

DOCUMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The fate of Blacks and Jews: a response to Jeffrey Herf

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Introduction

My title is taken from the final chapter of Laurence Mordekhai Thomas's unjustly neglected book, *Vessels of Evil: American Slavery and the Holocaust*, but I might as well have used an essay title by the same author: "The Morally Obnoxious Comparisons of Evil: American Slavery and the Holocaust."¹ To undertake comparisons of such subjects is to approach a hornets' nest of ethnic sensitivity and identity politics as well as to risk methodological pitfalls. Thomas warns us against the inherent dangers of "competition" between blacks and Jews in these exercises, which he thinks—rightly in my view—trivializes the experiences and evil both have endured. Whatever one makes of Thomas's philosophically-mediated conclusions, there is no denying the irenic spirit in which they are reasoned and expressed. "The sufferings of the Holocaust and the sufferings of American Slavery can be and should be recalled," he concludes, "not, however, with the aim of asserting any dominance over the other, but with the hope of nourishing our moral character and shoring up our foibles."²

These are notions that Jeffrey Herf might have pondered as he wrote his recent article, "Comparative perspectives on anti-Semitism, radical anti-Semitism in the Holocaust and American white racism" for this journal.³ For what promises to be a fruitful exploration turns out to be a summary of his latest book *The Jewish Enemy* which is a transparent exercise in intellectual policing, moral discounting, and implicit political alarmism.⁴ Engaging in the comparison is not taken as an opportunity to discuss similarities and differences, mutual imbrications and discursive entailments in a scholarly spirit, but to clinically distinguish cases and establish clear boundaries at the expense of historical complexity. Herf's constant use of "yet" as a transitional device indicates those many points at which the comparison with American racism or colonialism more generally is said no longer to hold and the Holocaust proclaimed to be manifestly "unique" (his term). Neither is there

more than a perfunctory engagement with the new literature making links between colonialism and the Holocaust, despite Herf's confidence that they do not bear comparison either.⁵ Debate is shut down, not opened up.

The reluctance to explore the general issues in, and linkages between, these cases of institutionalized racism and human destruction hinders the aim of building a dialogue between scholars of racism and genocides without entering into superfluous debates about hierarchies of suffering and degrees of extremity.⁶ What does Herf's reluctance to engage in a productive comparison tell us about his broader agenda, as well as about the issues at stake in genocide studies? A prolific historian of modern Germany, Herf is a passionate writer who responds to the *Zeitgeist* as he experiences it; as a Manichaean struggle, in which good and evil are locked in mortal combat, civilization itself hangs in the balance, and the fate of entire peoples is at stake. Never afraid to court unpopularity in his campaign against moral ambiguity, he once published a book about the European missile crisis to convince his colleagues that their pacifism was endangering the west by weakening resistance to communism. This book, *War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles*, made explicit what is implicit in his other works: the identification of threatening anti-liberal forces and ideologies, and praise for liberalizing forces and ideologies.⁷

The tendency to divide the world into friends and enemies and to proclaim states of emergencies persists in his current interventions. The west is imperilled yet again, Herf thinks, no longer by Nazism but by radical Islam. The two threats are linked, however, because Islamism continues the apocalyptic anti-westernism and anti-Semitism of Nazism, indeed it consciously borrows elements of its ideology from that poisoned source. What is more, as Herf tries to demonstrate in a special issue of the *Journal of Israeli History* that he edited, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism "converge," thereby importing the anti-liberal/anti-Semitic impulse into the western academy. His anxiety was made plain in the introduction to the special issue: "The hostility of the Western New Left to Israel and then the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in recent decades have led to renewed concern that the secular anti-Zionism of the radical left is making common cause with the religiously inspired anti-Semitism of the radical Islamists."⁸ No distinction is made between anti-Zionism and criticism of specific Israeli policies, a conflation as bald as Herf's generalizations about the "terrorist campaign in 2000" of "the Palestinians."⁹ The connotative chain that Herf posits is Nazis = Islamists = Western anti-Zionists, a conflation rooted in alarm about the perceived beleaguered geopolitical position of Israel, which he supports as ethnically-conceived "Jewish state" while enjoining secular democracy in the United States.¹⁰

His article in this journal is part of a broader campaign to enlist scholars in the Bush administration's "war on terror" by drawing specious analogies with the Holocaust and Second World War, a point examined in the conclusion of this reply. I suggest there that such militant engagement is not the ideal habitus for the production of innovative and challenging scholarship. I commence by examining Herf's agenda and methodology, and then suggest more creative ways of thinking about the relations between racism, colonialism, and Nazi genocide.

A miscast asymmetric comparison

The political purpose of Herf's attempted comparison is evident in the very posing of the question: the juxtaposition of Nazi anti-Semitism and American slavery so as to demonstrate that the former is "unique": "Yet these distinctions [between the two cases] matter and are too easily obscured when attempting to subsume these different events under the rubric of a common word, 'racism'" (576). No note is provided to identify the target of his intervention. Does he mean, perhaps, the anti-racism of non-European countries that, at the UN Conference in Durban in 2001, condemned European imperialism and Zionism as forms of racism?¹¹ Or is he referring to the trend in the literature that culminated in books like *The Racial State* by Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Ipperman all the way back in 1991?¹² We are left none the wiser.

Either way, the racism paradigm is hardly new, and it was subject to criticisms long ago by those who advanced the uniqueness position. Steven T. Katz, for instance, identified the danger that the racism paradigm posed to his conviction about the "phenomenological" uniqueness of the Holocaust: anti-Semitism would become just another form of racism, much like that against the indigenous people, the Roma and people with disabilities. For that reason, he insisted that anti-Semitism was "a very particular racism" by emphasizing the eschatological and mythical elements in the Nazi ideology.¹³ Saul Friedlander's well-known formulation of "redemptive anti-Semitism" falls in this pattern, particularly the view of recent world history as a Jewish plot against Christians and "Aryans."¹⁴ Although he does not acknowledge this lineage in his article, Herf's "radical anti-Semitism" (an apparently unique term that he suggests, somewhat hubristically, he invented [578], perhaps to associate it rhetorically with radical Islam), with its emphasis on paranoia about a supposed world Jewish conspiracy, is just another version of it. These arguments are familiar to scholars in Holocaust and genocide studies.

