the genocidal process. Eliminationist animalisation refers to the process of naming victims as menacing, ‘inherently killable animals’, thereby facilitating and legitimising killing.<sup>16</sup> Savage explores historical attitudes toward particular animals (such as insects, rodents, snakes, wolves, monkeys, birds, pigs, and even fauna), in order to determine what it is about synonymising victims with these animals that engender hatred.<sup>17</sup> For instance, Savage reasons that ‘pigs are both shamefully dirty and also inherently ‘killable’’,<sup>18</sup> and so analogising victims to swine warrants their death. Savage argues that by labelling victims certain animals is to demand ‘immediate action, one for which a biological solution, such as killing, is legitimate’.<sup>19</sup> Much merit is to be found in this observation, insofar that Savage – like this research – identifies that there must be a difference between that which allows killing and that which sees it as a necessity.<sup>20</sup> He argues that branding individuals as ‘inherently killable’ animals both necessitates their extermination (much like toxification), and allows for their death because they are dehumanised.<sup>21</sup> However, a limitation of Savage’s work is that he focuses only on the analogy of victims to *animals*, and by no means does this always necessarily mandate their extermination. This would be deeply problematic if it were to be operationalised as an early warning sign for genocide, as it would *only* raise alarm for genocide if propaganda labelled victims particular animals. Even then, many instances of dehumanisation use terms such as pig, dogs, and monkeys – without necessitating their

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<sup>16</sup> ‘Inherently killable’ is Savage’s phrase. Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 1.

<sup>17</sup> Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 31–42.

<sup>18</sup> Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 13.

<sup>19</sup> Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 17.

<sup>20</sup> Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 27.

<sup>21</sup> Savage, “Victims to be cleared,” 45.

slaughter. Indeed, they may be more ‘killable’, to use Savage’s term, but they do not *need* to be killed. Savage was certainly correct in attempting to identify something that makes killing seem compulsory, but he missed the mark by choosing to focus on specific animal-analogies.

Moreover, Savage provides a Western historical perception of animals that are undesirable or killable; not all animals are universally recognised as lethal *or* inherently killable. Therefore, Savage provides a one-dimension approach to which particular animals apparently prompt killing. Following the example provided above, although pigs may be regarded by some cultures as ‘shamefully dirty’ or ‘untouchable’, these animals are farmed for food and – in recent cases – kept as pets: the same can be said of birds, dogs, snakes and monkeys. Moreover, by focusing on particular *animals*, I would submit Savage’s focus closely follows dehumanisation. He is, in essence, looking at which animals *may* be more justifiably killed than other humans: he fails to note the inevitable lethality or toxic element, which must necessarily accompany such rhetoric that then makes killing a necessity. This is not to refute the central role of analogising victims to certain animals – for instance, rodents are disease-disseminating agents – yet, such animals are not inevitably lethal. What needs to be emphasised is the inevitable lethality that would result from exposure to such animals. Aside from choosing to emphasise only the role of certain animals, Savage’s ‘eliminationalist animalisation’ is relevant to the research conducted here because it too identifies that although scholars have cited the perceived threatening nature of the victim group in the past, ‘few have considered it as deserving importance as a primary subject of investigation’.<sup>22</sup> In other words, Savage’s work parallels my own insofar that he attempts to operationalise a concept that he regards to be an important part of the genocidal process.<sup>23</sup>

A second concept that could be operationalised as a more important early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation is Hugh Raffles’ ‘insectification’.<sup>24</sup> Raffles’ research looks at how parasitology and entomology (specifically, equating the Jewish population with lice or parasites) amplified the Nazi fixation with purity, cleanliness and disease. According to Schutzstaffel (SS) Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler in 1943, ‘Antisemitism is *exactly the same* as delousing’,<sup>25</sup> and it is this theme

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<sup>22</sup> Savage, “Victims to be Cleared,” 18.

<sup>23</sup> Although the investigation here is still distinct insofar that I am concentrating on early warning signs for genocide.

<sup>24</sup> Hugh Raffles, *Insectopedia* (Washington DC: Pantheon Books, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Hugh Raffles, “Jews, Lice and History,” *Public Culture*, 19 (2007): 521.

of analogising extermination with ridding parasites that characterises Raffles' insectification. Although Raffles does not argue that insectification is an early warning sign for genocide, his analysis is valuable because it sheds further light on various ways victims are described prior to genocide to *convey* their toxic nature. Moreover, he shows how such a metaphor must be decisive: 'a people must become vermin in fact as well as in metaphor'.<sup>26</sup> Entrenched within this insect rhetoric is the subtle notion of toxicity, insofar that cockroaches are disease-disseminating agents, lice drain the 'lifeblood from the body politic',<sup>27</sup> parasites 'injure the host, often to the point of death',<sup>28</sup> and mosquitos spread infections. Yet whereas *this* – the potential lethality of the victim group – is the crux of the argument, insectification continues to emphasise the entomology and parasitology narrative preceding genocide. The Jewish people were described by the Nazi regime as 'a sect of exploiters, a people of leeches, nothing but one single devouring parasite'.<sup>29</sup> This language is important to forewarning genocide, but it is not because they are analogised to insects, as per Raffles' insectification. Rather, it is because this language insinuates that Jews present a toxic threat to the German population and Third Reich. Relying on insectification as a more indicative early warning sign for genocide would be too specific. Attention should be given to the crux of what is meant by describing victims as certain insects; that is, the *lethality* of the victim group. What is needed is a more explicit concept that directly articulates when the victim group is presented as poisonous to oneself or one's ideal society. Lastly, Raffles continues to focus on the need for how 'people must be made as killable as animals' for genocide to occur.<sup>30</sup> Attention is once again given to how one can 'exterminate it with an easy conscience', by seeing murder as tolerable *precisely because it is not murder*.<sup>31</sup>

Moving away from neologisms, it is important to consider the role of medical metaphors and rhetoric that draws on the themes of modernity. As aforesaid, language that draws on themes of eugenics, superiority, hygiene, disease, cancer and viruses has

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<sup>26</sup> Raffles, *Insectopedia*, 146.

<sup>27</sup> Raffles, "Jews, Lice and History," 528.

<sup>28</sup> Alex Bein, "The Jewish Parasite: Notes on the Semantics of the Jewish Problem with Special Reference to Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 9 (1964): 9; quoted in Raffles, "Jews, Lice and History," 527.

<sup>29</sup> Edmund Silberner, "The Attitude of the Fourierist School towards the Jews," *Jewish Social Studies* 9 (1947): 339–62; quoted in Raffles, "Jews, Lice and History," 529.

<sup>30</sup> Raffles, *Insectopedia*, 146.

<sup>31</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 12; see also Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, 71.



been widely cited in the genocide literature as playing an important role in conditioning individuals to kill.<sup>32</sup> These themes are typically discussed as facilitating or motivating the genocidal campaign. For instance, Susan Sontag traces how diseases and cancers, such as leprosy, syphilis and tuberculosis have been used as political metaphors throughout history to convey what is plainly ‘socially wrong’, and how this process of identifying something as ‘necessarily fatal’ and ‘equalling death’ incites a counter attack, punishment and extradition.<sup>33</sup> Analogising individuals to diseases could thus be regarded as a more indicative early warning sign for genocide, because it suggests that there is an inherent wrongness within society that must be righted, or indeed ‘cured’. Similarly, narratives that draw heavily on eugenics and racial purity cites the linear evolution and perfectibility of humans, wherein some humans ought to be erased because they stagnate or regress the advancement of humanity.<sup>34</sup> That is, allowing any ‘degenerates’ who had ‘fallen’ far from the Garden of Eden<sup>35</sup> to continue existing would catalyse a physical and intellectual regression, and precipitate epidemic, inter-generational sicknesses.<sup>36</sup> Whilst there is merit to be found in operationalising such a concept, such rhetoric emphasises only one means through which killing is necessitated. Therefore, it is better understood as one such expression of a broader concept, such as toxicification.

A final concept that could be considered a more indicative early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation is demonisation. Demonisation is the characterisation of a group of individuals as evil and wicked deities, such as demons, devils, or monsters. I submit that there are two shortfalls of demonisation as a reliable an early warning sign for genocide. Firstly, in the literal sense, the notion of demonisation is often entrenched within a religious paradigm, which has become largely antiquated in some regions and has since lost its powerful influence in the contemporary era of modernity, rationality and logic. Nevertheless, some societies do retain the centrality of

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<sup>32</sup> Savage, “Disease Incarnate”, 404–40.

<sup>33</sup> Susan Sontag, “Disease as Political Metaphor,” *New York Review of Books* 1(1978): 29–33.

<sup>34</sup> Markusen, “Genocide and Total War,” 112; Tatz, *With Intent to Destroy*, 27; Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 17; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 31; Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 408, 411; Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 33; Semelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 34.

<sup>35</sup> Alexander Hinton, “Savage, Subjects, and Sovereigns: Conjunctions of Modernity, Genocide and Colonialism,” in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History* ed. Dirk A. Moses (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 442.

<sup>36</sup> Marie Fleming, “Genocide and the Body Politic in the Time of Modernity,” in *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, eds. Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 109; Andreas Musolff, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust: The Concept of Body Politic* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 35.

religion and subscribe to spiritual sentiments. In this instance, demonisation could be regarded as a helpful early warning sign for genocide *only if* the labelling of individuals as demons seems to necessitate murder. A broader interpretation of demonisation is useful because it refers to the portrayal of an individual as wicked, lying, conniving, or threatening. Such rhetoric is important and often present prior to genocide; however, even in adopting this interpretation of demonisation, such descriptions are not specific to the onset of genocide. For instance, much scholarly and media attention has been given to the demonisation of refugees as a deterrent for allowing their settlement in Australia and Canada.<sup>37</sup> In short, the appearance of an individual as malicious or evil is not synonymous with seeing them as a presence that must be systematically massacred. Secondly, I submit that conceptualising something as demonic, thereby connoting barbarism, Satanism, and violent savagery, makes killing conceivable and even appropriate. Yet, demonisation also suggests that these symptoms can be remedied without *necessarily* resorting to annihilation. Following the logic of the religious rhetoric attached to demonisation, it could be argued that a demon<sup>38</sup> has weaknesses that could be manipulated and mastered. Their demonic characteristics could be exorcised, or the demonic individual could be chained, banished or ‘reasoned’ with – that is, with bribery, bargains or sacrifice. In essence, the demon’s lethality can be quelled without murder. For example, Black slaves were often regarded as demons or monsters, but they were not designated for extermination. Instead, they were chained in an attempt to curb their perceived lethality and were seen to serve an instrumental purpose. This is contrasted to the depiction of someone as fundamentally lethal: such individuals are immune to persuasion or affection, and so extermination is portrayed as the only viable option in the eyes of the potential perpetrators.

The concepts above are not offered as early warning signs for genocide. Nonetheless, each have their merit and provide valuable contributions to understanding the portrayal of the victim group preceding genocide. Each focuses on the *perception* of the victim group in the eyes of the perpetrator and the subsequent interaction between these two groups (resulting in genocide). However, these perspectives are too specific for constituting a holistic early warning sign for genocide and – in most instances – they continue to focus on the permissibility of slaughter. Moreover, by emphasising the use

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<sup>37</sup> Bleiker et al., “The Visual Dehumanization,” 398–419.

<sup>38</sup> Or, more appropriately, an individual perceived to be a demon.

of certain metaphors or analogies prior to genocide, each ultimately misses the central point: the victims are portrayed as *lethal*, and therefore genocide is presented as necessary. Such metaphors and analogies are used as *mechanisms* through which victims are being described as lethal. For this reason, toxification synthesises each into its broader conceptual framework, but it departs from each by articulating the portrayal of the victim group as inevitably lethal. It is not that victims are described as ‘inherently killable animals’, certain insects, demons, or cancers; it is that they are portrayed as lethal *via these mechanisms*. What matters is the portrayal of victims as lethal, however this is achieved. Toxification flags this depiction and umbrellas the above language tools into its conceptualisation.

If we accept that toxification is a socio-psychological process distinct from dehumanisation, how do these concepts interact in the context of genocide indicia?

Toxification and dehumanisation: the shift from ‘us *and* them’ to ‘us *or* them’

Evidence from the preceding chapters asserts that dehumanisation can exist independently from genocide and toxification. Yet, does toxification need to exist alongside dehumanisation to be a reliable an early warning sign for genocide? In this thesis, the conceptualisation of toxification *encompasses* dehumanisation. An individual may be identified as carrying a fatal and contagious disease and therefore be regarded as, quite literally, lethal. However, if they retain their humanity, attempts are made (in the most part) to cure the individual of their noxious ailment: the toxicity does not *define* them.<sup>39</sup> Infected individuals are still seen as human. However, I would submit that this is *not* toxification. Toxification depicts individuals are not portrayed as merely *having* a toxic sickness;<sup>40</sup> they *are* poisonous. The individual forfeits their humanity (dehumanisation), and *instead* of being human, they are deemed a lethal threat to the one’s society or self (toxification). Whereas dehumanisation can exist independent of

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<sup>39</sup> This is not to say that individuals harboring toxic elements are not removed from the sphere of *equal* moral standing. The example of leper colonies and other forms of quarantine to ensure others are not contaminated is testament to this. Attempts to exterminate these individuals do not take place, as they are still seen as human and their murder would be morally impermissible. Nevertheless, their presence is unwelcome and an underlying current of ‘anywhere but here’ prevails. An element of sympathy is had for those toxic individuals, but thoughts of ‘at least it is not *us*’, and ‘we’ would prefer if ‘they stayed away’ prevail. These thoughts and actions are not a consequence of dehumanisation, but an affirmation of difference and recognition of the ‘other’.

<sup>40</sup> This would suggest that any outbreak of a fatal virus wherein the contaminated individuals are subject to toxification, which is not my argument.

assignments of lethality or even danger, toxification portrays victims as both without human status *and* toxic. Therefore, toxification is a more reliable genocide early warning sign than dehumanisation because it signals that killing is presented as tolerable *and* necessary.

I will provide three illustrative examples of toxification to demonstrate how the conceptual framework can operate in practice. This will be achieved by looking at three twentieth genocides: Nazi Germany, Rwanda in 1994, and the Democratic Kampuchea.

A glimpse of toxification in the ‘blood-soaked century’: three 20<sup>th</sup> century genocides as illustrative examples of toxification

Thus far, I have provided evidence to support the argument that dehumanisation is not a reliable early warning sign for genocide. In doing so, I also highlighted the need for a more specific socio-psychological early warning indicator. I then introduced the conceptual framework of toxification in an attempt to fill this gap. The purpose of the next three chapters is to illustrate how toxification, as a conceptual framework, would operate in practice. To this end, I will provide examples of toxification in the Nazi-perpetrated genocide of Jews and people with disabilities from 1933 to 1945, the genocide of the Tutsis by Hutu extremists in 1994, and the Democratic Kampuchean (Cambodian) genocide of 1975 to 1979. These examples of toxification will highlight important aspects of the concept by focusing specifically on how its two manifestations – toxic to the self and toxic to the ideal – appear prior to and during the genocide.

The justification for casing my analysis to these genocides is fourfold. Firstly, the above campaigns are considered to be the most studied genocides in the twentieth century.<sup>41</sup> Hence, I can draw on a large range of sources to illustrate what I mean by the concepts of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self.<sup>42</sup> Secondly, these cases have dissimilar variables, such that they differ across location, victim and perpetrator groups, methods of mass annihilation, longevity of the massacres, and historical context. This variance provides a broader illustration of toxification, and demonstrates how it can

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<sup>41</sup> Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 13; William Rubinstein, *Genocide: A History* (London: Pearson, 2004), 147; Jonassohn and Björnson, *Genocide*, 41.

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (New York: Cornell University, 1997), 79.

manifest in different ways depending on the context.<sup>43</sup> Thirdly, I include the Democratic Kampuchea genocide as my ‘hard’ illustrative example of toxification. Although the Khmer Rouge massacred ethnic and religious minorities, many of the victims of the genocide were destroyed on the basis of their perceived political affiliation. With the exception of the United Nations 1948 Genocide Convention definition of genocide and the etymology of the term itself, most definitions genocide include the destruction of individuals on the basis of their class or political association.<sup>44</sup> These definitions, including the one I have chosen to work with for the purposes of this thesis, do not discriminate according against political, economic, social or class groups.<sup>45</sup> However, the identification of the victim group in the case of the Democratic Kampuchea is more amorphous than the case of Nazi Germany and Rwanda. Because the Khmer Rouge in the Democratic Kampuchea targeted people on the basis of their perceived political affiliation, any individual could suddenly be depicted as a ‘class enemy’, and therein deemed toxic to the Year Zero ideal. For these reasons, it will be interesting to see how the example of Cambodia effectively illustrates what I mean by toxification.