What is more, the genocide studies community has already conducted the debate about the uniqueness question and has moved onto other research questions. That does not mean the same journey has been undertaken by colleagues in Holocaust history, Holocaust studies or Jewish studies. Advancing dialogue between genocide studies and these kindred scholarly communities is clearly timely. It would entail understanding, to begin with, why we do think "uniqueness" is more of a *theological* than useful *historical* category of analysis.¹⁵ If Herf is upset by non-European contestations of the uniqueness question, then he needs to engage explicitly with them and not just present an essentially monologic historical narrative of the Holocaust. An engagement with the following position by African writer Wole Soyinka would be a welcome change of tone, especially in view of Herf's interest in the Frankfurt School's critique of western humanism:

The Atlantic slave trade remains an inescapable critique of European humanism. In a different context, I have railed against the thesis that it was the Jewish Holocaust that placed the first question mark on all claims of European humanism—from the Renaissance through the

Enlightenment to the present-day multicultural orientation. Insistence on that thesis, we must continue to maintain, merely provides further proof that the European mind has yet to come into full cognition of the African world as an equal sector of a of a universal humanity, for, if it had, its historic recollection would have placed the failure of European humanism centuries earlier—and that would be at the very inception of the Atlantic slave trade.¹⁶

Instead, we are treated to a methodologically flawed comparative exercise. The comparison is miscast because Herf has selected incommensurable cases. The “radical anti-Semitism” he sees as responsible for the Nazi genocide only takes off in the context of a war—after 1939—which was understood by the Nazi leadership as one of Germany’s survival, as Herf clearly shows. Consequently, it is entirely predictable that the regime’s rhetoric would be excessive and saturated with paranoia in comparison to the racism that justified slavery in the American South. The terms of comparison make the proclaimed differences banal, self-evident truths. In view of his presentation of an undifferentiated American racism, Herf has made an “asymmetric comparison.” It is a risky method, historian Jürgen Kocka observes:

Based as a rule on selected secondary literature, the sketch of the foil [in this case, the American South: ADM]. . . can be so selective, superficial, stylized, and idealized that it leads to distorting results. It can only be objected that asymmetrical comparison abuses the unit of comparison, which is not studied in its own right, but is instrumentalized. One examines the other only to understand oneself better.¹⁷

In other words, Herf has set up a comparison that would deliver the result he sought rather than exploring a research problem with an open mind. If he wanted to isolate the specificity of Nazi anti-Semitism, he should have compared it with the virulent anti-Semitism in, say, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, and the Baltic countries in the first half of the twentieth century. One could say whether the Nazi obsession with a Jewish world conspiracy bent on murdering innocent Aryans (Christians) was uniquely German or peculiar to the 1930s. He should have also compared cases of such societies in wartime conditions for the exercise to yield insights. For this reason, we might ask whether the “independent variable” is total war rather than radical anti-Semitism. If Herf wanted to explore the link between political paranoia and mass murder, he might have compared Nazi Germany to Stalin’s Russia, Mao’s China, or Pol Pot’s Cambodia, rather than the antebellum United States.

A systematic comparison has been undertaken by George Fredrickson, who makes interesting points in elaborating the racist campaigns against the emancipation of Jews in Germany and blacks in the United States. Rather than run an exclusivist line, he highlights the differing starting points of these minorities before emancipation, and their subsequent economic role and position in the class structure. He rightly notes the role of lost war in fomenting intense racist resentment against a minority that was seen to support the enemy, going so far as to speak of “radical racism” and “genocidal hatred” against blacks in the South after the Civil War. If, as a small but successful and modern “entrepreneurial minority,” German Jews could be possibly deported (or worse), the larger African-American

minority was reviled as backwards but economically essential and so needed to be kept in place, but not eliminated, by periodic terror. Because the USA did not lose the First World War, the black minority did not need to serve as a scapegoat in the way that Jews did in Germany. Fredrickson traces white supremacy ideology in the US and anti-Semitism in Germany, but also observes that the Nazis combined the two forms of racism: Hitler was a “Negrophobic white supremacist.”

One can only speculate what would have happened to Africans in Nazi Germany had there been, say, 500,000 of them living there, but the forced sterilization of the so-called “Rhineland Bastards” by the Nazis would not have bode well for them. For all his focus on race, Fredrickson wonders whether racism alone can account for Hitler’s hatred of Jews, which he says took on a spiritual and paranoid quality, anticipating Herf’s argument by four years.¹⁸ Characteristically, this observation is not made in triumphalist manner and is not the point of his book. Even if one might take issue with this or that interpretation, in its sobriety and balance, range and ability to contextualize different racist regimes as responses to modernization crises, *Race: A Short History* is a model comparative history.

Transnational histories and “civilized memory”

Other historians, however, are now less interested in outright comparison than transnational approaches that trace discursive and institutional transfers across time and space.¹⁹ Thus rather than see which racist society was more lethal (and uniquely, radically evil), one could ask what the Nazis made of the American South and vice versa.²⁰ As it happens, German anti-Semites were hysterically anti-black, regarding Africans and “*Verniggerung*” as a threat to white civilization; they approved of the South’s segregation laws as well as lynchings of alleged black rapists of white women. Such acts displayed “racial pride.” Hitler admired American “Negrophobia.” Nazis associated the US situation with the presence of black French occupation troops in the Rhineland after the First World War. Herf does not seem to have read those articles in the *Völkischer Beobachter* that advocated common cause with the US in preserving the great white race against “racial bastardization.”²¹ The German admiration for aspects of the US meant that when senior bureaucrats, academics, and Nazis gathered in 1934 to plan the Nuremberg Laws they were inspired less by the inter-marriage ban in the former German colonies than by such bans in North American states.²² As might be expected, the Southern press ignored parallels with Nazi Germany, though the black press did not, characterizing white criticism of Nazi Germany as hypocrisy.

Contrary to the conventional view that these white supremacy and anti-Semitic racisms represent entirely distinct “continuities” to the Holocaust,²³ recent research has shown how they became rhetorically intertwined and impossible to disentangle entirely. The Pan-Germans exhibited this conflation even before the First World War.²⁴

Their understanding of a future German European empire in the twenty years before the First World War was influenced by contemporaneous discussions about German colonialism in Africa and the Pacific. Upset by the success of Jewish integration into German society, they became obsessed with racial mixing, which they called “bastardization,” a problem that they thought led to the destruction of the Roman Empire. Their ideal of a “tribal empire” (*Stammesreich*) in Europe posited a racially-pure utopia of German rule over Slavs.²⁵

German rule over Africans provided the model of racial subjugation, segregation, and oppression. For instance, in the 1890s these anti-Semites demanded that Jews be placed under a special alien law at the same time as they advocated that Africans be subject to a separate “native law.” They defended Carl Peters—the German colonial adventurer whose brutal treatment of the locals in German East Africa scandalized sensibilities at home—by insisting that European norms of war could not apply to Africans, who effectively occupied another moral universe.²⁶ Above all, the understanding of the Jewish presence in Germany occurred in the context of a race-conscious worldview in which conquest and colonization of foreign peoples, hierarchies of civilization, progress and decline, survival and extinction were central elements.²⁷

Why Herf does not make such connections may be due to his invocation of what he calls “civilized memory” (575), a term whose meaning is presented as self-evident. Those of us who work on colonialism would immediately ask: what does such a memory exclude? One answer would be: the memory of settler colonialism and the genocides perpetrated in establishing white settler societies—such as in North America. It is telling that Native Americans are not mentioned at all in Herf’s article despite its invocation of colonialism. Possessing a “civilized memory” means that he consistently underplays the genocidal aspects of colonialism and imperialism. Even where he is prepared to attribute colonial aspects to the Nazi occupation of Europe—a connection often disavowed in the literature²⁸—he characterizes them at worst as an “extreme form of ethnic cleansing,” although he acknowledges that the Nazis planned “for mass starvation and murder” (578, 580). But if the intended deaths of tens of millions of Slavs is not genocide, what is?

Now an open-minded exploration of the issues might reveal that that many Jews were worked to death as slaves, just like indigenous people throughout world history. Sixty per cent of the prisoners in Majdanek died from starvation, exhaustion, epidemics, and abuse by SS guards.²⁹ Herf is plainly ignorant of the fact that Raphael Lemkin, the jurist who invented the concept of genocide, regarded the Nazi occupation policies towards many subject peoples, not just Jews, as genocidal.³⁰ Like Steven T. Katz, Herf seems unable to bring himself to ascribe the dubious honour of genocide to other victims groups. The reason is clear: radical anti-Semitism “bears no comparison” with “ideology of European colonialism and imperialism” (580-581). Only the former led to genocide, he thinks, while the latter resulted merely in exploitation and ethnic cleansing.³¹

Such a blindness is no longer academically defensible. A cursory scan of journals reveals that scholars are making new connections between European

and non-European worlds in non-competitive ways. The work of Michael Rothberg, for instance, shows how a transnational perspective can make links between Holocaust memory and memories of colonialism and decolonization without entering into pointless identity politics. Rothberg identifies a tradition that he calls “multidirectional memory,” in which Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals remember and relate different forms of racism and extreme violence without lapsing into facile equation or producing crude hierarchies of suffering.³²

To highlight the framing scripts and context of empire is not to adopt a facile anti-imperialism, a polarized position that belongs more to Herf’s generation than to younger scholars who have moved beyond such stark, ideological alternatives. Herf’s method, however, is to persist in these ideological games by placing the Holocaust as form of barbarism, squarely outside western civilization, thus ignoring the mountains of literature that links the Holocaust and modernity.³³ Yet as Herf notes, the Nazis consistently purported to defend the west against barbarism; he himself quotes Nazi propaganda denouncing the Jewish Bolshevik danger to “Aryan humanity as well as against Western culture and civilization” (593). Indeed, such quotations pepper Hitler’s speeches and those of his minions; they understood themselves as defending the west against barbarism, equated with Bolshevism and “Asiatic” (and sometimes mongrelized with “Negroes”) forces, and the Jews. One does not need to take the Nazis at their word to henceforth apply the hermeneutics of suspicion to any argument for wars against “terrorists”—not forgetting that is what the Nazis called Bolshevik commissars (593)—in the name of western (or any) civilization. I shall revisit this point in the conclusion.

Anti-Semitism and the colonial origins of political paranoia

A virtue of Herf’s article is its careful differentiation between types of Nazi anti-Semitism, pointing out that initial and middle phases in the 1930s do indeed “bear comparison” with US anti-black and colonial racisms. Certainly, he could have said more, such as pointing out that the concept of “social death” has been applied by Orlando Patterson to slavery, as well as by Daniel Goldhagen to the dehumanization of Jews in the camps.³⁴ Still, he goes much further than most Holocaust historians are willing, and it is to his credit that he deprovincializes the literature to this extent. Indeed, he is effectively admitting that American society at the time was, in part, fascist-like in character, a residue perhaps of the leftism from his student past, though that implication may not be his intention. Over all, he gives the impression of conceding this ground only so he can isolate “radical anti-Semitism” as a “unique” feature of the Nazi regime, the independent variable that accounts for genocide as opposed to mere slavery and ethnic cleansing.

I agree that an added dimension is necessary. If anti-Semitism and white supremacist racism are mutually imbricated and overlap in parts, they diverge in others. How else can one account for the fate of personalities like Max Fleischmann, the German-Jewish legal academic who at the 1910 *Kolonialkongress* in Halle denounced “mixed-marriages” in the colonies by appealing to the “racial

consciousness" (*Rassenbewusstsein*) of Europeans. Advancing standard *völkisch* arguments of the time, he advocated co-operation with other colonial powers to ensure that mixed marriages could not be obtained in one colonial jurisdiction where banned in another. This racism did not save Fleischmann from the Nazis. He was forcibly retired from his professorship in 1935 and committed suicide in 1943 on the eve of his deportation from Berlin.³⁵ Bernard Dernburg, the German-Jewish first state secretary of the Colonial Office from 1907 to 1910, was a reformer who opposed genocidal policies towards Germany's African subjects. The extent of the racist consensus among policy elites is apparent when even he could believe that "in the process of civilization some native tribes, just like some animals, must be destroyed if they are not to degenerate and become encumbrances on the state."³⁶ Despite his contributions to German colonialism, he became increasingly isolated during the 1930s, and liberals like Theodore Heuss tried to intervene on his behalf. He died of natural causes in 1937, a marginalized figure.³⁷

If Anti-Semitism and colonial racism did differ in some respects, cannot we be more innovative than resorting, yet again, to an essentialist argument about anti-Semitism to explain the Holocaust? Herf's ideologically-driven case that "radical anti-Semitism" accounts, ultimately, for the Holocaust is typical of intentionalists generally. In this branch of the literature—typified by the work of, say, Gerald Fleming, Yehuda Bauer, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Dan Diner, and rather crudely by Steven T. Katz and Daniel Goldhagen³⁸—anti-Semitism, however conceived, is the explanatory key to which recourse is made in the last instance. Ideological intentionalism fills the gap where seemingly rational behaviour cannot account for action. Interestingly, Herf's approach was not shared by Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Hannah Arendt, writers whom he purports to admire but whose arguments are at odds with his own. Rather than take anti-Semitism as an analytical starting- and end-point, they tried to explain why it arose at all. The paranoia and projection that Herf rightly sees as intrinsic to radical anti-Semitism is a potential in *all* societies.³⁹