In order to illustrate how toxification operates as an early warning sign in these examples, I will look at the relevant discourses in the media, propaganda, and policies prior to and during the genocides. Propaganda, the media, policies and laws play a pivotal role in portraying victim groups in a particular way and attempts to influence individuals’ perception of the victims.<sup>46</sup> Thus, I will be consulting political speeches, newspaper articles, radiobroadcasts, correspondences, policy initiatives, interviews, books and films that are contemporary to the event.<sup>47</sup> In analysing these sources, it is important to remain critical of their reliability. Simply because a source is from the relevant historical epoch does not confirm its accuracy or dependability, or its reflectiveness of the time period. To mediate this, I will interpret such sources ‘in their

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<sup>43</sup> Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 78.

<sup>44</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 140; Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> For discussions regarding whether Cambodia should qualify as genocide in accordance with the Genocide Convention and International Law, please see Tom Fawthrop and Helen Jarvis, *Getting away with Genocide? Exclusive Justice and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2005), 222–25.

<sup>46</sup> Although it is not my intention to speak about causal mechanisms of genocide, more validity is found in looking to propaganda prior to and during genocides because, according to Straus, ‘propaganda indirectly or directly conditions people to kill.’ Quoted in Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 36.

<sup>47</sup> For literature on the importance of this, see Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation*, 110; Burns, *Introduction to Research Methods*, 25, 319; Thies, “A Pragmatic Guide,” 356–57; Eisenhardt, “Building Theories,” 534.

historical, situational, and communicative contexts’,<sup>48</sup> as well as give consideration to their purpose and authenticity.<sup>49</sup> I will also draw on evidence from secondary sources and discuss the dominant way the victim group was described. While secondary sources have the luxury of retrospect, they are structured around a debate, and so make a series of arguments that are designed to persuade the reader to agree with a particular interpretation of an event. Hence, they too are not without their biases, selectivity, intentions, omissions, and methodological decisions.<sup>50</sup> Nonetheless, looking to these sources is important to illustrate what I mean by toxification, as well as demonstrating how it can forewarn the onset of genocidal killing. The first illustrative example of toxification is the Nazi perpetrated genocides of 1933 to 1945.

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<sup>48</sup> Deborah Larson, “Social Science and History: Ranchers versus Farmers?” in *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations*, eds. Colin Elman and Miriam F. Elman (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 343.

<sup>49</sup> On this point, please see Thies, “A Pragmatic Guide,” 357; George, *Propaganda Analysis*, 37–44.

<sup>50</sup> Thies, “A Pragmatic Guide,” 359; Larson, “Social Science and History,” 339.

## Chapter 4

‘Someday Europe will perish of the Jewish disease.’<sup>1</sup>

### The Nazi-perpetrated genocides, 1933-1945

The first example used to illustrate toxification is the Nazi-perpetrated genocide of the Jews and those deemed ‘hereditarily diseased’, a-social, or mentally ill. By the time the Allied forces had penetrated Germany in 1945 the Nazi regime had slaughtered approximately six million Jews across Europe. Five million more – mostly Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), Slavs, Poles, homosexuals, political opponents, and individuals with disabilities – had also perished under Nazi genocidal policies.<sup>2</sup> It was this fastidiously co-ordinated effort to annihilate a group of people that first shed light on the concept of genocide. In 1941 Winston Churchill aptly stated that the world was ‘in the presence of a crime without a name’,<sup>3</sup> despite genocide occurring for centuries, if not millennia, prior to 1933.<sup>4</sup> Arguably the most infamous and researched genocide to date, it is appropriate to use the Nazi-perpetrated genocides to illustrate how toxification, particularly the concept of toxic to the ideal, operates as an early warning sign for genocide.

#### Toxic to the ideal

The Nazi German genocides perpetrated from 1933 to 1945 highlights two important aspects of the manifestation of toxic to the ideal. Firstly, it demonstrates how toxic to the ideal can manipulate the metaphor of the ‘body politic’ to portray victims as lethal to one’s envisaged society.<sup>5</sup> The body politic refers to the unification of the nation’s statehood and sovereignty with its subjects; it likens the state to a human body, therein

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<sup>1</sup> This is a statement made by Joseph Goebbels and is addressed later in this chapter. Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 421.

<sup>2</sup> This estimate is from Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 34. For further discussions on the genocide of the gypsies, see Michael Zimmermann, “The National Socialist ‘Solution of the Gypsy Question,’” in *Genocide Volume II: Genocide in History*, ed. Adam Jones (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 262–82 and Sybil Milton, “Holocaust: The Gypsies,” in *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, eds. Samuel Totten, William Parsons and Israel Charny (New York: Routledge, 2004), 161–76.

<sup>3</sup> This phrase is from Winston Churchill’s BBC radio broadcast in August 1941: ‘We are in the presence of a crime without a name’, cited in Barbara Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil: A Short Walk to Genocide* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 1. Also cited in Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of a history of genocides, see Ben Kiernan’s *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Neilsen, “Toxification,” 87.

emphasising the gravity of the states' 'health'. Secondly, this example demonstrates how toxification portrays victims as toxic to the ideal by using particular language devices that are linked to the notion of body politic. Nazi propaganda consistently cited quasi-medical terminology to depict victims as lethal: victims were described as terminal diseases, cancers, and contagions poisoning the ideal society. Moreover, the Nazi example highlights how toxic to the ideal rhetoric can cite discourses of superiority, eugenics, racial hygiene and blood-purity to depict certain groups as obstructing the achievement of a master race status or idolised society.<sup>6</sup> The victims are presented as 'inferior' or 'defective', therein causing the deterioration of the potential perpetrators' desired society. Furthermore, the example shows how the notion of toxic to the ideal presents victim groups as lethal parasite to the 'body politic' and state.<sup>7</sup> Victims are depicted as pernicious pests, weeds or nuances whose societal survival and lineage comes at the eventual expense of another's.<sup>8</sup> Each of these instances is an example of the conceptual framework of toxification as toxic to the ideal; overall, they elucidate how the manifestation draws on certain language devices, and how toxification can appear as an early warning sign for genocide.

Propaganda that emphasised the health of the German *Volkskörper* (body politic) and the *Volksgemeinschaft* (community of the German people) was at the heart of portraying certain groups as toxic to achieving the Aryan Ideal and realising the Third Reich.<sup>9</sup> The Nazi ideology articulated that the Aryan is 'the Prometheus of mankind',<sup>10</sup> and those individuals, who did not fit this model, were portrayed as contaminating and poisoning the *Volkskörper*.<sup>11</sup> Toxic to the ideal discourses asserted that allowing such lives to exist in the Third Reich, and for Aryan blood to mix with that of 'lesser-cultured' peoples, was nothing short of apocalyptic.<sup>12</sup> Nazi toxic to the ideal propaganda declared that preserving the '*fehlerhaften und defekten*' (deficient and

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<sup>6</sup> Bruce Wilshire, *Get 'em all! Kill 'em! Genocide, Terrorism, Righteous Communities* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2005), 21; David G. Williamson, *The Third Reich* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2011), 55; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 154–55.

<sup>7</sup> Wilshire, *Get 'em all!*, 19.

<sup>8</sup> Roy F. Baumeister, "The Holocaust and Four Roots of Evil," in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, eds. Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 246.

<sup>9</sup> Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 55; Baumeister, "The Holocaust," 245.

<sup>10</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 290. Cited in Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 107.

<sup>11</sup> Moshman, "Us and Them," 128–29; Fleming, "Genocide and the Body Politic," 113; Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 426; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 12.

<sup>12</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 106; Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 102.



defective), the racially inferior, and the ‘degenerate and depraved’ was to allow ‘false humanity’ to intoxicate the Aryan ideal and stunt human progression as the Nazi ideology saw it.<sup>13</sup> To make this point, in *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler cited fictitious ‘historical evidence...[which] shows with terrifying clarity, that in every mingling of Aryan blood (*Blutsvermengung des Ariers*) with that of lower peoples, the result was always the end of the cultured people’.<sup>14</sup> Continuing, Hitler explained: ‘Blood mixture and the resultant drop in racial level is the sole cause of the dying out of old cultures, for men do not perish as a result of lost wars, but by the loss of that force of resistance which is contained only in pure blood.’<sup>15</sup> The Holocaust was thus presented in propaganda as a grand social engineering project, designed to halt the perceived racial desecration (*Blutschande*) of Germany: certain groups were portrayed as destroying or encumbering the Nazi-envisioned Third Reich, thereby presenting the annihilation of the victim group as necessary.<sup>16</sup> The groups that were thought to be penetrating the German *Volkskörper* and poisoning the Aryan ideal included (but were not limited to) the Roma and Sinti (the ‘Gypsy plague’),<sup>17</sup> Slavs, Poles, homosexuals, communists, and people with mental and physical disabilities.<sup>18</sup> The most fervently depicted as toxic to the ideal, however, was the European Jewry.<sup>19</sup>

The 1920s saw the emergence and intensification of dehumanising the Jewish population; this gave way for (and were reinforced by) Nazi policies of bigotry, discrimination and persecution.<sup>20</sup> However, this dehumanisation of Jews soon became charged with rhetoric that spoke of the ‘inevitable demise’ of the Nazi German culture if Jews continued to exist.<sup>21</sup> Language had moved from speaking of Jews as unworthy,

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 55; Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 413; Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 27; Wilshire, *Get ‘em all!*, 19.

<sup>14</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 290, cited in Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 107. See also Musolf, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust*, 35.

<sup>15</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 296, cited in Daniel Chirot and Clark McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All? The Logic and Prevention of Mass Political Murder* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 325.

<sup>16</sup> David R. Mandel, “Instigators of Genocide: Examining Hitler From a Social-Psychological Perspective,” in *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, eds. Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 278; Chirot and McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All?*, 47; Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 67; Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 16, 67.

<sup>17</sup> Zimmerman, “The National Socialist,” 263; Milton, “Holocaust,” 161.

<sup>18</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 27; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 182; Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 69.

<sup>19</sup> Hitler describes the Jewry as ‘the mightiest counterpart to the Aryan.’ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 272. See also Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 168.

<sup>20</sup> Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 21.

<sup>21</sup> Chirot and McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All?*, 15–16; Mandel, “Instigators of Genocide,” 278.

corrupt, or lesser, to lethal to the Third Reich. Toxic to the ideal rhetoric was saturated with describing Jews as lethal viruses, pestilences, infections and infestations penetrating the *Blutkreislauf unseres Volkes* (the bloodstream of our people) and thereby causing the death and putrefaction of the Third Reich.<sup>22</sup> Jews were described in Nazi films, posters, books and speeches as ‘the *Erkrankung von Volkskörper* (disease of the body politic), the *Volkerparasit* (parasite of the people), and *Die Sünden wider das Blut* (the sin against the blood), corroding the body politic’.<sup>23</sup> Extending this portrayal further, Jews were presented as a poisonous, ubiquitous presence, having existed ‘since time immemorial and spread over the entire earth’, continuing to ‘erode and disintegrate the natural logic of the universe.’<sup>24</sup>

The propaganda in Nazi Germany had thus moved beyond stripping Jews of their status as human: they were portrayed as inexorable, noxious presences buried in the Third Reich body politic. They were presented as the ‘maggots feeding on a rotting corpse, the parasites that had to be surgically removed...a plague worse than the Black Death, the sponger who spreads like a noxious bacillus and then kills his host.’<sup>25</sup> Thus, in the inevitable event that extradition was insufficient, movement was made toward portraying the total extermination of the Jews as necessary: the Final Solution. In 1942, Hitler stated that ‘the discovery of the Jewish virus is one of the greatest revolutions that have taken place in the world... We shall regain our health only by eliminating the Jews.’ Later that year, Hitler claimed that by ‘exterminating the pest, we shall do humanity a service’:<sup>26</sup> the *Gesundung* (healing) of Europe. Re-inforcing this portrayal, according to Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda: ‘our task here is surgical...drastic incision or some day Europe will perish of [sic] the Jewish disease’.<sup>27</sup> Jews were thus portrayed as not simply inhuman, but *toxic* to the Third Reich. Via this toxic to the ideal rhetoric, they were presented as malignant, cancerous growths on the

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<sup>22</sup> Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 217; Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 102; Musolff, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust*, 25; Hirsch, *Genocide and the Politics of Memory*, 102; Tatz, *With Intent to Destroy*, 40–41.

<sup>23</sup> Neilsen, “Toxification”, 88. See also James K. Mason and Philip Fielden. *Republic to Reich: A History of Germany, 1918-1939* (North Ryde: McGraw Hill, 2007), 197; Stefan Berger, *Inventing the Nation: Germany*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 139; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 47; Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 52-53; Colin Tatz, “The Doctorhood of Genocide,” in *Genocide Perspectives III: Essays on the Holocaust and Other Genocides*, eds. Colin Tatz, Peter Arnold and Sandra Tatz (Sydney: Brandl & Schlesinger, 2006): 40–46; Musolff, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust*, 1-3, 130.

<sup>24</sup> Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 68.

<sup>25</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 106; cited in Neilsen, “Toxification,” 86.

<sup>26</sup> Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 71.

<sup>27</sup> Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 421.

German *Volkskörper* that had to be cauterised and destroyed.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in his final speech on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 1945, before committing suicide, Goebbels stated, the ‘International Jewry froths at the mouth...it does not want peace until it has realised its satanic goal of the destruction of the world.’<sup>29</sup> Toxicification, specifically the notion of toxic to the ideal, flagged that the Nazis not only deemed Jews as without human status, but as lethal to the Third Reich. This example illustrates how toxic to the ideal portrayed the killing of millions of Jews as synonymous with the existential expulsion of a toxic disease that was destroying the *Volksgemeinschaft*.<sup>30</sup> One Nazi physician asserted that ‘if one needs to cut off a limb to save the body’, or ‘if one needs to amputate a poisoned arm to save a life, it is done’.<sup>31</sup>

Looking at how toxic to the ideal rhetoric portrayed hereditarily determined ‘a-socials’ and the mentally and physically deficient also illustrates how toxicification operates as a genocide early warning indicator. By ‘hereditarily diseased’ individuals, the Nazi doctors meant anyone who they diagnosed to have incurable congenital feeble-mindedness, mongolism, schizophrenia, severe physical deformity, severe alcoholism on a discretionary basis, hereditary blindness or deafness and manic depression.<sup>32</sup> Owing to their apparent ‘*defekten*’ condition, these individuals were portrayed as contaminating the idealised master race; subsequently, their destruction was depicted as necessary so as to ensure there was no leakage ‘biological impurities into the Aryan breeding stock.’<sup>33</sup> Not only did they fail to qualify as pure Aryans due to their disabilities, they were portrayed as noxious to the vitality Third Reich because they were considered drains on resources and incapable of making useful contributions to (and sacrifices for) the prosperity of Nazi Germany.<sup>34</sup> ‘A-socials’, such as the criminally insane, people with a history of substance abuse, individuals in mental asylums, and repeat offenders were also regarded as toxic contaminations in the ‘perfect

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<sup>28</sup> David Welch, “Nazi Propaganda and the *Volksgemeinschaft*: Constructing a People’s Community,” *Contemporary History Understanding of Nazi Germany* 39 (2004): 221–22; Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 65.

<sup>29</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 61.

<sup>30</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 108.

<sup>31</sup> Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 191.

<sup>32</sup> Rubinstein, *Genocide*, 187; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 119; Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 104; Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 67.

<sup>33</sup> Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 185. See also Hugh Gregory Gallagher, “Holocaust: The Genocide of Disabled Peoples,” in *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, eds. Samuel Totten, William Parsons and Israel Charny (New York: Routledge, 2004), 213.

<sup>34</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 17; Hamburg, *Preventing Genocide*, 42; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 191; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 34; Rubinstein, *Genocide*, 175, 184; Wilshire, *Get ‘em all!*, 19.

society' the Nazis sought to achieve.<sup>35</sup> Thousands of individuals who apparently fit these criteria were deemed lethal contagions in the *Volkskörper*; such 'Lebensunterwertes lebens'<sup>36</sup> (life unworthy of life) were subject to 'purifying processes', 'mercy killings', and 'voluntary' euthanasia, so as to ensure optimal advancement of the Third Reich.<sup>37</sup> According to the 1936 propaganda documentary film *Erbkranken* (Hereditary Illness) created by the Racial and Political Office of the National Socialist Party, the German population had 'sinned terribly' because '[the German population] haven't just maintained life unworthy of life; we have even allowed it to multiply!'<sup>38</sup> That is, Nazi propaganda posited that the German population were putting the *Volkskörper* in deadly peril by allowing toxic contagions to not only exist, but to 'proliferate'.<sup>39</sup> Fritz Klein (a physician at the Auschwitz concentration camp) reported that just as he would 'remove a gangrenous appendix from a diseased body' he removed the mentally ill and physically unfit 'as gangrenous appendix in the body of mankind'.<sup>40</sup> By this, Klein saw the destructions of these individuals 'as a therapeutic imperative' out of 'respect for human life'.<sup>41</sup>

The above toxic to the ideal rhetoric flagged the 1939 Euthanasia program of children, who had (according to Nazi physicians) severe birth defects, and physical and intellectual disabilities.<sup>42</sup> From 1939 to 1945, 5000 children were destroyed, typically without parental permission or knowledge. A final policy of *Die Freigabe der Vernichtung lebensunwerten* (the release and destruction of lives not worth living) was implemented that same year to exterminate those who were seen as toxic contagions to

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<sup>35</sup> Götz, Aly "Medicine against the Useless," in: *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*, eds. Aly Götz, Peter Chroust and Christian Pross (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 24; Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (London: Macmillan, 2000), 194; Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 67; Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 71; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 185.