The question, then, is not to isolate and foreground radical anti-Semitism as an independent variable in the insistent manner of Goldhagen, but to explain how and why such paranoia developed in the first place.⁴⁰ Doing so means that Herf's singular focus on the period after 1939 is inadequate. To be sure, his case against teleological arguments that attempt to identify the origins of the Holocaust centuries earlier in German history, such as Liah Greenfeld's *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, is welcome and salutary.⁴¹ Herf refers as inspiration to François Furet's own opposition to Marxist arguments about the long-term origins of the French Revolution, with its focus on "ideas, intentions and circumstances that produced a novel event" (582). But the school Furet founded did in fact trace discursive origins of the Revolution in the *Ancien Régime*. The focus was not on short-term contingencies but *political culture*, which develops over generations.⁴²

How, then, did a political culture develop in which Jews could be classified as an enemy people? Uncovering the founding trauma of this form of "catastrophic

nationalism” (Michael Geyer) is not difficult.⁴³ The Nazis referred to it continually: Germany’s loss in the First World War and the subsequent socialist revolutions.⁴⁴ This is a commonplace in the literature, but might we also see *colonial modality* to anti-Semitism if we think outside the box? Herf notes that lynchings killed 3,000 Blacks under Jim Crow at a time when such civil violence was unthinkable in Germany (577). That was an absence Nazis regretted because they—and many other Germans—felt Jews had “taken over” in Germany. For all the similarities and mutual imbrications between anti-African racism and anti-Semitism, an important distinction was the fact that blacks were in Germany’s colonies while Jews were in Germany and doing comparatively well. This spatial difference inverted the dichotomy of colonizer-colonized that framed the political imagination of all peoples at the time.⁴⁵ Especially during the First World War, Jewish success and non-Jewish German suffering was coded by anti-Semites as Jewish domination over non-Jewish Germans. Already during the 1912 national elections, rightwing Germans had decried supposed Jewish control of the “red” and “gold” internationals. In Austria, they complained that Jews owned more than 50% of banks and held 80% of the key positions in that sector. The development of capitalism was regarded as a Jewish imposition, a “control system” over gentiles.⁴⁶ During the war, the military in particular complained about shirking and profiteering by Jews. General Erich Ludendorff levelled an accusation that would be common during the Weimar Republic. “They acquired a dominant influence in the ‘war corporations’ . . . which gave them the occasion to enrich themselves at the expense of the German people and to take possession of the German economy, in order to achieve one of the power goals of the German people.”⁴⁷

In other words, many Germans regarded themselves as an “indigenous” people who were being slowly colonized by a foreign people, namely Jews. The cult of indigeneity was signalled by the *völkisch* obsession with “ancient German tribes” whose virtues of simplicity and honesty were contrasted with the decadent civilization of the French and British. This ideology culminated in the “blood and soil” rhetoric of the Nazis who idealized the peasant rooted in the land. Nomadic peoples like Arabs and Jews were parasites, whereas settlers, such as the “Nordic” colonists in North America, spread civilization and advanced humanity.⁴⁸

The anxiety about colonization by Jews was compounded after the First World War when the Rhineland was occupied by French troops from Africa. Not only had Germany been forcibly decolonized by its imperial rivals—a massive trauma—they had imposed “inferior” black troops on the country. Germany was now the colonized, not the colonizer, an inversion of the seemingly natural racial order.⁴⁹ Rightwing Germans launched a concerted and virulent propaganda campaign against the “black disgrace” of the occupation, replete with lurid tales of rapes and violence against local women. In thrall to conspiracy theories, they believed the occupation was an international plot to contaminate Germans with the “inferior blood.” Foreign Minister Adolf Köster spoke for many when he complained that “the German *Volkskörper* was facing permanent annihilation on his

western front.”⁵⁰ In effect, the occupation was a policy of genocide, as Hitler believed in *Mein Kampf*, linking anti-Jewish and anti-African racism:

It was and is the Jews who bring the negro to the Rhine with the same concealed thought and clear goal of destroying, by the bastardisation which would necessarily set in, the white race which they hate, to throw it down from its cultural and political height and in turn to rise personally to the position of master.⁵¹

The colonization trope was also a feature of the notorious 1940 Nazi propaganda film, *Der Ewige Jude*. Jews are depicted as a people with “Asiatic and Negroid” elements that enter central Europe by parasitically attaching themselves to previous empires. Maps of the globe show their spread:

Everywhere they made themselves unwelcome. In Spain and France the people rose openly against them in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and they wandered on, mainly to Germany. From there they followed the path of the Aryan culture—creative Germans, colonizing the East—until they finally found a gigantic, untapped reservoir in the Polish and Russian sections of eastern Europe.

And from there, the Jews colonized the world, that is, the African, American, and Australian continents.⁵²

Contra Herf, then, the accusation that Jews entertained genocidal intentions against Germans long precedes the later 1930s. Writing in the early 1920s when Germany was in the grip of the inflation crisis and paying massive reparations, Hitler concluded that “the [Weimar] Republic is a slave colony of foreign countries and has no citizens, but at best subjects.” The internal enemy serving foreign interests was “the Jew.” This situation spelled the end for his beloved Germany: “Carthage’s fall is the horrible picture of such a slow self-earned execution of a nation.”⁵³ The political culture of paranoid radical anti-Semitism was not an accompaniment or product of the war in 1939, but has its roots in the First World War and aftermath understood in a colonial and imperial frame.

The relentless drive to exterminate the Jews entirely, then, can be explained in terms of the *subaltern’s racist nationalism*. Frantz Fanon’s observations about the political emotions of subaltern peoples are apposite. Their violence against the colonizer was redemptive, he thought, because it was the means by which the colonized shed an internalized sense of inferiority and became a free historical agent: “the most elementary, most savage, and the most undifferentiated nationalism is the most fervent and efficient means of defending national culture.”⁵⁴ Other francophone intellectuals like Albert Memmi and Jean-Paul Sartre pointed how the nativism of the colonized manifested itself in murderous hostility towards *all* Europeans, irrespective of political stripe.⁵⁵ The totality of the genocidal intention is a product of a colonized’s sense of abjection, desperation and panic.

Of course, there is a difference between an actual colonial occupation (e.g. Algeria) and a fantasized one (the Nazi view of Jewish emancipation). The latter clearly *is* paranoid. But leaving it at that, as Herf does, is insufficient. We need to explore these fantasies in the manner suggested by the historian Alon Confino: “we cannot understand why the Nazis persecuted and exterminated the

Jews unless we are ready to explore such Nazi fantasies, hallucinations and imagination.” We need to ask the following question, he urges: “What were the reasons for their persuasiveness? How did they arise? How were they diffused and internalized?” It is necessary, in other words, to embark on a “sociology of belief”.⁵⁶ The salient point, then, is how rightwing Germans (and not just Germans) *experienced* modernization and Jewish emancipation. Such an experiential gaze allows us to understand that the nativist *political emotions* generated by a real or perceived occupation are the same, with the same totality of murderous intent: “In Algeria and Angola,” Sartre observed, “Europeans are massacred at sight.”⁵⁷ Underlining the racist nationalism of the indigenes, Memmi noted that “in the eyes of the colonized, all Europeans in the colonies are *de facto* colonizers.”⁵⁸ If the Nazis’ anti-Semitism was “redemptive” and “radical,” its particular intensity at this moment cannot be read from centuries of anti-Semitism, which had not resulted in genocide like this before.⁵⁹ In the Nazi mind, the Second World War was a war of national liberation, and redemption inhered in the elimination of foreign Jewish rule and the threat of further Jewish domination, indeed destruction, in the form of the Bolsheviks.

Understanding this version of anti-Semitism in light of both the political emotions common in central European nationalisms since the nineteenth century, and later anti-colonial movements allows us to contextualize the Holocaust in broader, transnational trends. The racist rage of the subaltern subject was not confined to the non-European world.⁶⁰ This radical anti-Semitism, in other words, was produced by colonial conjuncture and articulated in a colonial modality, rather than the inevitable product of Christian traditions or radicalization after 1939. It is no coincidence that German national consciousness had been largely formed in an *anti-imperial* modality, namely in the war of liberation against French occupation in the first decades of the nineteenth century.⁶¹

A broader look at Nazi propaganda, reveals still more connections to colonialism. As the historian Raffael Scheck has shown, the Nazi leadership made much of the fact that the French army contained some 100,000 troops from its African colonies, raising the spectre of the French occupation of the Rhineland in the early 1920s and the use of such troops in the First World War. So intense was the antipathy against these soldiers, whipped up by tales about mutilation of German POWs from the *Völkische Beobachter* and SS *Das Schwarze Korps*, that they were often separated from other captured French soldiers and summarily executed, sometimes in large-scale massacres. Diary entries of German soldiers reveal that they internalized the fear and revulsion of their African opponents. “One should gas this whole rabble,” wrote one, while security reports noted, for instance, that “people go very far when imagining the reprisals they want to be implemented, both in terms of the nature and extent of the measures.” Scheck even speaks of a “race war” conducted by the Wehrmacht in France. The Nazis reviled the French themselves for resorting to colonial troops, a policy that inverted the supposedly natural order of European world rule, and for encouraging what they saw as racial chaos in their ranks and general population. It had become “mulattoized,” “negroidized” and so on. Alfred Rosenberg declared that the French

population now comprised “black and white Negroes.” French Jews were sometimes depicted as driving this perceived racial degeneration, but it is striking that the master racial tropes of Nazi propaganda regarding France were racial mixing between Europeans and Africans.⁶²

Genocidal anxieties

Herf’s highlighting of the Nazi belief that Germans were subject to a genocidal warfare led by Jews raises an interesting point about perceptions and paranoia in genocides: namely that the Nazis believed they were acting in self-defence. For anyone who studies genocide comparatively, this conviction is remarkably common. Settlers in frontier situations, the Young Turks, the Hutu Power in Rwanda, the Soviets on many occasions: all these and others believed they were retaliating against intolerable provocations and existential threats. But are there not differences, Herf may say, in the fantastical notions of a Jewish international conspiracy that bore no relation to the real conflicts which took place on frontiers, in Armenia, Rwanda and, at least at times, in the Soviet Union? The Nazis were paranoid, not these other perpetrators, he might continue, and therein lies the singularity of the Holocaust. Hitler’s positing of his Holocaust as a response to Jewish aggression—that is, as a link in the chain of cause and effect—began the tradition of “[d]enial of the uniqueness of the Holocaust” (584), because it disavows the *ideological* element of the crime; namely that it was, in effect, the largest and most pure hate crime in human history, driven by nothing less than fanatical and irrational enmity, manifesting an intention to murder *all Jews, uniquely, on the planet*.

Leaving aside the loaded question of uniqueness and denial, it is time to ask for greater substantiation from this chestnut of the intentionalist literature. Is the claim about the unprecedented global nature of the genocidal intention as singular as it appears when one considers that Jews were a diasporic people, many of whose communal leaders regarded themselves as single people spread around much of the world? Their opponents, the anti-Semites, thought of them in the same terms. When, for reasons I present above, German anti-Semites decided Jews were congenitally hostile to Germans, their gaze was naturally, well, transnational. Was not the “conflict” with Germany articulated in global terms because Jews were imagined by so many contemporaries as a global people? To acknowledge this point does not entail attributing reality to the Nazis’ conspiracies about Jewish world domination. I do not have the space to elaborate this point here, but it is worth exploring. Herf might argue that the totality of the Nazi fantasy makes the Holocaust “unique,” but the fear that internal minorities manipulated enemy powers is not unknown where geopolitics intersects with domestic ethnic tensions, as in the Ottoman view that “treacherous” Armenians conspired with the great powers to intervene on their behalf.⁶³

It is time to deprovincialize this branch of the Holocaust historiography in the same way as Yuri Slezkine has embedded the Jewish experience of, and in, modernity in the story of other entrepreneurial “Mercurian” minority groups in

host societies.⁶⁴ Such a deprovincialization might point out the paranoia common to all genocides. How do we explain the fact that the perpetrators attack not only males as potential combatants but also women and children who, by more conventional criteria, are blameless and harmless? Their targeting is licensed by genocidal rhetoric that demonizes the innocent. Only an ignorance of other genocides could lead to the suggestion that the genocidal rhetoric of the Holocaust was somehow unique in this respect (585). Talk of cockroaches, vermin, tumours and other *threatening* metaphors is dismayingly ubiquitous in this branch of human affairs.⁶⁵