<sup>36</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 202; Wilshire, *Get 'em all!*, 21.

<sup>38</sup> Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 189.

<sup>39</sup> For Hitler's writings on the necessity to eliminate the 'physically and mentally unhealthy and unworthy', see Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Hutchinson, 1974), 367–68; see also Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 167.

<sup>40</sup> Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 16.

<sup>41</sup> Tatz, "The Doctorhood of Genocide," 89. See also Markusen, "Genocide and Total War," 111; Raffles, "Jews, Lice and History," 521–66; Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, 20; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 216.

<sup>42</sup> The children targeted were mostly toddlers and infants, but evidence has found that some up to the age of seventeen were also involuntarily euthanized. See Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 104.

the Aryan race and thus ‘useless eaters’ to the Third Reich.<sup>43</sup> The T4 *Tiergartenstrasse* 4 euthanasia program saw that ‘the sickly, malformed and the least fleet or powerful’,<sup>44</sup> were mass destroyed via gas chambers – the first group of people to be murdered in this way by the Nazis.<sup>45</sup> Despite officially halting T4 in 1941 due to public condemnation,<sup>46</sup> the T4 program continued in secret until 1945: by this time, 200 000 adults had been euthanised against their will. These laws were propagated by Nazi regime as a ‘moral command’, because *not* to do so would condemn the Aryan race to death and hinder the progression of the Third Reich.<sup>47</sup>

This example has highlighted a number of important ways toxic to the ideal can operate as an early warning sign for genocide. The case of Nazi Germany illustrated how toxic to the ideal can draw on themes of the body politic. The Nazi regime discussed the state in terms of a human body, therein stating that certain entities can affect the state as a whole. In discussing the paramount importance of the vitality of the body politic, this consequently paved the way for toxification rhetoric to use certain language devices to portray victims as toxic to the ideal. In this instance, Nazi German propaganda manipulated themes of eugenics and racial purity to present victims as not only less than human, but harmful to human progression. Moreover, the example illustrated how toxic to the ideal rhetoric equates victim groups with lethal pestilences, contagions and parasites. Those who failed to fit the Aryan model, including those

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<sup>43</sup> Tatz, *With Intent to Destroy*, 90; Christian Pross, “Introduction,” in: *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*, eds. Aly Götz, A, Peter Chroust and Christian Pross (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1994), 3; Williamson, *The Third Reich*, 71; Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 105.

<sup>44</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 37.

<sup>45</sup> Rubinstein, *Genocide*, 186; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 108; Savage, “Disease Incarnate,” 417, 426; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 34; Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 107.

<sup>46</sup> The churches in Germany strongly opposed the program and demonstrations against the forced euthanasia were not uncommon. See Gallagher, “Holocaust: The Genocide of Disabled Peoples,” 211.

<sup>47</sup> In other words, I would submit that it was not dehumanisation that forewarned the mass systematic killing of these individuals per se, but rather their depiction as irreconcilably hindering the Nazi ideal. This is not to say that dehumanisation did not play a central role; in the case of the mentally and physically unfit, these individuals were often referred to as ‘creatures’, ‘existences’, ‘idiots’ and ‘travesties of human form and spirit’ and often depicted in propaganda films as acting as animals. See, for example, Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 194. Moreover, toxic to the ideal rhetoric was drawn upon, for instance, to justify the 1933 Sterilisation Laws (officially, the *Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses*, Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring). This saw the mandatory sterilisation of any individual deemed to have a heredity disease (as aforementioned) so as to ensure that such diseases were not *passed on* to future generations, thereby continuing to contaminate the Aryan ideal. This was considered the primary step to annihilate the possibility of any *additional* noxious presences in the Third Reich, before turning to eliminate the ‘existing’ lethal entities. Consequently, approximately 400 000 individuals were forcefully sterilised without consent by 1945. For more discussions on the forced sterilisation processes, see Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 108.

deemed mentally and physically deficient, were presented as toxic to the Third Reich. Lastly, this example showed how toxification depicts victim groups as parasites who – by ‘feeding off’ the host state – will catalyse the death of the one’s society. In tandem with the themes of the body politic, this demonstrates that the notion of toxic to the ideal can label victims as parasites who exist ‘outside the confines of his homeland, sucking off the marrow of the people of the host country’<sup>48</sup> until the host state collapses.<sup>49</sup> Via toxic to the ideal discourses, victims of the Nazi-perpetrated genocides were portrayed as something beyond *untermensch* (sub-human) or inhuman, as per dehumanisation. They were portrayed as fundamentally *toxic* to the furtherance of the Aryan ideal and the perfect Nazi society, therein signalling that killing the victim group was not only allowed, but necessary.

#### Toxic to the self

While the Nazi-perpetrated genocides are highly demonstrative of toxic to the ideal, there are some instances that effectively illustrate toxic to the self. In particular, this example shows that toxic to the ideal compounds and reinforces the notion of toxic to the self. As aforementioned, the toxic to the ideal narrative was reliant on the concept of the German *Volkskörper* (body politic). The notion of the body politic purports that the state is subject to the influences of its individual citizens; however, by extension, what affects the state necessarily affects its *people*.<sup>50</sup> In this way, this example provides an illustration of toxic to the self. Nazism stressed the unconditional equation of ‘the individual fate with the fate of the nation’: according to Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft*, the Jewish plot to see the demise of the German *Volkskörper* extends to the death of each German citizen. Owing to this language device, toxic to the ideal gave rise to and strengthened the notion of Jews (in particular) as being toxic to the self. Further, the example of Nazi Germany here illustrates the absolute universality of toxic to the self: *no one* in the population is exempt from the lethality of the victim group. An example of toxic to the self rhetoric is Hitler’s assertion that ‘no one is excepted from the crisis

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<sup>48</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1995), 259.

<sup>49</sup> See also Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap*, 217.

<sup>50</sup> Fleming, “Genocide and the Body Politic,” 112–13; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 35; Musolf, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust*, 3; Kelman, “Violence without Moral Restraint,” 33; Tatz, “The Doctorhood of Genocide,” 78–94; Moshman, “Us and Them,” 123.

of the Reich'.<sup>51</sup> This fundamental unification of the German state with its people also manipulates the *individual's* sense of security. According to Hitler, 'This Volk is but yourselves'.<sup>52</sup> Hence, when talking about the bacillus of the Jews, the Gypsy disease, and the *lebensunterwertes leben* lethally contaminating the German state and Aryan ideal, the Nazi regime is insinuating that these groups are also poisonous to *each German citizen*. 'How many diseases,' stated Hitler in 1942, 'have their origins in the Jewish virus!'<sup>53</sup> In this instance, the groups thought to be toxic to the ideal, are also *unavoidably*, toxic to the self. Goebbels, the mouth piece for creating and disseminating toxic discourses in Nazi Germany, wrote a diary entry dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 1942, in which he said that 'If we [the Nazi regime] hadn't defended ourselves against them, the Jews would have exterminated us. It is a battle of life and death between the Aryan race and the Jewish bacillus.'<sup>54</sup> In another diary entry, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1942, Goebbels wrote that, 'The Jews are the lice of civilised humanity. They have to be exterminated somehow...when you spare them, you subsequently become their victim.'<sup>55</sup> This highlights that Jews were more than dehumanised; rather, via this toxic to the self rhetoric, Jews had been assigned an element of lethality to individual citizens.

Another example is the writings of Julius Streicher, editor of the anti-Semitic magazine *Der Stürmer* from 1924-1945. Articulating that Jews were toxic to the self as well as to future generations, Streicher 'a single act of intercourse between a Jewish man and an Aryan woman is enough to poison the woman's blood forever.'<sup>56</sup> Moreover, an excerpt from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* constitutes an example of toxic to the self insofar that Jews are portrayed as intentionally targeting German women: 'With satanic joy in his face, the black haired Jewish youth lurks in waiting for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people.'<sup>57</sup> This manifestation of toxic to the self is linked back to themes of toxic to the ideal: 'With every means he tries to destroy the racial foundations of the people he has set out to subjugate.'<sup>58</sup> The infamous children's storybook *Der Giftplatz* (The Poisonous Mushroom) is a final

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<sup>51</sup> Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 82.

<sup>52</sup> Koenigsberg, *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, 82.

<sup>53</sup> Chirot and McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All?*, 16.

<sup>54</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 38.

<sup>55</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 117.

<sup>56</sup> Norbert Westenrieder, *Deutsche Frauen und Mädchen: Vom Alltagsleben 1933 – 1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste-Verl., 1988), 31; cited in Nancy A. Harrowtiz & Barbara Hyams, *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger* (New York: Temple University Press, 1995), 161.

<sup>57</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 293–95.

<sup>58</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 294, cited in Chirot and McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All?*, 325.

example of the toxic to the self rhetoric in Nazi Germany. In addition to suggesting that Jews are ‘the incarnation of everything evil and soulless’,<sup>59</sup> it stresses that German children are able to identify, and must at all costs avoid, a Jewish person because of their lethality.

This example has highlighted important aspects of toxification’s two manifestations and shed light on how the concept can manifest prior to genocide. It illustrated how one type of toxification can pave the way for, and reinforce, the other preceding the killing. Toxic to the self in the case of Nazi Germany was largely drawn from the toxic to the ideal narratives focusing on the body politic. By using discourses of the body politic in the toxic to the ideal Nazi propaganda, it also posited that this group is necessarily toxic to the average German civilian. That is, the examples of toxic to the self here are based on the logic that the *Volk* are inexorably affected by the ailments afflicted onto the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Moreover, the example here makes the important point that the toxic to the self rhetoric is designed to affect *all* members of one’s group. The lethality of the victim group is portrayed as ubiquitous and cannot be reconciled short of annihilation; by extension, toxic to the self implies ‘powerful self-protective motives’.<sup>60</sup>

## Summary

These examples of the notions of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self in the context of Nazi Germany illustrate how the concept of toxification can manifest as an early warning sign for genocide. By looking at Nazi German propaganda for examples of toxification, this exercise shed light on important aspects of the notions of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self. Specifically, it highlighted how the notion of toxic to the ideal can use certain language vehicles and metaphors to portray victims as lethal. These include, using discourses of eugenics, labelling victims as diseases and cancers, and depicting them as parasitical entities on the body politic. Moreover, this example also highlighted how one form of toxification can form the basis for the other. I would be inclined to suggest that while the Nazi perpetrated genocides illustrates how toxic to the self can operationalise, this case should more appropriately be understood as an example of toxification as toxic to the ideal. The propaganda Nazi Germany discussed

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<sup>59</sup> Berger, *Inventing the Nation*, 144; Neilsen, “Toxification,” 88.

<sup>60</sup> Staub, “The Origins and Prevention of Genocide,” 98.



the centrality of achieving an Aryan ideal and seeing the prosperity of the Third Reich; therefore, much of the toxification discourses were qualified by portraying victims as toxic to the ideal. Thus, it is more useful for showing how toxic to the ideal would operate.

To this end, the Nazi genocide sits in contrast with the Rwandan genocide of the Tutsis in 1994, which I regard as primarily an example of toxification as toxic to the self.

## Chapter 5

‘The more we cut, the cutting became child’s play to us.’<sup>1</sup>

### The Rwandan genocide, 1994

The international community originally regarded the 1994 Rwandan genocide as ‘standard’ African inter-tribal warfare, birthed from ‘deep seated antagonisms’ and ‘ancient atavistic hatreds’.<sup>2</sup> In retrospect, the genocide is now heralded as one of the worst and most efficient genocides of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> Killing began shortly after the assassination of Hutu-extremist President Juvéna Habyarimana on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April with the *interahamwe* (Hutu-power militia)<sup>4</sup> targeting the Tutsi ethnic minority.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to the gas chambers in death camps manned by Nazi officials during the Holocaust, killing was executed at close range. Killers used ‘machetes, *massues* (clubs studded with nails), small axes, knives, grenades, guns, and fragmentation grenades.’<sup>6</sup> Other victims were beaten to death, killed by having limbs amputated leading to exsanguination, drowned, buried alive, or raped and mutilated before being killed.<sup>7</sup> Within one hundred days, approximately 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu moderates<sup>8</sup> had been exterminated.<sup>9</sup> According to Philip Gourevitch, ‘that’s three hundred and thirty-three

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<sup>1</sup> This is a quote from a Rwandan perpetrator after the genocide. Cited in Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 45.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Campbell, *Genocide and the Global Village* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 74,77; Joseph Sebarenzi, *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (New York: Atria Books, 2009), 69; Michael Barnett, *Eye Witness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2002), 51, 103; Johan Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 32; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 17–19.

<sup>3</sup> The final statement on the genocide from the United Nations Security Council read: ‘The horrors of Rwanda’s killing fields have few precedents in the recent history of the world,’ cited in Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 134. For similar acknowledgements of the brutality and efficiency of the Rwandan genocide, see Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*, (London: Picado, 1998), 3; Sebarenzi *God Sleeps in Rwanda*, 70; Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda*, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Meaning ‘those who stand together’, the *interahamwe* was the Hutu-extremist militia group during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. See Charles Mironko, “Ibitero: Means and Motive in the Rwandan Genocide,” in *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda: New Perspectives*, ed. Susan E. Cook (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 163.

<sup>5</sup> This includes people who ‘looked’ Tutsi, as well as Hutu moderates – those accused of being ‘accomplices’, or refusing to participate in the massacres. See Fujii, *Killing Neighbours*, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Physicians for Human Rights, *Rwanda 1994: A Report of the Genocide* (London: Author, 1994), 11, quoted in Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell The Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), 8.

<sup>7</sup> For an account of the perpetrators’ testimonies regarding the genocide, see Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*.

<sup>8</sup> Hutu moderates refer to those Hutus who refused to participate in the killing.

<sup>9</sup> No exact death toll exists for the Rwandan genocide. Estimates vary from 500,000 to over a million; the consensus in the genocide literature is usually around 800,000, so I am inclined to use this figure. For additional estimates, see also Larry May, “Complicity and The Rwandan Genocide,” *Res Publica* 16 (2010): 135; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 41; Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 1, 131.

and a third murders an hour – or five and half lives terminated every minute.’<sup>10</sup> Neighbours, friends, colleagues and family members participated in the massacres, often in places of sanctuary such as schools, hospitals and churches.<sup>11</sup> In the harrowing words of William Rubinstein, ‘Rwanda became, literally, a bloodbath’.<sup>12</sup>

### Toxic to the ideal

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 highlights significant characteristics of toxic to the ideal as an early warning sign for genocide. Firstly, it illustrates how toxic to the ideal discourses can draw upon (and manipulate) ongoing social upheavals or previous conflicts between the groups in question. Specifically, the toxic to the ideal propaganda can cite factual instances where the victim group was in a position of superiority, or had previously attempted to destroy the potential perpetrators’ society. I submit that this type of toxic to the ideal attempts add credibility and plausibility to the claim that the victim groups is lethal to one’s envisaged society. Secondly, the Rwandan example illustrates how toxification as toxic to the ideal can depict the victim group as *actively* attempting to destroy one’s ideal society. In contrast to the Nazi example, wherein victim groups were largely regarded as toxic *in their nature*, Rwanda shows that toxic to the ideal propaganda can also ascribe an element of *agency and intent* to the victim group. Rather than being toxic due to their mere existence within the Hutu society, the toxic to the ideal discourses here presented Tutsis as plotting to destroy the Hutu ideal.<sup>13</sup>

Hutu extremist propaganda in the early 1990s asserted that the presence of the Tutsis was fundamentally lethal to the Hutu-led society. Around the time of the genocide, much of the Rwandan population was illiterate.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, Rwandans relied heavily on communal meetings, illustrations in newspapers, and the radio for their

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<sup>10</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 133.

<sup>11</sup> Fujii, *Killing Neighbours*, 3; Sebarenzi, *God Sleeps in Rwanda*, 70; Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 228; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 18; René Lemarchand, “The Rwanda Genocide,” in *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, eds. Samuel Totten, William Parsons and Israel Charny (New York: Routledge, 2004), 409. Over million people are estimated to be in some way complicit to the genocides. For discussions regarding how many Rwandans were complicit in the genocide, please see May, “Complicity and the Rwandan Genocide,” 135 and Mark Drumbl, *Atrocity, Punishment and International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 71.