Conclusion

Let us revisit Herf's purpose in his article: to insist upon the distinction between anti-African/colonial racism and radical anti-Semitism. Although he declares that it "matters," he never explains why. The reader is left to draw their own conclusion from a dark warning in the conclusion: "It would be complacent to assume that variants of the [anti-Semitic] narrative explored here are not part of our future as well" (597). To understand what Herf means, it is necessary to consult his recent interventions on Islamism, anti-Semitism and the US-led war in Iraq.⁶⁶ What we learn is that, like Paul Berman and Mathias Küntzel,⁶⁷ he thinks political Islam has inherited the mantle of Nazi radical anti-Semitism and that the west faces a serious crisis: "we are living in a period in which the legacies of Nazi anti-Semitism has diffused into the Islamic world," he warned in 2004, "and into the mood of too much discourse in Europe."⁶⁸ In his own transnational move, Herf wants to use the perceived lessons on history as a guide for action today: if only a pre-emptive strike had been made against Germany in the 1938 or earlier, instead of wishy-washy League of Nations appeasement, the ensuing world war and Holocaust would have been averted. The lesson: the 2003 invasion on Iraq was justified for pre-empting the worst that Saddam surely promised.⁶⁹ He urges academia to join the "war on terror." Of a new book on the subject by Michael J. Mazarr, *Unmodern Men in the Modern World: Radical Islam, Terrorism, and the War on Modernity*, Herf welcomes "the closing of a gap between the world of serious scholarship in the humanities and social sciences and that of policy debate in Washington, DC."⁷⁰ The line between academic and engaged intellectual seems to have become blurred.

In the current climate and in view of Herf's war advocacy, these interventions, including his article in this journal, cannot be interpreted as reducing the anxiety and occasional hysteria about politics in the Middle East. I do not wish to enter specific arguments concerning this foreign policy issue here, but I do want to point out that the logic of pre-emption is the same as the logic of genocide; they are invariably perpetrated to prevent a feared enemy from annihilating one's own group. Herf is playing with fire. How can we be sure of our pre-emption?⁷¹ What kind of international order would we have to endure if pre-emption became its *modus operandi*? It would be to forestall an imminent, pre-emptive attack—a fear based on the kind of

political paranoia we see in the work too many militant liberals—that one can imagine Iran or a similar regime launching a pre-emptive strike of its own. Herf’s advocacy of pre-emption contributes to the political paranoia of world politics; indeed, it threatens to call forth the very events and actions he seeks to prevent. This mechanism is plainly a recipe for disaster. It was to prevent such disasters that jurists like Raphael Lemkin and Hersch Lauterpacht advocated international legal instrumentals and safeguards during the interwar and postwar years. This journal is a legacy of one of those instruments, the Genocide Convention.⁷²

Paranoia and regression is not just a problem of totalitarian societies, as Herf knows. He cites Richard Hofstadter’s famous essay, “The Paranoid Style in American Politics,” in a footnote to his book.⁷³ With an eye to the anticommunist hysteria of the McCarthy years, Hofstadter catalogued the apocalyptic political underground of American politics that occasionally surfaced. Trading in plots, conspiracies, and national security threats, the paranoid spokesmen, usually fringe figures, could set the tone of public debate. They came in various forms: “highbrow, lowbrow, and middlebrow.” All of them, though, were “always manning the barricades of civilization. He [the paranoid] constantly lives at a turning point.”⁷⁴

The argument has been elaborated by Eli Sagan in his book, *The Honey and the Hemlock: Democracy and Paranoia in Ancient Athens and Modern America*. Advancing a psychological-evolutionary argument, Sagan postulates that democracies are political miracles because citizens surmount the “paranoid position” typical of most societies. Rather than fear that catastrophe is imminent because fellow citizens are threatening strangers conspiring to dominate or destroy one another, they develop sufficient mutual trust to tolerate difference and engage in non-violent competition. Despite, or perhaps, because of this achievement, however, democracies tend to regard neighbouring states as enemies that must be subdued. Ironically, then, democracy can incline to imperial domination and jettison civilizational restraints in the name of defending civilization. The “paranoid style” of politics can debase democracies, as Sagan suggested occurred during the McCarthy years in the United States, by destroying tolerance and increasing mutual fear among citizens.⁷⁵ Sagan published his book in 1991, but his analysis seems uncannily prescient about the so-called “war on terror” in which Herf calls academics to enlist.

My view is that a core value of scholars should be to guard against political paranoia within themselves and others, a lesson taught by Max Weber in “Science as a Vacation.”⁷⁶ To that extent, education and scholarship have a political mission: as institutionalized social spaces of communicative action, in which paranoia is banned from the language game. Paranoia obstructs the calm and balanced examination of issues. Framing contemporary Middle Eastern politics in terms of a possible “second Holocaust,” for instance, can hardly be said to contribute to sober analysis.⁷⁷ A scholarly approach to contemporary Islamism, whose anti-Zionism and violent anti-Jewish rhetoric are indeed readily apparent, might be to place it in historical perspective. Islamic revolts against western

penetration of Muslim regions have been going on for a long time.⁷⁸ The nexus of occupation and rebellions, such as mounted by the Jewish Zealots against Roman occupation 2000 years ago, at least warrants calm discussion.⁷⁹ Let us conduct such a discussion. Herf is entitled to indulge in highbrow paranoia in the public domain as a free citizen but, for academic purposes and in the spirit of Weber, it would be preferable if his considerable acumen was devoted to pursuing questions that address scholarly research imperatives rather than attempting to convert his colleagues to the “war on terror.”