<sup>12</sup> Rubinstein, *Genocide*, 289; Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 29.

<sup>13</sup> Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 181.

<sup>14</sup> According to Mann, sixty-six per cent of Rwandans were literate, however other estimates place this much lower. At the time of the genocide, the population of Rwanda was approximately 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi, and 1% Twa. See Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 444.

information.<sup>15</sup> As such, toxification can be found in broadcasts from the government-sponsored radio station Radio Rwanda, the (more extremist and more popular) privately run Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), and public speeches made by Hutu extremists and politicians.<sup>16</sup> For illustrations, and for those who could read, toxification can also be found in the Hutu Power newspaper *Kangura*, established in 1990 by Hassan Ngeze.<sup>17</sup>

Accusations of Tutsis as being toxic to the ideal were drawn from the country's decades of civil war and a history of colonial influence, in which Tutsis were put in positions of power and superiority over Hutus by the Belgian colonisers.<sup>18</sup> Radio announcements, public meetings and articles announced the need to preserve the Rwandan society in which Hutus were liberated and empowered.<sup>19</sup> For the Hutu-hardliner National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) regime of the time, it was imperative that Rwanda also remained Hutu-led. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF, a Tutsi rebel group formed in 1987), known colloquially as *Inkotanyi* (meaning 'invincible'), was consistently depicted as lethal to the existing Hutu-dominated Rwandan society in the media. Emerging from a history of Tutsi superiority in Rwanda and drawing on legacies of past violence, the toxic to the ideal propaganda

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<sup>15</sup> Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell The Story*, 42; Frank Chalk, "Hate Radio in Rwanda," in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. Howard Adelman and Suhrke Astri (London: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 93.

<sup>16</sup> Established in July 1993, RTLM was French for 'Free Radio and Television of the Thousand Hills', as Rwanda was known for its hillsides. While RTLM was officially privately owned, it did receive sponsorship from Radio Rwanda, which was state-operated as is thus thought to have ties with the Hutu-extremist government of the time. Li Darryl, "Echoes of Violence," in *The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention*, eds. Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 122–23; Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 177; Chalk, "Hate Radio in Rwanda," 94, 97; Mary Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," in *The Media and the Rwandan Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 123.

<sup>17</sup> According to a witness to the genocide, 'Everyone spoke of *Kangura*,' cited in Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide* (London: Verso, 2004), 49. In the prosecution of Hassan Ngeze, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda affirmed that the propaganda *Kangura* 'had the effect of poison' on the Rwandan population. "Rwanda File: Primary Sources from the Rwandan Genocide – RTLM Transcripts," accessed 3 July 2015. <http://www.rwandafile.com/rtlm/>. For further statements about the role of hate speech on the radio in Rwanda, See also Jean-Pierre Chrétien, "RTLM Propaganda: the Democratic Alibi," in *The Media and the Rwandan Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 57; Alison Des Forges, "Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994," in *The Media and the Rwandan Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 42–43; Chalk, "Hate Radio in Rwanda," 95; Mamdani, *When Victims Becomes Killers*, 190.

<sup>18</sup> For an account of the Belgian colonial influence, historical Tutsi dominance in Rwanda, and how these factors influenced the social dynamics prior the genocide, see Bill Berkeley, "Road to Genocide," in *The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention*, eds. Nicolaus Mills and Kira Brunner (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 103–16; Mamdani, *When Victims Becomes Killers*, 44–48, 202; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 432–34; Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 12–16.

<sup>19</sup> Berkeley, "Road to Genocide," 111; Chrétien, "RTLM Propaganda," 57.

spoke of an inevitable RPF attack on Rwanda.<sup>20</sup> For instance, Pierre-Claver Rwangabo, a Hutu moderate, stated that the propaganda ‘always said that it was the Tutsi coming to attack the country. All they said all day was that it was the Tutsi coming to take the power away from the Hutus.’<sup>21</sup> This propaganda stated that unless the Hutu deterred such an attack, the Tutsi RPF would re-assert Tutsi superiority, re-instate monarchism by crushing democracy,<sup>22</sup> and once again oppress Hutus, thereby annihilating the Hutu-liberated society.<sup>23</sup> In effect, the ‘Tutsis of the past’, who were once in a position of superiority over Hutus, were presented as the same as the ‘Tutsis of the present’, attempting to re-install this regime.<sup>24</sup> To make this more compelling, propaganda not only fabricated narratives of RPF intentions to destroy the Hutu ideal, it also cited evidence of RPF violence against and massacres of Hutus.<sup>25</sup> For instance, the 1972 genocide of 200,000 to 300,000 Hutu committed by an almost exclusively Tutsi army in Burundi was a constant theme in the Hutu *Powa* discourse.<sup>26</sup> It was on this platform that President Habyarimana was portrayed as the defender and saviour of the nation.<sup>27</sup> Yet, the propaganda soon began to equate the lethality of the *Inkotanyi* with the wider Tutsi population. The distinction between the RPF and Tutsis eventually collapsed. All Tutsis were portrayed as the ‘sole enemy: accomplices of the *Inkotanyi*’.<sup>28</sup> This is epitomised by the slogan made infamous by a 1993 *Kangura* article *Umwanzi ni umwe ni umutusi*, meaning: ‘the enemy is one, it is the Tutsi’.<sup>29</sup> This was echoed by an announcement by the Ministry of Defence on April 12<sup>th</sup> 1994: ‘the only enemy and this is the enemy that we have always known... It’s the enemy who wants to reinstate the former feudal

<sup>20</sup> Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 178–79; Fujii, *Killing Neighbours*, 184.

<sup>21</sup> Bill Berkeley, “Rwanda: Those Who Started the Slaughter,” *The Washington Post*, April 18, 1995, A17, cited in Chalk, “Hate Radio in Rwanda,” 99.

<sup>22</sup> Support for democracy became synonymous with a Hutu-extremist led government; as identified by Michael Mann, President Habyarimana enshrined the slogan ‘Majority Democracy’. See Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 435, 444; Chrétien, “RTLM Propaganda,” 60.

<sup>23</sup> Berkeley, “Road to a Genocide,” 111–13; Li, “Echoes of Violence,” 94; Mamdani, *When Victims Becomes Killers*, 191, 199; Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 219.

<sup>24</sup> Kimani, “RTLM,” 112.

<sup>25</sup> Fujii, *Killing Neighbors*, 184; Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 86; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 435.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Orth, “Rwanda’s Hutu Extremist Insurgency: An Eyewitness Perspective In the Rwandan Genocide,” in *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda: New Perspectives* ed. Susan E. Cook (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 219; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 183; René Lemarchand, “The Burundi Genocide,” in *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, eds. Samuel Totten, William Parsons and Israel Charny (New York: Routledge, 2004), 321.

<sup>27</sup> Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 35.

<sup>28</sup> According to the Minister of Justice of the time, Stanislas Mbonampeka, ‘The Tutsis were not killed as Tutsis, only as sympathisers of the RPF... There was no difference between the ethical and the political... Ninety-nine percent of Tutsis were pro-RPF.’ Cited in Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 98. See also Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 50.

<sup>29</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 173, 225.

monarchy – the Tutsis.’<sup>30</sup> Hutu hardliner propaganda and politicians then unabatedly asserted the need to ‘protect’ and ‘defend’ the Hutu Rwandan society from the lethal, ‘concrete and immediate’ Tutsi ‘alien’ infiltration.<sup>31</sup> All Tutsis were thought to be complicit in the *Inkotanyi* attempt to restore colonial-influenced Tutsi domination and Hutu subjugation.<sup>32</sup> Three months before the mass killing began, the *Kangura* stated: ‘We [the Hutu] will begin by getting rid of the enemies inside the country. The Tutsi ‘cockroaches’ should know what will happen, they will disappear’.<sup>33</sup>

Having blurred the distinction between the RPF and the wider Tutsi population, the propaganda that described Tutsis as toxic to the ideal was indiscriminate; it targeted the ‘young and old, the healthy and infirm, men as well as women’.<sup>34</sup> Hutu extremist propaganda warned that if Tutsi women and children were not killed, future generations would also seek the demise of a Hutu-‘liberated’ Rwanda.<sup>35</sup> This was because, in the arguments of the Hutu extremists, Tutsis posed an irreconcilable lethal threat not only to the *current* society as idolised by Hutu *Powa*, but also to future generations of Hutus.<sup>36</sup> This is epitomised in Léon Mugesera’s November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1992 speech, in which he declares: ‘Let no snake [Tutsi] escape you (*Ntihagire inzoka ibacika*)...Not even a baby...because a child of a snake is a snake (*Umwana winzoka ni inzoka nawe*)’.<sup>37</sup> In a similar vein, the 1993 *Kangura* article stated that: ‘A cockroach gives birth to another cockroach... the history of Rwanda shows us clearly that a Tutsi stays always exactly the same, that he has never changed... They are all linked...their evilness is the same.’<sup>38</sup> Extending upon this theme of Tutsis as being toxic to the Hutus’ future, RTLM

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 50.

<sup>31</sup> The use of the term ‘alien’ was drawn from the Hutu nationalism from the 1959 revolution, which saw Tutsi minority as a race group alien to the indigenous ethnic group of Rwanda as part of its ideology. See Mamdani, *When the Victims Became Killers*, 189–90; Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell The Story*, 10; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 138.

<sup>32</sup> For example, see *Kangura*’s 1992 article, “They Hide Behind Political Parties, Believing that We Have Fallen Asleep,” in “Rwanda File: Primary Sources from the Rwandan Genocide,” accessed 2 July, 2015 <http://www.rwandafile.com/Kangura/k30c.html>.; Mamdani, *When Victims Becomes Killers*, 192; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 241; Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 88; Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 86.

<sup>33</sup> Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killer*, 186.

<sup>34</sup> Fujii, *Killing Neighbours*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> This logic was drawn from the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which was comprised of predominantly the children of Tutsi refugees from the 1959 revolution and persecution in the 1960s and 1970s. See Semelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 43; Kevin O’Halloran, *Pure Massacre. Aussie Soldiers Reflect on the Rwandan Genocide* (Newport: Big Sky Publishing Pty Ltd, 2010), 26–27; Des Forges, *Leave None To Tell The Story*, 78.

<sup>36</sup> Mamdani, *When Victims Becomes Killers*, 189; Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 51

<sup>37</sup> Mugesera was the MRND Vice-Chairman for the Gisenyi prefecture in Rwanda. Quote from Mironko, “Ibitero: Means and Motive,” 182.

<sup>38</sup> Cited in Valentine, *Final Solutions*, 185.

broadcasts cautioned 'its listeners to do a thorough clean up: this time – as opposed to the last time, in 1961 to 1963, even the children should not be spared.'<sup>39</sup> The apparent necessity of killing Tutsi women and children became known as 'pulling out the roots of bad weeds',<sup>40</sup> so that they are unable to poison the future of Rwanda as desired by Hutu extremists. Reminiscent of Nazi Germany's toxic to the ideal rhetoric which drew upon the notion of the body politic, Hutu extremist propaganda stated that the Hutu were not simply the majority ethnic group in Rwanda: 'they were the nation'.<sup>41</sup> By extension, medical metaphors were also used to illustrate the Tutsi lethality to the Hutu society. For instance, a cartoon in *Kangura* depicted Ngeze being psychoanalysed by the democratic press, wherein the doctor asks about the source of Ngeze's sickness, and Ngeze responds: 'The Tutsis... Tutsis... Tutsis!!!!!!'<sup>42</sup> In another *Kangura* article: 'If this disease is not treated immediately, it will destroy all the Hutu'.<sup>43</sup>

This example highlighted that the notion of toxic to the ideal drew on and manipulated historical evidence of tensions between the two groups. The propaganda in Rwanda cited the colonial-influenced subordination of Hutus, and the Tutsis' wish to return to a Tutsi-led society. This was then fuelled by previous conflicts between the Tutsis and Hutu, by citing previous RPF rebellions and conflict during the 1960s and 1970s in neighbouring states, especially Burundi. On this note, and just as crucially, the Rwandan illustrative example also highlights that the victim group can be presented as *actively* attempting to destroy the potential perpetrators' future. MRDN Hutu hardliners presented all Tutsis as maliciously seeking to annihilate the Hutu-led society by re-instating a feudal monarchy, enslaving Hutus, and demolishing 'democracy'. Thus, this Rwandan example highlights that the toxic to the ideal discourses can also depict victims as *intending*, and *actively* seeking, the demise of one's society. This stands in contrast to the Nazi example, wherein discourses largely depicted the mere existence of certain groups as being toxic to realising the Aryan ideal. Such propaganda insinuated that unless Hutus took action against this deliberate, lethal infiltration, the Tutsi enemy would successfully return to destroy the Hutu-extremist society.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Mamandi, *When Victims Become Killers*, 212. For similar public statements, such as Mugusera's 1992 statements: 'No matter what you do, do not let them get away... The fatal mistake we made in 1959 was to let them get out... We have to act. Wipe them all out' see Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 444.

<sup>40</sup> Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 26; Mamandi, *When Victims Become Killer*, 194.

<sup>41</sup> Quote from Mamandi, *When Victims Become Killers*, 189; Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 32.

<sup>42</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 87.

<sup>43</sup> Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 75.

<sup>44</sup> Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 34; Des Forges, *Leave None To Tell The Story*, 78.

## Toxic to the self

Rwanda is the paradigm example of the concept of toxic to the self: propaganda explicitly stated that the Hutu were facing a 'kill or be killed' *fait accompli*. The toxic to the self discourses in Rwanda portrayed the Tutsis as planning to exterminate every single Hutu, irrespective of familial relations, friendships, or workplace status.<sup>45</sup> The messages of toxic to the self unabatedly alleged the Hutu were subsequently engaged in a 'war of self-defence':<sup>46</sup> if the Hutu majority did not destroy the Tutsis, the Tutsi would annihilate the Hutu first.<sup>47</sup> These unequivocal assertions Hutus illustrate how toxification as toxic to the self can explicitly portray genocide as a *necessary, preventative measure*. As a minor side point, this example also highlights how toxic to the self can cite fictitious evidence to 'validate' the claims about the victim group's lethality. For example, broadcasters would frequently announce that Tutsis had stockpiled and concealed weapons behind cathedrals around the country that they would use to kill Hutus.<sup>48</sup> A December 1990 *Kangura* issue claimed that the Tutsis were preparing a war 'that would leave no survivors'; similarly, a 1991 Hutu extremist pamphlet decreed that 'to restore the dictatorship of the extremists of the Tutsis minority,' the Tutsis were going to execute 'a genocide, the extermination of the Hutu majority.'<sup>49</sup> The Hutu-extremist propaganda blamed Tutsis for (fabricated) narratives of assassinations and massacres of Hutu civilians in neighbouring Burundi.<sup>50</sup> For example, Ngeze published an article in *Kangura* in January 1994 titled 'The Inyenzi were about the Kill Hassan Ngeze, But Thank God He Escaped Death', in which Ngeze states: 'My arrest proves that the *Inyenzi* will hunt down anyone who oppose them.'<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Berkeley, Bill. "Road to Genocide," 122; Kimani, "RTLM," 123; Des Forges, "Call to Genocide," 43

<sup>46</sup> Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 249. See also Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 102; Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 27.

<sup>47</sup> Gruenfeld and Huiboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide*, 37; Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 32; Li, "Echoes of Violence," 118; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 183; Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 81.

<sup>48</sup> Des Forges, *Leave None To Tell The Story*, 10.

<sup>49</sup> Cited in Des Forges, *Leave None To Tell The Story*, 78.

<sup>50</sup> *Kangura* reported on this in May 1992. See "Press Release: Tutsis Massacre Hutu Civilians," accessed 2 July 2011. <http://www.rwandafile.com/Kangura/k35h.html>. See also Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 192.

<sup>51</sup> *Kangura*, "The Inyenzi were about the Kill Hassan Ngeze, But Thank God He Escaped Death," in "Rwanda File: Primary Sources from the Rwandan Genocide," accessed 2 July, 2015. <http://www.rwandafile.com/Kangura/k54a.html>.



The toxic to the self rhetoric in Rwanda was used as mirror propaganda – ‘the notion of ascribing to others what we ourselves are preparing to do’ for the *interahamwe* and Hutu-extremist government.<sup>52</sup> It was the authority’s attempt to convince ordinary Hutu citizens that Tutsis were lethal to all Hutus, and thus had to be annihilated.<sup>53</sup> The toxic to the self signalled that the Tutsi situation as a survival security dilemma for the Hutus.<sup>54</sup> ‘The exigencies of survival triumphed a zero-sum game’<sup>55</sup> whereby the extermination of Tutsis was portrayed as an act of preventative, self-preservation.<sup>56</sup> An example of this toxic to the self discourse is another statement made by Léon Mugesera in a speech to party members on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1992. He declared: ‘Know that the person whose throat you do not cut now will be the one who will cut yours.’<sup>57</sup> By 1993, Hutu *Powa* propaganda declared via radiobroadcasts: ‘We know that they have attacked us with the intention of massacring and exterminating 4.5 million Hutu’.<sup>58</sup> Prior to the genocide, the RTLM consistently demanded Hutus had to arm up and ‘defend’ themselves against the Tutsi lethality.<sup>59</sup> One radio announcer broadcast this intent months before the onset of the killing: ‘We said... We are going to kill them before being killed by them.’<sup>60</sup> Lastly, the week before the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, RTLM broadcaster Georges Ruggiu proclaimed: ‘You cockroaches must know you are made of flesh. We won’t let you kill! We will kill you!’<sup>61</sup> Hence, the toxic to the self propaganda

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<sup>52</sup> Chrétien, “RTLM Propaganda,” 55.

<sup>53</sup> Kimani, “RTLM,” 123; Li, “Echoes of Violence,” 125; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 96; Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 10.

<sup>54</sup> Neilsen, “Toxification,” 89; Berkeley, “Road to Genocide,” 111–12; Lemarchand, “The 1994 Rwanda Genocide,” 402; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 186; Kimani, “RTLM,” 123.

<sup>55</sup> Neilsen, “Toxification,” 89.

<sup>56</sup> Mironko, “Ibitero: Means and Motive,” 164; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 140; Mamdani, *When the Victims Became Killers*, 191.

<sup>57</sup> Cited in Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 86.

<sup>58</sup> Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 78.

<sup>59</sup> For example, see RTLM Transcripts: 25 October 1993; 12, 20, 24 November 1993; 29 March 1994; 1, 3 June 1994 in Des Forges, “Call to Genocide,” 45. See also Berkeley, “Road to Genocide,” 119; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 138; Li, “Echoes of Violence,” 91.

<sup>60</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 138.

<sup>61</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 114. What’s more, Tutsis were depicted as bloodthirsty plunderers and cannibals. The cover of *Zirikana* in 1993 shows a Tutsi RPF soldier slitting the throat of Hutu baby, having already sliced off its hands and legs. The Tutsi says, ‘this piece of meat is very small. You [to the Hutu father] and your wife will eat the arms and legs while we will take the liver and chest, ok?’ The mother is shown to scream in horror. The Tutsi soldier continues, ‘Mam, what’s your problem? You didn’t give yourself to us. Here we share everything, right?’ This caricature was depicted and explained in Gruenfeld and Huiboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide*, 25.

purported that Hutu civilians were fighting a war of self defence against the toxic Tutsi presence, and that ‘nothing short of physical liquidation can deal with such danger’.<sup>62</sup>

Such toxic to the self rhetoric intensified after the onset of the genocide, signalling that killing would continue, if not escalate. Radio Rwanda broadcasted a political debate on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, in which one Hutu politician announced that Tutsis were going to ‘exterminate, exterminate, exterminate, exterminate’; ‘exterminate you [the Hutu] until they are the only ones left in the country so that they can keep for a thousand years the power that their fathers had kept for four hundred years... you must not let up your efforts’.<sup>63</sup> ‘Will [the Tutsis] truly continue to commit suicide against the majority?’ asked a RTLM announcer on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 1994, ‘Will they not be exterminated?’<sup>64</sup> In a final attempt to depict Tutsis as toxic to the self and reiterate the apparent necessity of their annihilation, another RTLM announcer declared ‘the cruelty of the *inyenzi* can be cured only by their total extermination’.<sup>65</sup>

Benedicte Ndagijimana, an English major college freshman during the genocide explained the impact of toxic to the self propaganda disseminated by authorities: ‘They [the Hutu-Rwandan population] hear over and over that the Tutsis are out to kill them, and that is reality. So they act not out of hate as fear. They think they have only the choice to kill or be killed.’<sup>66</sup> Also commenting on the portrayal of Tutsis as toxic to the self, a Hutu perpetrator explained, ‘we thought if we killed them all, they would not have the power to kill us.’<sup>67</sup> Another *avoues* (confessed perpetrator of the genocide) stated that the Tutsi ‘had become a threat greater than all we had experienced together... That’s how we reasoned and we killed at the time.’<sup>68</sup>

In addition to explicit calls for ‘self defence’ against a toxic to the self threat, it is important to note the role of particular labels used by Hutu-hardliners and the *interahamwe* to describe Tutsis. Scholars have written extensively on terms such as *inyenzi* (cockroaches), ‘rats’, ‘snakes’, ‘dogs’, and ‘devils’ and the way they served to

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<sup>62</sup> Quote from Lemarchand, “The 1994 Rwanda Genocide,” 399. See also Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 97; Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 206; Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda*, 39; Orth, “Rwanda’s Hutu Extremist Insurgency,” 221.

<sup>63</sup> Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *Rwanda: les medias du genocide* (Paris: Karthala Editions, 1995), 300; cited in Des Forges, “Call to Genocide,” 48.

<sup>64</sup> Li, “Echoes of Violence,” 95.

<sup>65</sup> RTLM transcript 3 June 1994 from Chrétien, *Rwanda*, 204, cited in Des Forges, “Call to Genocide,” 48.

<sup>66</sup> David Lamb, “Rwanda Tragedy May Reflect Larger Africa Problem,” *The Dallas Morning News* June 12, 1994, p. 21A; cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 191.

<sup>67</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 160; cited in Neilsen, “Toxification,” 89.

<sup>68</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 113; cited in Neilsen, “Toxification,” 89.

dehumanise the Tutsis prior to and during the slaughter.<sup>69</sup> In addition to this, I submit that these terms are also loaded with *toxic* connotations, as well as denying the Tutsis' humanity.<sup>70</sup> Cockroaches and rats are not just disgusting animals: they are disease-disseminating agents that hoard and transfer lethal illnesses to humans.<sup>71</sup> As well as having an association with deceit and treachery, snakes represent a lethal threat almost universally. The demonising language of '*ibinhindugemb*' (heinous monsters without a head or tail), 'demons' that consume the innards and organs of Hutu, and 'devils' also insinuates an element of lethality to an individual.<sup>72</sup> While these words served to dehumanise Tutsis, it is important to note the element of lethality inherent within each.

As a final, crucial note, the Hutu extremist propaganda exhorted that all Hutu were to see destroying the Tutsis as their responsibility. Consequently, any Hutu moderates (branded '*ibytso*' meaning 'accomplices') who refused to partake in the massacres were also killed by the *interahamwe*.<sup>73</sup> By not exterminating the *inyenzi*, the *ibytso* were considered as equally toxic to the self and the ideal.<sup>74</sup> Illustrating this point, one Hutu perpetrator stated that if a Hutu refused to kill, they 'were considered like a Tutsi. Even if you were Hutu, you were no longer considered Hutu...They had to understand that we were attacked by the Tutsi *ubwoko*. They had to help us fight them.'<sup>75</sup> For Hutu citizens, failure to comply with the militia's orders to kill 'meant a death warrant for themselves and their families.'<sup>76</sup>

This example has illustrated two important aspects of the notion of toxic to the self. Firstly, it identifies how the toxic to the self rhetoric can explicitly portray the situation as 'kill or be killed'. In doing so, it assigned an element of *agency* to each Tutsi: Tutsis were depicted as actively planning to kill all Hutus. Via the toxic to the self propaganda, average Hutu civilians were told that their death was guaranteed unless they eliminated the Tutsi first. By not participating in the killing, they were considered by Hutu extremists to stagnate the purging of a lethal presence. Secondly, the example

<sup>69</sup> Mironko, "Ibitero: Means and Motives," 182; Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You*, 94; Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 220; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 444.

<sup>70</sup> Toxic as meant in the sense of toxification; that is, connoting an element of fundamental and irreconcilable lethality.

<sup>71</sup> Such diseases include, for example, including staphylococcus, salmonella, the bubonic plague, and streptococcus. See Neilsen, "Toxification," 87.

<sup>72</sup> This was discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. See also Semelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 30.

<sup>73</sup> Coloroso, *Extraordinary Evil*, 29; O'Halloran, *Pure Massacre*, 28; Berkeley, "Road to Genocide," 112; Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 42, 142; Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 119.

<sup>74</sup> Neilsen, "Toxification," 89; Fujii, *Killing Neighbours*, 77.

<sup>75</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 142.

<sup>76</sup> Lemarchand, "The Rwanda Genocide," 403. For more testimonies regarding the perceived complicity of Hutu moderates, see Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 121.

here highlighted how the toxic to the self rhetoric can cite both falsified and historically accurate evidence to make such accusations more compelling. Announcements cited ‘unequivocal evidence’ – often fabricated by radio announcers – that Tutsis had begun realising their plan to destroy all Hutu. In tandem with the notion of toxic to the ideal, this example also highlighted how legacies of past violence between the RPF and Hutu civilians can be used to depict Tutsis as toxic to the self. I submit that these historical instances (however manipulated or exaggerated) therein fuels widespread panic regarding individual survival. Put frankly by one *génocidaire* after the Rwandan genocide:

It was kill or be killed. Each morning there were those who had to die and those who had to kill. Anyone who spoke out against the killings was killed, even for a murmur. Anyone who slipped away slowed down the killings of his colleagues, and he had to hide until he was found out and penalised. In the end, what you call genocide is killings that offer only one option.<sup>77</sup>

## Summary

The Rwandan genocide has illustrated how toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self can manifest prior to the onset of genocide. Hutu-hardliner propaganda depicted that all Tutsis, as *the enemy* (*Umwanzi ni umwe ni umutusi*), were fundamentally lethal to the society desired by the MRDN and Habyarimana regime. Toxic to the ideal propaganda accused Tutsis of seeking to disband democracy, restore feudal monarchies, and enslave Hutus. In doing so, Tutsis were intending to destroy the current Hutu-empowered society and return to an era of Tutsi superiority and Hutu subordination.<sup>78</sup> Propaganda prior to and during the genocide effectively portrayed Tutsis as less than human. However, it also presented a kill or be killed *fait accompli* for the Hutus *because* of the Tutsis’ irremediable lethality. Rhetoric of ‘civil self defence’ was rampant as radio broadcasts and public speeches insisted Tutsis would kill all Hutu unless the Hutu killed first. This toxic to the self propaganda was designed to influence Hutus to believe that “‘we had to defend ourselves’”<sup>79</sup> against the Tutsi toxic threat. Converse to the Nazi genocides, I submit that the Rwandan genocide is highly demonstrative of toxic to the

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<sup>77</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 230.

<sup>78</sup> Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 50; Kimani, “RTL,” 112; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 444.

<sup>79</sup> Quoted from a *génocidaire* in Mironko, “Ibitero: Means and Motive,” 168.

self and thus is better understood as an example of this strain of toxification. Although the above examples do illustrate toxic to the ideal, a great deal of the propaganda prior to the genocide was marked by 'kill or be killed' dialogues.

The Nazi-perpetrated genocide and the Rwandan genocide examples both effectively illustrate toxification as toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self; each have disparate emphasises, and each highlighted important aspects of the two concepts. I will now turn to look at the case of the Democratic Kampuchean genocides as my 'hard' illustrative example of toxification.

## Chapter 6

‘They will rot society, rot the Party, and rot the army.’<sup>1</sup>

### The Democratic Kampuchea genocide, 1975-1979

On 17<sup>th</sup> April 1975, the Khmer Rouge marched victoriously into Phnom Penh, welcomed as heroes for ending the Cambodian civil war.<sup>2</sup> Within hours, the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot installed a radical communist regime known as Democratic Kampuchea (DK).<sup>3</sup> Pol Pot embarked on a program to reduce Kampuchean society to a purely peasant, agrarian state, thereby returning to what he heralded as ‘Year Zero’ and marking this moment as the beginning of history. Entire city populations were forcefully evacuated to the countryside and were required to work in the fields. Currency was abolished, property collectivised, religion prohibited, and the traditional family was replaced with *Ângka*.<sup>4</sup> The Khmer Rouge articulated that anyone who failed to ‘fit’ the Democratic Kampuchea ideal society, or was suspected to be a counter-revolutionary or ‘internal traitor’, was lethal to the DK. This included, but was not limited to, certain ethnic and religious groups, the intelligentsia,<sup>5</sup> rebels, political opponents, civil servants, and members of the previous prime minister’s (Lon Nol) military or government (their family members). While these groups were explicitly identified, the Khmer Rouge propaganda placed emphasis on realising the DK ideal, and so if an individual was thought to fall foul of this model – mostly accused of being a ‘class enemy’ – they were considered toxic and subsequently eliminated. As a consequence, the ‘enemy’ was largely amorphous, in comparison to Nazi Germany and

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<sup>1</sup> Quote from Pol Pot on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1976, cited in Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975 - 79* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 336.

<sup>2</sup> French for ‘Red Khmer’ or ‘Red Cambodians’, the Khmer Rouge referred to the followers of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and was formed as a sect of the Vietnam People’s Army in North Vietnam.

<sup>3</sup> Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 111.

<sup>4</sup> *Ângka* was a quasi-institutionalised construction referring to the party leadership and the population. It thought to be the ‘all knowing’, ‘true’ knowledge and authority in DK. The Khmer Rouge stated that ‘*Ângka* is the soul of the revolution’ and ‘the soul of the motherland’. Attached with the notion of *Ângka* was also an Orwellian Big Brother sense that the party was constantly surveying the population and that any reactionary behavior would be discovered and punished. For more on *Ângka*, see Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?* 144; Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 142, 154; Edward Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide in Ethiopia and Cambodia* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 63; Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> The intelligentsia referred to individuals who were, for example, teachers, doctors, or lawyers.

Rwanda. The killing was seemingly indiscriminate and ubiquitous.<sup>6</sup> The genocide under the Khmer Rouge reign continued for three years, eight months and twenty days – a mantra known to almost all Cambodians today.<sup>7</sup> In this time, 1.7million Democratic Kampuchians (more than twenty per-cent of the population) perished as a result of execution or conditions intentionally designed to bring about starvation, malnutrition, disease or exhaustion from enforced physical labour.<sup>8</sup>

### Toxic to the ideal

The Democratic Kampuchea genocide of 1975 to 1979 is my hard illustrative example, because the genocidal policies largely targeted individuals on the basis of their perceived political, economic and social affiliations. Thus, the identification of who actually belonged to these groups is more amorphous than the previous two illustrative examples, which were predominantly ethnically or race focused. Consequently, the case of DK highlights important aspects of toxic to the ideal that were not addressed in the Nazi or Rwandan example. Most crucially, it illustrates that toxification can signal the onset of killing *even if* the construction of the victim group seems capricious. The Khmer Rouge asserted that any individual who did not fit the peasant, agrarian ideal was considered toxic to the DK. This included certain religious, ethnic and class groups; however, on the whole, victims were more loosely identified. In the case of the DK, the concept of the toxic to the ideal emphasised the qualities of citizens necessary to realise the ideal society, rather than focusing on specific victim groups. Therefore, anyone could suddenly be portrayed – often without proof or reason – as obstructing the communist ideal. This sits in contrast to Nazi Germany and Rwanda, where the victim groups (Jews and Tutsis) were clearly identified prior to the killing. Furthermore, it highlights that toxification can depict individuals as lethal on the basis of their perceived voluntary affiliation with political, economic or class groups.

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<sup>6</sup> Peter Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 52; M/ Ilyinski, “Total Genocide,” in *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Rebirth*, ed. E. Kobelev, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), 35; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 114.

<sup>7</sup> It is also synonymous with the horror of the Khmer Rouge regime.

<sup>8</sup> Estimates of death vary, but 1.7million seems to be the most quoted figure. For estimates of how many died, please see Alexander Hinton, “A Head for an Eye: Revenge in the Cambodian Genocide,” *American Anthropological Association* 25(1998): 352; Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields: Lessons from the Cambodian Genocide* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2005), 117–19.