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Notes

- 1 Laurence Mordekhai Thomas, *Vessels of Evil: American Slavery and the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); idem, “The morally obnoxious comparisons of evil: American slavery and the Holocaust.” Originally published in German as “Verabscheuungswürdige Vergleiche des Bösen: Die amerikanische Sklaverei und der Holocaust,” in: Susanne Meinel und Irntrud Wojak (Eds.), *Grenzenlose Vorurteile: Antisemitismus, Nationalismus, und ethnische Konflikte in verschiedenen Kulturen* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2002), pp 87–100. In English at <http://www.laurencethomas.com/Evils.pdf>.
- 2 Thomas, “The morally obnoxious comparisons of evil,” p 12.
- 3 Jeffrey Herf, “Comparative perspectives on anti-Semitism, radical anti-Semitism in the Holocaust and American white racism,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 9, No 4, 2007, pp 575–600. References to this article will be made in the text in parentheses.
- 4 At times it reads like a publicity blurb: “*The Jewish Enemy* offers the most extensive study to date on the Nazi interpretation of the role of Jews in World War II and on the role that explanation played in justifying a publicly declared intention to ‘exterminate’ and ‘annihilate’ Europe’s Jews.” Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p 582. See Dan Stone’s review in the *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 9, No 1, 2007, pp 141–144.
- 5 Ritually citing Hannah Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is not longer sufficient. Much has been written since 1951. A sample: Jürgen Zimmerer, “The birth of the Ostland out of the spirit of colonialism: a postcolonial perspective on the Nazi policy of conquest and extermination,” in: A. Dirk Moses and Dan Stone (Eds.), *Colonialism and Genocide* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp 101–124; idem, “Colonialism and the Holocaust: towards an archaeology of genocide,” in: A. Dirk Moses (Ed.), *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp 49–76; idem, “Kolonialer Genozid? Vom Nutzen und Nachteil einer historischen Kategorie für eine Globalgeschichte des Völkermordes,” in: Dominik J. Schaller et al. (Eds.), *Enteignet, Vertrieben, Ermordet: Beiträge zur Genozidforschung* (Zürich: Chronos, 2004), pp 109–129; Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New York and London: The Free Press, 2003); Benjamin Madley, “From Africa to Auschwitz: how German South West Africa included ideas and methods adopted and developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe,” *European History Quarterly*, Vol 33, No 3, 2005, pp 429–464; David Furber, “Near as far in the colonies: the Nazi occupation of Poland,” *International History Review*, Vol 26, No 3, 2004, pp 541–579.
- 6 Paradigmatic of the productive borrowing and shuttling back and forth between cases, literatures, and disciplines, including the Holocaust, is Arjun Appadurai, “Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization,” *Development and Change*, Vol 29, No 4, 1998, pp 905–925.
- 7 Jeffrey Herf, *War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: The Free Press, 1991); idem, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in*

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- Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); idem, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).
- 8 Jeffrey Herf, "Introduction," *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol 25, No 1, 2006, p 3. He explains the context of this publication: "The articles in this special issue address issues raised by such concerns. They were first presented at a conference entitled 'Convergence and Divergence: Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective' held in March 2004 at Brandeis University. The conference was organized by the editors of this journal with the support of the Chaim Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism and Israel at Tel Aviv University, the Sarnat Center for the Study of Anti-Jewishness at Brandeis University, and the American Jewish Committee. Contemporary events—especially the second Intifada and its global consequences—overshadowed the gathering and were an impetus for its organization." It contains sensible and balanced essays by Derek Penslar, David Myers, and Shulamit Volkov, and Joseph Bendersky that belie some of the conclusions drawn by Herf himself. Whereas Penslar and Myers link Arab and Muslim hostility to Jews closely to the Zionist colonization of Palestine, Herf wants to posit a timeless and abstract anti-Jewish antipathy that joins Nazis, Muslims, and western leftists.
 - 9 Ibid. p 7.
 - 10 Ibid. p 9. See also Jeffrey Herf, "Convergence: the classic case Nazi Germany, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism during World War II," *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol 25, No 1, 2006, pp 63–83.
 - 11 (<http://www.un.org/WCAR/>).
 - 12 Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
 - 13 Steven T. Katz, "The Holocaust: a very particular racism," in: Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Eds.), *The Holocaust and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp 56–63.
 - 14 Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol 1, *The Years of Persecution* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), pp 73–112.
 - 15 The literature is reviewed in Dan Stone, "The historiography of genocide: beyond 'uniqueness' and ethnic competition," *Rethinking History*, Vol 8, No 1, 2004, pp 127–142; and A. Dirk Moses, "Conceptual blockages and definitional dilemmas in the 'racial century': Indigenous genocides and the Holocaust," *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol 36, No 4, 2002, pp 7–36, reprinted in Moses and Stone, *Colonialism and Genocide*; Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), preface. Prescient: Geoff Eley, "Holocaust history," in *London Review of Books*, Vol 3, March 13–16, 1982, pp 6–9. Generally, see Dan Stone (Ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide* (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).
 - 16 Wole Soyinka, *The Burden of Memory, The Muse of Forgiveness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp 38–39.
 - 17 Jürgen Kocka, "Asymmetrical historical comparison: the case of the German *Sonderweg*," *History and Theory*, Vol 38, No 1, 1999, p 49. Kocka thinks such comparisons can be undertaken fruitfully in certain conditions.
 - 18 George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp 110–111, 92–95, 114, 122–126. Herf does not cite this book in his article, nor the following key essay: Seymour Drescher, "The Atlantic slave trade and the Holocaust: a comparative analysis," in: Alan S. Rosenbaum (Ed.), *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996), pp 65–86.
 - 19 "AHR conversation: on transnational history," *American Historical Review*, Vol 111, No 5, 2006, pp 1440–1464.
 - 20 "It [the Holocaust] is the definitive example of genocide and radical evil": Herf, "Comparative Perspectives," p 575.
 - 21 Johnpeter Horst Grill and Robert L. Jenkins, "The Nazis and the American South in the 1930s: a mirror image?" *Journal of Southern History*, Vol 58, No 4, 1992, pp 667–694.
 - 22 Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge, MA: Belnap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), pp 172–176.
 - 23 Cornelia Essner, "'Border-line' im Menschenblut und Struktur rassistischer Rechsspaltung," in Michal Brumlik, Susanne Meil and Werner Renz (Eds.), *Gesetzliches Unrecht: Rassistisches Recht im 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2005), pp 27–64.
 - 24 Dennis Sweeney is working on this topic: Dennis Sweeney, "Race, capitalism, and empire: the Alldeutscher Verband and German imperialism," German Studies Association conference, 29 September 2006. On the Pan-Germans, see Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), and Roger Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German: a Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1886–1914* (New York: George Allen and Unwin, 1984).
 - 25 Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, "Race power, freedom, and the democracy of terror in German racialist thought," in: Richard H. King and Dan Stone (Eds.), *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation,*