Pol Pot's messianic aim was to do something that had 'never been done before in history'.<sup>9</sup> He spoke of the 'special course' to restructure the Kampuchean society to be a communist utopia, and that this required the total recalibration of the population.<sup>10</sup> By this, the Khmer Rouge sought to eradicate those individuals who were either unable or unwilling to become part of the revolutionary consciousness of the Democratic Kampuchea.<sup>11</sup> As one Khmer slogan went, the DK had to 'Build the Revolution on the Graves of the Reactionaries'.<sup>12</sup> Kampuchean toxic to the ideal propaganda was rife with lies and fabrications.<sup>13</sup> It falsified information to encourage all civilians to be wary of hidden reactionaries and 'enemies of the nations', because they were seeking to overthrow the communist state.<sup>14</sup> Illustrating their status as toxic to the ideal, in 1976 Pol Pot described these individuals as 'treacherous elements' causing a 'sickness inside the Party'. Pol Pot and the party line consistently declared that such 'internal elements' were 'ugly microbes'<sup>15</sup> who were planning 'real damage' and to 'rot us from within', thereby destroying the DK societal ideal.<sup>16</sup> One DK slogan read: 'What is infected must be cut; what is rotten must be removed; it isn't enough to cut down a bad plant, it must be uprooted.'<sup>17</sup> According to this toxic to the ideal discourse, these 'corrupt' and 'diseased elements'<sup>18</sup> had to be exterminated so as to 'purify' the population and ensure Year Zero could be realised.<sup>19</sup>

In the mass movement to the countryside, urban dwellers were termed 'new people', whereas rural people continuing to work in the fields were called 'old people'.<sup>20</sup> 'New people' were portrayed as 'parasitic plants', bringing 'nothing but

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<sup>9</sup> David Chandler, "Seeing Red: Perceptions of Cambodian History in Democratic Kampuchea," in *Revolution and Its Aftermath in Kampuchea: Eight Essays*, eds. David Chandler and Ben Kiernan (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1983), 34.

<sup>10</sup> For an account of Pol Pot's ambition to birth a radical communist society from 'the ashes of the old,' see Nic Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner: A Story of the Khmer Rouge* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005), 103; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 175; Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 283; John Barron and Anthony Paul, *Peace with Horror: The Untold Story of Communist Genocide in Cambodia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), 76.

<sup>12</sup> Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 123; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 91.

<sup>13</sup> M Ozerov, "They Know What Hell Means?," in *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Rebirth*, ed. E. Kobelev (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), 57.

<sup>14</sup> Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 103; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 148.

<sup>15</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 91.

<sup>16</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?* 147.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 156.

<sup>18</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 155.

<sup>19</sup> John Barron and Anthony Paul, "Untold Sufferings of the People," in *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Rebirth*, ed. E. Kobelev (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), 87.

<sup>20</sup> Hinton, "A Head for an Eye," 352; Judith Banister and Paige Johnson, "After the Nightmare, The Population of Cambodia," in: *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge, the United*



stomachs full of shit and bladders bursting with urine’.<sup>21</sup> One of the Khmer Rouge mottos in relation to the ‘new people’ read: ‘To keep you is no benefit. To destroy you is no loss.’<sup>22</sup> This points to the Khmer Rouge’s apathy regarding the survival of the ‘new people’; however, many ‘new people’ also qualified as lethal to the peasant, agricultural society and this was seen to warrant their extermination.<sup>23</sup> Among the first to be portrayed as lethal to the DK were the aristocracy or ‘intelligentsia’: intellectuals or people who were middle or upper class or had ‘professions’, such as teachers, academics, doctors, lawyers, and businessmen.<sup>24</sup> Yet, the ‘intelligentsia’ also included civilians with minimal education (sometimes, only one or two years of schooling), or civilians who wore glasses, or had un-calloused hands.<sup>25</sup> Because of their intellect and knowledge, these individuals were portrayed as *ipso facto* counterrevolutionary and ‘internal enemies’.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the Khmer Rouge branded known or suspected capitalists, and former members of Lon Nol’s government or military ‘supertraitors’, who were thought to ‘owe the communist party a blood debt.’<sup>27</sup> Anyone who was suspected of being against the regime, often for the most trivial ‘offense’, such as not eating with the group, were accused of being an agent of the CIA, KGB or Vietnamese secret service (sometimes all three simultaneously).<sup>28</sup> The *soansrokis*, security agents, had complete liberty to decide who was guilty and were permitted to kill even on paltry evidence or information.<sup>29</sup> Driving home the portrayal of eliminating such individuals

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*Nations, and the International Community*, ed. Ben Kiernan (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993), 68; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 113.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Henri Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book: The Sayings of Angkar* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2004), 185. See also Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 130; Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 140.

<sup>23</sup> May Ebiara, “A Cambodian Village under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979,” in *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge, the United Nations, and the International Community*, ed. Ben Kiernan (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993), 54; Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 210; Barron and Paul, *Peace with Horror*, 76.

<sup>24</sup> Barron and Anthony, “Untold Sufferings of the People,” 89; Peter du Preez, *Genocide: The Psychology of Mass Murder* (London: Boyas and Bowerdean, 2013), 54; Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 149; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 176.

<sup>25</sup> Un-calloused hands were thought to represent that the individual did not engage in hard labour in the fields and were considered to be hindrance to achieving the idealised cultivation society. See Barron and Paul, *Peace with Horror*, 77.

<sup>26</sup> Barron and Paul, *Peace with Horror*, 78; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 67.

<sup>27</sup> Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 50; Serge Thion, “Genocide as a Political Commodity,” in *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge, the United Nations, and the International Community*, ed. Ben Kiernan (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993), 166; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 113.

<sup>28</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 56; Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 59; For in-depths accounts of the torture used to ‘extract information’ from accused CIA or KGB spies (who were mostly average Kampuchians or foreigners), see Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*.

<sup>29</sup> Ilyinski, “Total Genocide,” 35; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 117.

as necessary to ensure the survival of the Khmer communist peasant society, Pol Pot announced: 'Let there be no holes at all for the enemy to worm his way into the insides of our Party.'<sup>30</sup> In portraying certain individuals as being lethal to the DK, Khmer Rouge propaganda sought a Maoist 'elimination of contradiction' by mass annihilation.<sup>31</sup>

The portrayal of intellectuals, rebels, and political opponents as lethal to the DK also extended to their family members, friends, and distant relatives.<sup>32</sup> According to a Khmer motto, this was to 'completely defeat the enemy' and deter possible retaliation. In other words, massacring relatives (women and children) meant that 'they would not be able to avenge their murdered fathers and grand fathers'<sup>33</sup> and continue to pose a toxic threat to the communist society. Via this toxic to the ideal discourse, the Khmer Rouge spouted the sheer necessity of eliminating the apparent corrosive and toxic elements to the communist society: 'No mercy for the enemies. Soft-heartedness is a crime'.<sup>34</sup> The depiction of certain victims as toxic to the DK, thereby illustrating the necessity of destroying such a toxic presence, is summarised in one infamous Khmer saying: 'It is better to kill ten innocent people than to let one guilty person go free.'<sup>35</sup> Not only did Pol Pot fear that intellectuals or former members of Lon Nol's government would 'rise up' or become counter-revolutionaries, but these individuals were also thought to fall foul of the peasant, farming society idolised by the Khmer Rouge. Thus, the identification of the enemy – despite being thought by officials to 'fall foul' of the DK standard – was seemingly fluid and random.<sup>36</sup> Because the requirements for being regarded as an enemy were so loose and were without clearly identifiable membership, almost anyone could suddenly be considered a toxic threat to the DK.

Party lines also spoke of the need to achieve racial purity: an ethnic-monolithic society of 'original' and 'pure (*borisot*) Khmer'.<sup>37</sup> This required destroying any race or ethnic groups that had 'contaminated' Cambodia.<sup>38</sup> In 1975, the Khmer Rouge publicly decreed that 'in Kampuchea there is one nation, and one language, the Khmer language.

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<sup>30</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 143.

<sup>31</sup> G. Damba, "Kampuchea: Maoist 'Elimination of Contradictions' by Mass Extermination," in *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Rebirth*, ed. E. Kobelev, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), 85.

<sup>32</sup> Ozerov, "They Know What Hell Means?," 67.

<sup>33</sup> Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 158.

<sup>34</sup> Ilyinski, M. "Total Genocide," 34.

<sup>35</sup> Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 138.

<sup>37</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 56.

<sup>38</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 114; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 149.

From now on the various nationalities... do not exist any longer.’<sup>39</sup> Not only did this foreshadow an attempt at what William Shabas termed ‘acts of cultural genocide’,<sup>40</sup> but also the mass killing of Buddhist monks, Muslims, Christians, ethnic Chams, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Lao, and Kola.<sup>41</sup> In particular, the Khmer Rouge propaganda organs portrayed the Vietnamese as toxic to DK, by stating that their ‘goal is to swallow Cambodia’s territory and force Cambodia into an Indochinese federation under its control’.<sup>42</sup> In particular, Khmer Rouge propaganda depicted all Vietnamese as quintessentially evil and lethal to the DK: they stated that the Vietnamese sought to destroy the communist peasant society in their ‘march to the south’.<sup>43</sup> Much of the discourses that had been around during the civil war were re-enforced by the Khmer Rouge. Radio broadcasts described the Vietnamese as living concealed among the population, infiltrating, sabotaging and destroying the communist regime.<sup>44</sup> For example, a 1978 Khmer Rouge radiobroadcast ‘Who Are ‘We’?’ declared that the enemy is any member of the feudal-capitalist oppressor class, but *specifically* ‘expansionist, annexationist Vietnamese enemy.’<sup>45</sup> Further broadcasts spoke of the need to ‘weed out and exterminate the enemy planted within the cooperatives,’ and reminded the Khmer soldiers ‘you are not fighting only against Vietnamese soldiers, but the whole of Vietnam. So spare nothing and no one.’<sup>46</sup> According to Pol Pot, the Vietnamese are ‘a black dragon that spits its poison.’<sup>47</sup> Ben Kiernan concludes that the overall death toll for Vietnamese Khmers was 100 per cent of the population.<sup>48</sup>

Ethnic Chinese were portrayed as symbolic of the urban, exploitative capitalism that was fundamentally toxic to the DK, as well as being depicted as not ‘pure Khmer’. The Chinese population in DK were branded ‘archetypal city dwellers’ revolutionaries

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<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over: The Voice's of Cambodia's Revolution and its People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 253; see also Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, xvii.

<sup>40</sup> Meaning an attempt to destroy the people’s culture, not the people themselves. William Schabas, “Cambodia: Was it Really Genocide?,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 23 (2001) 472–73.

<sup>41</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 114; Thion, “Genocide as a Political Commodity,” 172; Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 102.

<sup>42</sup> Cited in Craig Etcheson, *The Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1984), 188.

<sup>43</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 215. See also Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 60; Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 3.

<sup>44</sup> It is interesting to note that often other ‘internal enemies’ of the Khmer stage were regarded as ‘Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds’ to emphasise the inherent and irremediable toxicity of the individual. Quote from Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 3.

<sup>45</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 211.

<sup>46</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 222.

<sup>47</sup> Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 174.

<sup>48</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 456.

because they were typically thought to hold city jobs, such as being a trader or money-lender.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, the Khmer Rouge disseminated toxic to the ideal propaganda that spoke of the necessity to eliminate the embodiment of capitalism, which was lethal to the communist Khmer utopia. That is, the Khmer Rouge articulated that it needed to ‘stifle the survival and biological reproduction of the domestic Chinese’.<sup>50</sup> Executions and starvation saw that just under 200,000 of the 425,000 (approximately fifty percent) Chinese Cambodians were left alive in 1979.<sup>51</sup>

Ethnic Chams were also destroyed on the basis of their ethnicity and religion. Their distinct Muslim religion, language and culture was portrayed as an irreconcilable threat to the Khmer Rouge’s new communist, revolutionary society.<sup>52</sup> Because the Chams belonged to Islamist faith, which mandated praying five times a day and devoting considerable time to rituals, they were depicted as an immutable obstacle to achieve homogeneity in DK and collectivised agricultural progression.<sup>53</sup> They were depicted as a drain on production and a hindrance to the cultivation society because they were apparently ‘shirking’ their duties to achieve the communist agrarian society.<sup>54</sup> The Chams were thus required to renounce their religion and ethnic affiliations and live as ‘pure’ Khmer lived: they were forced to eat and raise pork, cut their hair, and were forbidden to pray.<sup>55</sup> Those who chose not to abide by these orders were executed for being obstructions to the communist ideal.<sup>56</sup> By the end of 1979, whole Cham villages were decimated and just under half of the 250,000 Chams (approximately 50 to 60 percent of the population) were killed as ‘reactionaries’ to the DK.<sup>57</sup> According to a Khmer Rouge order, ‘The Cham nation no longer exists on Kampuchea soil belonging to the Khmers.’<sup>58</sup>

Despite the Constitution of DK allowing free practice of religion, most forms of worship were publicly dubbed ‘reactionary’ and counter revolutionary to realising the

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<sup>49</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 116; Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 288.

<sup>50</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 116.

<sup>51</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 456–60, table 458; see also Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 186.

<sup>52</sup> Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 50; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 162; Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 2, 260.

<sup>53</sup> Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 70.

<sup>54</sup> Gregory Stanton, “The Cambodian Genocide and International Law,” in *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge, the United Nations, and the International Community*, ed. Ben Kiernan (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, New Haven 1993), 141.

<sup>55</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 266–67.

<sup>56</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 270, 275.

<sup>57</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 461; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 175.

<sup>58</sup> Stanton, ‘The Cambodian Genocide’, 141.

Khmer ideal.<sup>59</sup> Places of worship were dismantled, religious organisations forcefully disbanded, and Buddhist monks were described in propaganda as ‘parasites who eat the rice of the people’.<sup>60</sup> In a similar vein to the ethnic Chams, whose praying was regarded as an impediment to cultivation, the Buddhist’s reclusive and non-integrated life was deemed counter-revolutionary and noxious to the communist society.<sup>61</sup> Monks were stripped of their robes and forced into hard labour along side other Khmer in the fields (sacrilegious in the first instance), but most were slaughtered.<sup>62</sup> A document dated September 1975 lauded the Khmer Rouge’s ‘ninety to ninety-five percent’ success rate of eliminating monks in the DK. By January 1979, approximately 2,000 of 70,000 Buddhist monks had survived the regime.<sup>63</sup> Further annihilating any ethnic or religious minority groups that fell foul of Pol Pot’s ‘one Khmer’ Kampuchea were Thai, Lao and Kola.<sup>64</sup> According to Ben Kiernan, the slaughtering of the Thai population saw figures drop from 20,000 in 1975 to approximately 8,000 in 1979. Of the 1,800 Lao families, only 800 survived. Lastly, the entirety of the Kola minority group – of 2,000 people – were annihilated.<sup>65</sup> These ethnic minorities constituted almost twenty percent of the Khmer population; by the end of 1979 they were ‘virtually erased from history’.<sup>66</sup>

The sick, elderly, wounded, weak or anyone unable or unwilling to work in the fields were also portrayed as toxic to the ideal because they paralysed the realisation of Pol Pot’s Year Zero.<sup>67</sup> Consequently, these groups were systematically purged by the Khmer Rouge.<sup>68</sup> Many were executed in hospitals in the cities or in the killing fields by being beaten to death, buried alive, cut with rudimentary cultivation tools such as hoes, or suffocated with plastic bags. Reminiscent of the destruction of *lebensunwertes*

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<sup>59</sup> The constitutions states that each citizen has ‘the right to worship according to any religion’; however, ‘reactionary religions which are detrimental to the Democratic Kampuchea and Kampuchean people are absolutely forbidden.’ It was on this basis that most of the religions in the DK were portrayed as toxic and subsequently eliminated. Quoted from Etcheson, *The Rise and Demise*, 226. See also Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 273–74.

<sup>60</sup> Cited in Etcheson, *The Rise and Demise*, 151. See also Ebihara, “A Cambodian Village,” 55.

<sup>61</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 57.

<sup>62</sup> Stanton, “The Cambodian Genocide,” 141.

<sup>63</sup> Ben Kiernan, “The Cambodian Genocide – 1975-1979,” in *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Essays*, eds. Samuel Totten, William Parsons, and Israel Charny (New York: Garland, 1997), 340.

<sup>64</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 251.

<sup>65</sup> All the above figures were sourced from the ‘approximate death toll’ table in Kiernan, “The Cambodian Genocide,” 341–43, and Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 115–16.

<sup>66</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 251.

<sup>67</sup> Barron and Paul, *Peace with Horror*, 76; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 168.

<sup>68</sup> Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia*, 130.

*lebens* in Nazi Germany, the destruction of such ‘impure’ Khmer was portrayed as ‘critical to the renewal and very survival of the body politic.’<sup>69</sup>

In addition to eliminating these groups that were considered toxic to the DK, the main goal of the Khmer Rouge was (as one Khmer saying went): ‘to completely annihilate diseases of consciousness’<sup>70</sup> that were toxic to achieving the peasant utopia.<sup>71</sup> This required eliminating the ‘hidden enemies burrowing from within’ (*khmang bângkap si roun phtai knong*)<sup>72</sup> and those who had – in Pol Pot’s words – a ‘sickness of consciousness’<sup>73</sup> or ‘revolutionary consciousness’ (*sâtiarâmma*).<sup>74</sup> *Sâtiarâmma* meant an individual who failed to focus on the communist, revolutionary cause and were therein portrayed as toxic to its realisation.<sup>75</sup> Thus, thousands of individuals who did not have membership in the aforesaid groups were also suspected of being toxic to the ideal. Even without considerable evidence or proof, individuals could suddenly be classified as toxic to the ‘Super Great Leap Forward’, and accused of being class enemies with a sickness of consciousness.<sup>76</sup> As such, ‘the desire to exterminate ‘enemies’ grew, as did the intoxication of doing so with impunity;’<sup>77</sup> enemies were depicted as pervasive and infecting the ‘pure Khmer’ ideal.<sup>78</sup> Thus, purging these contaminants was discussed as crucial to the survival of the DK.<sup>79</sup> As Hinton summarises, the enemies of the Khmer Rouge were likened ‘to an impurity that threatened the well-being of the revolutionary society’.<sup>80</sup> Yet, *more* than simply being – to use Mary Douglas’ phrase – a ‘matter out of place,’ these groups were portrayed as a lethal ‘source of pollution that need[ed] to be eliminated.’<sup>81</sup>

This example has illustrated how the Khmer Rouge portrayed certain victim groups as lethal to the communist ideal. The Khmer Rouge propaganda targeted religious, ethnic or class groups who were depicted as *a priori* noxious to the ideal, and

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<sup>69</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 285.

<sup>70</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 222.

<sup>71</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 163.

<sup>72</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 218.

<sup>73</sup> Quote from Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 218. See also Neilsen, “Toxification,” 89.

<sup>74</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 33.

<sup>75</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 222.

<sup>76</sup> Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 50; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 139; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 113; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 151.

<sup>77</sup> Ilyinski, “Total Genocide,” 45.

<sup>78</sup> Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 128.

<sup>79</sup> Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 128; Wilshire, *Get ‘em All!*, 71.

<sup>80</sup> Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 284.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36, 165.

thus portrayed the annihilation of these groups as necessary. However, this example also departed from the Nazi and Rwandan genocides, insofar that the Khmer Rouge's identification of victims was also often capricious and seemingly unpredictable. This is because the Khmer Rouge stressed that anyone who was deemed unfit for the Year Zero model, often due to their perceived political, economic or social affiliations, was portrayed as lethal. Pol Pot himself admitted to being unable to specifically identify those who were causing 'a sickness inside the party'. He stated in 1976: 'We cannot locate it precisely. The illness must emerge to be examined... If we wait any longer, the microbes can do real damage.'<sup>82</sup> As such, this example shows that toxic to the ideal can forewarn genocide even when the identification of the victim group is amorphous and seemingly subjective on a case-to-case basis.

#### Toxic to the self

Much of the propaganda disseminated by the Khmer Rouge implied that if no action was taken against the 'internal enemies', Khmer civilians would be killed. This logic held especially true for the Vietnamese reactionaries, counter-revolutionaries and 'agents' of the CIA or KGB. However, for the most part, this was simply *implied*. In an almost ironically true communist sense, the safety of individuals fell secondary to that of the continuity and vitality of the Party – and the civilians of DK were expected to be fully cognisant and supportive of this fact. Moreover, this example illustrated that almost any individual could quickly become 'toxic' to the ideal. Thus, offering a stable and identifiable group that qualified as 'toxic to the 'self' was exceedingly difficult when this seemed to change almost hourly and at any notice. For example, accusations of specific individuals being agents of the CIA, KGB or Vietnamese secret service typically happened once the individual was already in Khmer Rouge custody during interrogation and torture.<sup>83</sup> The propaganda mostly discussed certain groups as being toxic to the future of the Democratic Kampuchea peasant utopia, and implied that any lethal presence to the party is *and should be* of utmost importance in the minds of the Khmer people. The lives of average Democratic Kampuchean are tertiary in

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<sup>82</sup> Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 336.

<sup>83</sup> Tuol Sleng Prison is infamously known for where much of these interrogations and murders occurred. See Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 120, 126–27.

comparison to the vitality of the communist party and so there was little effort to convince the population that the presence of a group was toxic to them. In contrast to the Nazi perpetrated genocides of 1933 to 1945, and the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Cambodia fails to illustrate examples of toxification as toxic to the self.

## Summary

The Khmer Rouge under the direction of Pol Pot sought a homogenous, communist utopia. As a result, almost two million individuals, who were portrayed as being poisonous ‘contaminants’ in the DK owing to their political, economic, class, ethnic or religious affiliation, were slaughtered.<sup>84</sup> The Democratic Kampuchea illustrative example demonstrated two aspects of toxification. First, toxification can portray victims as lethal on the basis of their perceived voluntary membership in political, economic and class groups. In contrast to ethnic, religious and national identity affiliations, which are often considered immutable, the Khmer Rouge depicted individuals as irreconcilably lethal due to their choice to be associated with or subscribe to certain practices. The toxification propaganda in DK portrayed any individual who failed to fit the communist agrarian model was obstructing this ideal society; consequently, their elimination was also depicted as necessary. This was typically due to a person’s voluntary affiliations, identified almost exclusively at the discretion of a Khmer officer and without substantiated evidence. Therefore, this example showed that toxification can apply to amorphously identified victims. This manifestation of toxic to the ideal is distinct from the Nazi Germany and Rwanda cases, wherein the identification of the victim groups (Jews and Tutsis) was clearly articulated in propaganda. Secondly, this example showed that the two manifestations of toxification can exist separately and only one is sufficient to forewarn genocide. Unlike the previous two examples, the Democratic Kampuchea concentrated almost explicitly on portraying victims as toxic to the ideal, and rarely portrayed these victim groups as lethal to the individual security of everyday Kampucheans.

The next chapter refines the conceptual framework of toxification as an early warning sign for genocide in light of the three illustrative examples examined here. It

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<sup>84</sup> Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 128; Weitz, *A Century of Genocide*, 170; Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 269.



also discusses a number of unexpected observations that came out of the examples, which could form the bases for future research.

## Chapter 7

### Revisiting Toxification: Refining the Concept as an Early Warning Sign for Genocide

The purpose of the previous three chapters was to illustrate how toxification operates in practice and to highlight important aspects of its two manifestations. It did so by using three twentieth genocides. The Nazi genocides illustrated how toxic to the ideal can draw on the following themes: the body politic, quasi-medical terminology relating to disease and infection, eugenics and racial hygiene, and pernicious pests. It also highlighted how one manifestation (in this case, toxic to the ideal) can give rise to, and reinforce, the second (toxic to the self). The Rwandan genocide of 1994 highlighted how both toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self can draw upon historical and falsified evidence to make the arguments about the victim group more convincing. Although it had evidence of toxic to the ideal, the Rwandan genocide was the paradigm example of toxic to the self: propaganda explicitly articulated that the Tutsis were planning to kill all Hutus. Lastly, the Democratic Kampuchea genocide was my hard illustrative example of toxification. While Khmers systematically destroyed ethnic, national and racial groups, they also destroyed thousands on the basis of their perceived political or economic affiliation – something for which the UN definition of genocide does not account.<sup>1</sup> This is distinct from the two other examples examined here. Nonetheless, this example demonstrated that toxic to the ideal can forewarn genocide even if the identity of the victim group is more amorphous, compared to a ‘stable’, racial or ethnic classification. Pol Pot’s regime did portray religious and ethnic groups as toxic to the ideal; however, in the DK any individual (accused of being a class enemy or having a ‘sickness of consciousness’) can be considered ‘unfit’ for the envisaged utopia (for whatever reason, often without proof), and thus portrayed as toxic. This nebulous portrayal of the victim group stands in opposition to Rwanda and Nazi Germany, where the victim groups – Jews and the Tutsis – were clearly depicted in propaganda as toxic.

The illustrative examples in the previous chapters brought to light further aspects of toxification that refines the conceptual framework. These include: the devices used to propagate the concept of toxification, the institutions or individuals who

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<sup>1</sup> Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting away with Genocide?*, 223–4; Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 139. It is, however, something that many other genocide scholars include in the definition of genocide, and it is included in the definition I have used throughout this thesis.

typically disseminate such rhetoric, when toxification is likely to occur in proximity to the killing, and the forms that both types of toxification can take.

### Refining toxification as an early warning sign for genocide

In terms of operationalising toxification as an early warning sign for genocide, it is paramount to know where to look for it, how it may appear, and when. Further, it is important to be aware of the key aspects that draw each part of the conceptual framework together. A clear articulation of these points will assist in determining when and how to implement preventative measures.

In the examples explored, toxification appears as propaganda in ‘official’ platforms of information, including radiobroadcasts, newspaper articles, news reports, and the speeches and interviews of important figures in society.<sup>2</sup> It can also be found in emerging sentiments within the population, such as in community meetings, public rallies, and popular culture – posters, movies, television shows, and books. Additionally, political or government-party slogans, doctrine, or mantras can be used as vehicles to disseminate toxification propaganda and should also be monitored. Such propaganda will be found most compelling when it emanates from a figure with perceived legitimacy, authority and support or acceptance in the population. Therefore, the portrayal of victims as toxic tends to come from the government and organisations acting on behalf of the government. Yet, independent institutions and individuals can also circulate and reinforce toxification propaganda, and so attention must not be limited to political authorities. As an early warning sign for genocide, toxification typically occurs after other cleavages have been established between the groups and tensions are already high. For instance, toxification occurs after there is been an explicit delineation between ‘us’ and ‘them’, prejudice and discrimination is wrought or encouraged, and disfavourable policies have been instituted against the victim group. Furthermore, once a group has been depicted as toxic, it is not easy to retract such statements; considerable attention must be given to halting such discourses, because killing may soon be perceived as an urgent necessity. In short, although a myriad of other factors must be at play for genocide to come to fruition, toxification occurs in

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<sup>2</sup> This is a point I return to later in this paragraph.

relative close proximity to the genocide and immediate action must be taken to ameliorate the situation.

The illustrative examples demonstrated that toxification can draw on the following: a) medical terminology b) future, fate and fortune discourses, c) images of death-dealing agents and d) the language of poison. Toxification that draws on medical terminology describes the targeted collectives as diseases, cancers, and conditions that can be fatal. This tends to be discussed in terms of the metaphorical health (and death) of the potential perpetrator group, wherein victims are associated with various forms of lethal sicknesses or epidemics. Key words that flag this form of toxification include: pathologies, bacilli/microbes, cancerous growths, contagions, infections, and contaminations, plagues, viruses, pestiferous entities, cysts, and diseases, such as leprosy, syphilis, and tuberculosis. This form of toxification also includes notions of disinfection, sanitisation, purification, and a cleansing of fatal pollutions. Future, fate and fortune refers to when the victim group is represented as overthrowing or inevitably seeing the demise of one's future. Typically, this form of toxification is signalled by narratives that cite (fact or fictitious) historical instances of conflict between the groups, as well as of themes of racial purity, eugenics and evolution, achieving a master race and society, or preserving one's prevailing way of life in propaganda. Individuals are branded as defective, deficient or 'useless eaters' that obstruct – either intentionally or otherwise – the furtherance or betterment of one's society and life. Toxification in the form of death-dealing agents depicts victims as certain disease-disseminating insects, pestilent animals, and/or malefic cultural or spiritual entities which cause death. For example, members of the victim group are portrayed as infernal demons, devils, or evil spirits, infidels, evil spirits, parasites, leeches, snakes, cockroaches and rats. Lastly, toxification can come in the form of explicitly equating victims with poisons: victims are described as poisonous, noxious, pernicious, virulent, malignant, carcinogenic, venomous, fatal, nocuous, mephitic, lethal and toxic.

There are three elements that tie these forms of toxification together. Firstly, the victims are portrayed as more than simply without human status: they are depicted as causing death. Secondly, the victims are presented as lethal to one's self *and/or* one's ideal society. The notions of toxic to the self and toxic to the ideal can co-morbid or exist independently. In terms of co-existence, the illustrative examples identified that the two manifestations can be mutually enforcing, one can be reliant on the other, or one can assume primacy despite both being present. For instance, the case of Nazi Germany

highlighted that the toxic to the ideal rhetoric was dominant; however, because it stressed the survival of the body politic, it gave momentum to the concept of toxic to the self. Rwanda, on the other hand, demonstrated important aspects the manifestation of toxic to the ideal, but resonated more strongly with toxification as toxic to the self. Alternatively, one type of toxification can exist without the other. This was epitomised by the Democratic Kampuchean genocide, wherein no early warning sign of toxic to the self was present. Hence, the examples clarified complex dynamics of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self. Thirdly, each form of toxification portrays the extermination of these victims as not only permissible (because they are depicted as being outside the human universe of obligations) but also as being necessary, because they are presented as lethal. In addition to refining and providing further detail of the concept of toxification as proposed in Chapter Three, the illustrative examples conducted here also revealed aspects of toxification that were not anticipated in the original proposal and that could form the subject of future studies.

#### Unexpected observations

Three unexpected observations came out of the illustrative examples conducted in this thesis. First, the illustrative examples here raise the question of whether the type of toxification that is evident prior to the killing is related to the way that the genocide is executed. From these illustrative examples, the concept of toxic to the ideal seems to correlate with a *state-executed* campaign of genocide. Conversely, the notion of toxic to the self seems to be associated with state-driven but *civilian-perpetrated* massacres. For instance, examples of Nazi Germany and the Democratic Kampuchea elicited signs of toxic to the ideal *more so* than the toxic to the self. Victims posed as lethal hindrances to achieving the Third Reich ideal, and the DK class enemies obstructed achieving a communist Year Zero peasantry utopia. These genocides were highly systematic *state-organised* and *state-led* programs perpetrated by state authorities. Thus, the perpetrators of these genocides were official members of the state, acting in accordance with directives from their authorities:<sup>3</sup> ordinary civilians did not (on the whole) participate in the killing. In fact, the wider population were largely disassociated from the genocides;

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<sup>3</sup> While also having evidence of random shootings and murders committed by members of the public against the victim group.

they had had little to no contact with the mass murders, let alone a role in direct killing.<sup>4</sup> A similar situation occurred in the DK, wherein the officials of the Khmer Rouge communist party, committed the genocidal killing. Little to no inter-civilian massacres occurred.

In contrast, the Rwandan genocide was highly illustrative of toxic to the self, rather than toxic to the ideal. Although the Rwandan genocide was state-devised and state-encouraged, killing was not committed exclusively by state officials or the *interahamwe*. ‘Ordinary’ Hutu citizens, friends, family members or acquaintances of their victims, participated in the massacres.<sup>5</sup> Killing took place in the streets: ‘neighbours hacked neighbours to death in their houses, and colleagues hacked colleagues to death in their work places...Radio announcers reminded listeners not to take pity on women and children.’<sup>6</sup> Harrowingly put by one Tutsi official after the genocide: during the Holocaust, ‘the Jews were taken out of their residences, moved to distant far away locations, and killed there, almost anonymously. In Rwanda, the government did not kill you. It prepared the population, enraged it and enticed it. Your neighbours killed you.’<sup>7</sup> Thus, a point to come out of these illustrative examples is a possible correlation between the notion of toxic to the self and genocide committed largely by the *citizens* of a state, not just the authorities. While a study into this potential correlation falls beyond the scope of this thesis, it indicates a feasible area of future research.<sup>8</sup>

Secondly, the Rwandan illustrative example highlights that toxification could extend to individuals who are expected to participate in executing genocide but fail to do so. By refusing to participate in the killing, and therefore not eliminating that which was portrayed as toxic to the self, the Hutu moderates were portrayed as *equally lethal*

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<sup>4</sup> Indeed, much literature has been written on whether the German population was aware of the death and concentration camps. I am inclined to suggest that the majority of the German population was *aware* of the systematic destruction of individuals, who (so they were told) posed a irreconcilably toxic obstruction to the furtherance of the Nazi ideal, and were perhaps thus condoning (or at the least, able to feign ignorance) of the genocide. But members of the population *themselves* did not arm up and slaughter their neighbours.

<sup>5</sup> Li, “Echoes of Violence,” 127; Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 463.

<sup>6</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 115.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Valentino, *Final Solutions*, 37.

<sup>8</sup> Such an analysis would assist in determining how the genocide can be prevented. For instance, if a genocide looks like it will be executed by officials of the state (as per Nazi Germany and the DK), it would be appropriate to specifically target the governing regime and install mechanisms of resilience that will thwart potential genocidal policies. Conversely, if the genocide state is encouraging civilians to participate in the direct killing of civilians (as per Rwanda), it would be appropriate to not only concentrate on the authorities disseminating such propaganda, but also to placate the members of the population and provide reassurance that their insecurities are unfounded.

to the Hutus.<sup>9</sup> *Génocidaires* reported that militiamen frequently reminded them, ‘Either you kill them or you will be killed.’<sup>10</sup> Toxification portrayed Tutsis as lethal to the Hutu-led society and to individual Hutu members of the population; thus, if a Hutu thus chose not to murder a Tutsi, they were seen as ‘*Icyitso*’ (accomplice), allowing the toxic presence to survive.<sup>11</sup> Extrapolating on the logic of toxification, then, the Hutu moderates themselves became portrayed as toxic to the self and the ideal. This example insinuates that members of the perpetrator group who do not engage in the genocide can also be portrayed as toxic, therein becoming part of the victim group. My initial conceptualisation of toxification was purely focused on the victim group identified prior to the genocide, and had not taken into consideration the portrayal of individuals who rejected participating in the genocide. I would be inclined to suggest that this is true in the case of the Democratic Kampuchea: many perpetrators admitted that they felt as though if they did not kill ‘class enemies’, they themselves would be portrayed as toxic to the party, and eliminated accordingly. According to one confessed Khmer Rouge perpetrator: ‘I killed so as not to be killed myself... Many of us were executed for being too soft.’<sup>12</sup> While this is at danger of straying into arguments of perpetrator motivation, this is another interesting observation that came out of the illustrative examples. This illustrative example suggests that toxification could perhaps extend beyond the initial target group once the genocide has begun.

Thirdly, the Democratic Kampuchean example illustrated that toxification can apply to victims who are thought to voluntarily subscribe to certain beliefs, such as individuals belonging to political, social and economic groups. It is the ideology they internalise, or system of beliefs to which they subscribe, that prompts the portrayal of the victim group as toxic to the ideal. Victims were toxic owing to the beliefs they hold that make them who they are. This is not too far from the case of Nazi Germany and Rwanda; the difference is that the victim groups were portrayed as toxic on the basis of their ethnicity and race – aspects of the self one cannot deny or renounce. In contrast, the Khmer Rouge apparently gave Chams and Buddhist monks the opportunity to reject their religion, and therein waive their lethality. In the event that the potential-perpetrator

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<sup>9</sup> In attempting to explain why so many Hutu civilians participated in the killing, Bill Berkeley makes the explicit point that Hutus ‘killed because they were forced to. Many were killed for refusing to kill.’ Cited in Berkeley, “Road to Genocide,” 112. This ties in with the observation made here that those who refused to kill were portrayed as toxic as the Tutsis.

<sup>10</sup> Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 468.

<sup>11</sup> Semelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 31.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted from A. Levin, “Treachery,” in *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Rebirth*, ed. E. Kobelev, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), 46.

group perceives the victim group as forfeiting their lethality, the toxic threat is, essentially, eliminated.<sup>13</sup> The victims would no longer be *part* of the group regarded as toxic, and so would no longer constitute a lethal threat. Indeed, it is important to note that, in the case of the DK, most ethnic Chams and Buddhist monks were annihilated. I submit that this is probably due to two factors. While the potential-perpetrators may regard certain beliefs or membership as renounceable, this is not necessarily true for the victims: religion, political affiliation, and convictions of consciousness can be considered as equally engrained as race or ethnicity. Speaking on the DK genocide, Leo Kuper, wrote: ‘political affiliation can be as permanent and as immutable as racial origin’.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, simply because the potential-perpetrator group may verbally state that the victims have the chance to forgo that which is toxic to the ideal (such as their religion), the extent to which this actually regarded as possible, desirable, or believable is highly questionable. Irrespective of how much a victim may proclaim they have abjured their religion, these declarations may not be found convincing. The potential-perpetrators may reason that it is better to err on the side of caution and eliminate the individual anyway, than to accidentally allow a toxic presence to continue to exist in society. Hence, this example highlights that victims can be portrayed as lethal on the basis of their perceived voluntary subscription to, and membership in, social, economic, class or political groups. It also suggests that the potential perpetrators often question the extent to which such subscriptions are truly retractable, and therefore often are inclined to physically exterminate the victim to ensure their beliefs ‘die’ with them.

An important caveat must be made here. Each of the above three observations came out of the illustrative examples in the previous chapters raises questions and possible insights that I had not previously considered. In each case, it would be unwise to generalise from these very specific cases and make arguments regarding toxification that fall beyond the scope of the examples provided here. Rather, each observation indicates area for possible future research. My focus in this thesis has been on introducing toxification as a more reliable early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation. The illustrative examples in the previous chapters were used to demonstrate how toxification can appear in practice. This is a first, necessary step for operationalising any new concept. Having illustrated how toxification manifests in

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<sup>13</sup> In this instance, this could be considered as, to quote Schabas, an act of *cultural* genocide, or *ethnocide*. Schabas, “Cambodia,” 472; Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 110.

<sup>14</sup> Kuper, *Genocide*, 139; cited in Kissi, *Revolution and Genocide*, 104.



specific cases, and having refined the conceptual framework in light of the illustrative examples, I will now conclude my thesis by setting out the key contributions it makes to the genocide literature.

## Conclusion

### A Re-Negotiation of Genocide Early Warning Signs: Greater Hope for the Twenty-First Century

The purpose of this thesis was to conceptualise a more specific early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation. A literature review of the risk factors and indicia of genocide contextualised this investigation. In the genocide literature, dehumanisation has received considerable attention and is largely considered an important early warning sign for genocide. This is because dehumanisation strips individuals of their humanity and portrays killing as permissible. However, a broader literature review highlighted that dehumanisation also occurs in a variety of instances that do not lead to violence, conflict, or even aggression. Thus, I argued that dehumanisation is not specific enough to constitute a reliable early warning sign for genocide. Despite some genocide scholars recognising this, little effort has been made to establish a more specific socio-psychological genocide indicia.

The introduction of toxification in this thesis aimed to fill this gap. Toxification is the portrayal of the victim group as fundamentally lethal to an envisaged society (termed ‘toxic to the ideal’) or to oneself (‘toxic to the self’). Via this portrayal, toxification signals that killing is being portrayed as not only permissible, but necessary. This thesis thus shifts the focus of genocide early warnings signs from the perpetrators’ perception of killing as tolerable (because the individual is not deemed to be human) to necessary (because of an individual’s lethality). Toxification encompasses dehumanisation, but it goes beyond it. Of course, dehumanisation rhetoric can still exist independently of toxification prior to and during genocide. In the context of genocide, such language ejects individuals from the sphere of human moral obligation, and bypasses the perpetrators’ moral inhibitions against murder. From the perspective of the perpetrators, killing thereby does not qualify as ‘murder’; instead, the death of the dehumanised individual is made synonymous with the slaughter of an animal. But dehumanisation does not portray victims as lethal or dangerous; thus there is no *need* to kill. Dehumanisation occurs in instances outside of mass atrocities, and thus is not a reliable early warning sign for genocide. Toxification on the other hand demonstrates that killing is both permissible and necessary – victims are denied human standing and

are deemed to be lethal. Thus, toxification has been introduced as a more specific early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation.

By looking at three twentieth century genocides as illustrative examples of toxification, the thesis demonstrated how the conceptual framework can operate in practice. In doing so, it also sought to further refine toxification as an early warning sign for genocide. The illustrative examples highlighted important aspects of the concept and unpacked the complexities of its operation. The example of the Nazi German genocide from 1933 to 1945 illustrated how toxification can manipulate a variety of discourses to posit victims as lethal. The Nazis used discourses of the body politic, disease and cancer, eugenics, racial purity, and fatal symbiosis to portray victims as toxic to the ideal. Further, it demonstrated how one type of toxification can give rise to and reinforce the second. In the first instance, the Nazis emphasised that Jews were toxic to the ideal: the presence of Jews was portrayed as inevitably causing the demise of the Third Reich. This rhetoric drew heavily on the concept of the body politic – the unification of the self and state, wherein the vitality of the state is dependent upon its individual citizens, and where that which affects the state also affects its civilians. Because the notion of toxic to the ideal drew upon body politic rhetoric (claiming that Jews were affecting the German state, and so German citizens were also affected by Jews), this gave rise to the portrayal of Jews as toxic to the self.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide highlighted how toxification can draw on factual and fictitious historical evidence to render the portrayal of victims as lethal more convincing. It also epitomised what I mean by the notion of toxic to the self: propaganda in Rwanda unabatedly claimed that the Tutsis were planning to kill all Hutu, unless the Hutus killed first. Therefore, in contrast to the Nazi genocide where the toxic to the self rhetoric was fairly abstract, the Rwandan genocide explicitly illustrated how the notion of toxic to the self manifests.

The Democratic Kampuchea genocide showed that the concept of toxic to the ideal can operate even in the absence of a clearly identified victims. Whereas the Nazi genocide and Rwanda genocide explicitly identified the victim groups which are toxic to the ideal (Jews and Tutsis), the Khmer Rouge had a more amorphous construction of the victims. In this case, achieving the society's ideal is portrayed as paramount and *any* individual who is considered to obstruct this realisation is portrayed as toxic. Moreover, the DK example failed to illustrate the notion of toxic to the self; all emphasis was given to identifying victims as toxic to the ideal. This highlighted the important point

that that the two manifestations of toxification do not have to co-exist to forewarn genocide.

A reflection of these illustrative examples highlighted important points that had not been considered in the initial conceptualisation of toxification and thus enabled a refinement of the concept. Most notably, the notions of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self can draw on themes of medicine, future, fate and fortune, death-dealing agents, and poisonous entities. These themes are found in propaganda, disseminated by figures with perceived legitimacy, authority and support via mediums such as radiobroadcasts and speeches. This occurs after initial cleaves have been established in society, therein appearing in close proximity to the onset of killing. Additionally, the concepts of toxic to the ideal and toxic to the self can co-exist, re-enforce one another, or exist separately. That is, just one manifestation of toxification is sufficient to signal a pending genocide. Even if both are present, they are not necessarily prescribed equal importance in the propaganda. A few unanticipated observations also came out of these illustrative examples. Although it is unwise to generalise beyond these cases, they shed light on potential aspects of toxification for future investigations. For instance, the Rwandan genocide highlighted that toxification could extend beyond the victim group initially targeted after the genocide has begun, especially in the event that these individuals fail to participate in the killing. The Democratic Kampuchean genocide suggests that toxification could portray victims as being *in their nature* lethal to the perpetrators (ethnicity or race), or as lethal due to their *practices and subscriptions* (religion, political affiliation, economic/class stance). Each illustrative example suggests that toxic to the ideal could correlate with state-executed genocides, whereas toxic to the self could correlate with state-led, but civilian involved genocides. Hence, in addition to illustrating how the conceptual framework of toxification operates prior to genocide, the examples here helped refine the concept and yielded interesting aspects of toxification that I had not previously considered.

This thesis makes five significant contributions to the field of genocide prevention. The first four are interrelated, theoretical contributions to the literature, and the last is a practical contribution to the field.

*Firstly, this investigation clarifies the role of dehumanisation as an early warning sign for genocide.* Previous scholars have identified that dehumanisation is a necessary, but insufficient genocide early warning indicator. This thesis went further to make clear *what* dehumanisation does and does not do as an early warning sign for

genocide. It demonstrated that dehumanisation is an integral part of the genocidal process, because it silences the perpetrators' moral inhibitions against murder. By stripping a person of their individuality and humanity they no longer qualify as someone who has the same rights afforded to other humans; consequently, the perpetrators do not regard killing as murder. This means that perpetrators regard discrimination, abuse or killing as *permissible*. However, dehumanisation is not always associated with mass murder, ethnic cleansing, forceful displacement, or crimes against humanity. This thesis clarified that dehumanisation signals only when killing may be seen as acceptable. Just because an act is allowed, does not mean that an individual *will* commit this act. Hence, this thesis clarified the role of dehumanisation as a preliminary indicator for genocide.

*Secondly, and by extension, this thesis adds weight to the claim that dehumanization on its own is not a reliable early warning sign for genocide. A more specific socio-psychological early warning sign is needed.* As aforementioned, some genocide scholars have remarked that dehumanisation is not a useful genocide early warning sign. A literature review of dehumanisation in the genocide literature and the broader dehumanisation literature comprehensively affirmed this argument. A dehumanised individual is perceived as unworthy for inclusion in the sphere of human moral obligation, therein allowing for treatment that would be deemed unacceptable for fellow humans; but this does not necessitate violence and killing. In fact, this thesis highlighted that while some genocide scholars believe dehumanisation to be the very stage at which genocide begins, scholars in the broader dehumanisation literature believe it be present in everyday, social interactions. Because of this insufficiency, this thesis adds additional support to the argument that a more specific socio-psychological early warning sign for genocide than dehumanisation is needed.

*Thirdly, this thesis introduces toxification as a more reliable early warning sign for genocide. In doing so it shifts the emphasis of socio-psychological genocide indicia away from the permissibility of killing to the necessity of killing.* Toxification constitutes a departure from previous research because it stresses the perception of the victim group as not only sub- or in-human, but *lethal*. This thesis' thorough illustration of toxic to the self and toxic to the ideal further explains the complexities of toxification as an indicator of genocide. This shift in emphasis is an important normative contribution regarding the foci of attention for genocide indicia. By differentiating between two integral but interrelated processes that occur prior to genocide, I uncovered

and emphasised a process that had not been conceptualised as an early warning sign for genocide. Thus, I offer a new perspective on understanding the conditions preceding genocide that constitute genocide early warning signs. Moreover, it opens further debates regarding socio-psychological early warning signs of genocide and encourages development in this area of genocide scholarship.

*Fourthly, by introducing toxification, this thesis operationalises the perpetrators' portrayal of the victims as lethal and killing as necessary.* The observation that perpetrators portrayed their victims as dangerous or lethal has been made in the genocide literature. But the scholars making this observation have not given shape to a concept that operationalises the portrayal of victims as fundamentally lethal, or the depiction of killing as necessary. In these instances, attention remains with the certain analogies used to dehumanise victims, and only hints at the portrayal of the victim group as being lethal to the perpetrators.<sup>1</sup> This is a crucial gap in the genocide literature. This thesis makes a significant contribution to the literature by attempting to fill this void with toxification. Toxification is offered as a conceptual framework, which operationalises this portrayal of victims as lethal and the perpetrators' perception of killing as necessary. It does so by synthesising existing scholarship on how victims were described as dangerous or lethal into a single, coherent early warning sign.<sup>2</sup>

*Lastly, this thesis makes potential practical contributions to efforts to prevent genocide.* Toxification can be operationalised along a scale of prevention and integrated into existing early warning sign systems for genocide. These include genocide prevention frameworks by international organisations, such as the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. The re-negotiation of important early warning signs to stress the necessity of killing (toxification), rather than the permissibility of killing (dehumanisation) would position these bodies to better recognise the possibility of mass atrocities. By providing a more specific genocide indicia than dehumanisation, this thesis eliminates a further element of apprehension or anxiety surrounding whether a situation is at risk of genocide. In theory, then, institutions are able to make timely, informed decisions for preventative measures and *realise* these measures prior to the onset of killing.

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<sup>1</sup> Such concepts include, for example, Savage's 'eliminationalist animalisation' and Raffles' 'insectification'.

<sup>2</sup> This includes whether the portrayal of victims as lethal is by using disease and cancer metaphors, themes of racial purity, or analogies of individuals as disease-disseminating agents, fatal spongers or lethal animals.

In setting out the conceptual framework of toxification, this thesis also opens avenues for future research. *Firstly, this thesis forms the basis for a potential large-N case study analysis of toxification.* By setting out the conceptual framework of toxification, this thesis paves the way for a study which could empirically determine whether toxification is an important early warning sign for genocide. *Secondly, this thesis provides the opportunity for determining whether toxification is internalised by the perpetrators of genocide.* Such a study could determine whether toxification can also be regarded as a motivating factor for genocide and would contribute to the genocide literature's understandings of why people kill in genocide.<sup>3</sup> *Thirdly, this thesis highlights that the type of toxification could correlate with the execution of genocide, therein laying the foundation for a future research.* A study of this sort could assist in anticipating how a genocide is going to unfold (that is, executed by servants of the state or average civilians). This could better equip institutions to make informed decisions about prevention; specifically, regarding the target and nature of preventative measures. These further avenues of research, as well as others, are made possible by the conceptual framework of toxification set out in this thesis.

Early warning signs are integral to preventing genocidal slaughter. Admittedly, no mass atrocity exhibits the exact same early warning signs. Yet, if we can effectively identify these early warning signs, we have greater hope of halting massive loss of life.

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<sup>3</sup> This would be measured by testimonies from perpetrators and bystanders after the fact. For instance, a testimony from a Hutu perpetrator of the Rwandan genocide articulated toxic to the self: 'we thought if we killed them all, they would not have the power to kill us.' Another participant stated that the Tutsi 'had become a threat greater than all we had experience together... That's how we reasoned and we killed at the time.' Quotes are from Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 113. Reflecting on the systematic killing of the European Jewry, SS leader Himmler stated: 'we have stayed decent...we have suffered no harm to our inner being, our soul, our character'. Quoted in Savage, "Disease Incarnate," 426.

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