- Race, and Genocide* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), pp 21–37; idem, “Nobody’s people: colonial subjects, race power and the German State, 1884–1945” (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2004), pp 434–444.
- 26 Christian Stuart Davis, “Colonialism, antisemitism, and Germans of Jewish descent in imperial Germany, 1884–1912” (PhD dissertation, Rutgers, State University of New Jersey, 2005), pp 14, 29, 104, 135–203.
 - 27 von Joeden-Forgey, “Nobody’s People,” p 12.
 - 28 Birthe Kundrus, “Von Windhoek nach Nürnberg? Koloniale ‘Mischehenverbote’ und die nationalsozialistische Rassengesetzgebung,” in: B. Kundrus (Ed.), *Phantasiereiche: Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2003), pp 110–131; idem, “From the Herero to the Holocaust?” *Afrika Spectrum*, Vol 40, No 2, 2005, pp 299–308; idem, “Kontinuitäten, Parallelen, Rezeptionen: Überlegungen zur ‘Kolonialisierung’ des Nationalsozialismus,” *Werkstattgeschichte*, Vol 43, 2006, pp 45–62; Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski, “Der Holocaust als kolonialer Genozid? Europäische Kolonialgewalt und nationalsozialistischer Vernichtungskrieg,” *Geschichte & Gesellschaft*, Vol 33, No 3, 2007, pp 439–466.
 - 29 Tomasz Kranz, “Das KL Lublin—zwischen Planung und Realisierung,” in: Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth and Christoph Dieckmann (Eds.), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, Vol. 1 (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1997), p 381.
 - 30 Cf. Dan Stone, “Raphael Lemkin on the Holocaust,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 7, No 4, 2005, pp 539–550.
 - 31 These are also the arguments of Steven T. Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
 - 32 Michael Rothberg, “W.E.B. DuBois in Warsaw: Holocaust memory and the color line, 1949–1952,” *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, Vol 14, No 1, 2001, pp 169–189; idem, “The work of testimony in the age of decolonization: *Chronicle of a Summer*, cinema verité, and the emergence of the Holocaust survivor,” *PMLA*, Vol 119, No 5, 2004, pp 1231–1246; idem, “Between Auschwitz and Algeria: multidirectional memory and the counterpublic witness,” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol 33, No 1, 2006, pp 158–184.
 - 33 For discussion, see Dan Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), and Donald Bloxham, “Organized mass murder: structure, participation, and motivation in comparative perspective,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol 22, No 2, 2008.
 - 34 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1997).
 - 35 Essner, “‘Border-line’ im Menschenblut und Strukture rassistischer Rechtsspaltung,” pp 40–42. Also see Jürgen Zimmerer, “Von Windhuk nach Warschau. Die rassistische Privilegiengesellschaft in Deutsch-Südwestafrika – ein Modell mit Zukunft?,” in: Frank Becker (Ed.), *Rassenpolitik in den deutschen Kolonien* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), pp 97–123.
 - 36 Quoted in, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p 388.
 - 37 On this point, I thank Eric Kurlander for sharing his unpublished book manuscript on German liberals and the Nazis.
 - 38 Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust* for analysis.
 - 39 See the discussion in A. Dirk Moses, “Genocide and modernity,” in: Dan Stone (Ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp 156–93.
 - 40 A critique of Goldhagen’s ideology is A. Dirk Moses, “Structure and agency in the Holocaust: Daniel J. Goldhagen and his critics,” *History and Theory*, Vol 37, No 2, 1998, pp 194–219.
 - 41 Liah Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).
 - 42 Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
 - 43 The term originates in Michael Geyer, “Insurrectionary warfare: the German debate about a Levee en Masse in October 1918,” *Journal of Modern History*, Vol 73, No 3, 2001, pp 459–527.
 - 44 There is an excellent comparative discussion of the Nazi view in Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation-State*, 2 Vols., (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005). It anticipates many of the points Herf makes about Nazi paranoia.
 - 45 I expound on this point in “Colonialism,” in Peter Hayes and John Roth (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
 - 46 George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of the German Ideology* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p 142.
 - 47 Cited in Friedlander, *Nazi German and the Jews*, pp 74–82.
 - 48 Mosse, *The Crisis of the German Ideology*, pp 67–71; Clifford R. Lovin, “Blut und Boden: the ideological basis of the Nazi agricultural program,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol 28, No 2, 1967, pp 279–88; Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, chapter 11.

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- 49 Jared Poley, *Decolonization in Germany: Weimar Narratives of Colonial Loss and Foreign Occupation* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005).
- 50 Christian Koller, "Enemy images: race and gender stereotypes in the discussion on colonial troops," in: Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Eds.), *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), pp 145–47.
- 51 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1940), pp 448–449.
- 52 See the analysis in Marcia Klotz, "Global visions: from the colonial to the national socialist world," *European Studies Journal*, Vol 16, No 2, 1999, p 44.
- 53 Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, pp 590, 969.
- 54 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, preface Jean-Paul Sartre, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Viking, 1963), pp 94, 24. Cf. Paul Gilroy, *Between Camps: Race, Identity and Nationalism at the End of the Colour Line* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2000), pp 248–257. This book was published in the USA as *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- 55 This argument is elaborated in A. Dirk Moses, "Empire, colony, genocide: keywords and intellectual history," and David Furber and Wendy Lower, "Colonialism and genocide in Nazi-occupied Poland and Ukraine" in: A. Dirk Moses (Ed.), *Empire Colony Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008). For subaltern's racist nationalism see also Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
- 56 Alon Confino, "Fantasies about Jews: cultural reflections on the Holocaust," *History and Memory*, Vol 17, Nos 1–2, 2005, pp 297, 317.
- 57 Jean-Paul Sartre, "Preface," in Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p 20.
- 58 Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, pp 130–131.
- 59 Cf. Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*.
- 60 Moses, "Empire, colony, genocide," for details.
- 61 Susanne Kord, "The pre-colonial imagination: race and revolution in literature of the Napoleonic period," in: Mary Fulbrook (Ed.), *Un-Civilizing Processes: Excess and Transgression in Germany Society and Culture* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp 85–115.
- 62 Raffael Scheck, *Hitler's African Victims: The German Army Massacre of Black French Soldiers in 1940* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp 9, 101–117, 145–156; idem, "They are just savages": German massacres of black soldiers from the French Army in 1940," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol 77, No 2, June 2005, pp 325–344.
- 63 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp 62–68.
- 64 Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), chapters one and two.
- 65 Rowan Savage, "Disease incarnate": biopolitical discourse and genocidal dehumanisation in the age of modernity," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol 20, No 3, 2007, pp 404–440.
- 66 Jeffrey Herf, "Convergence: the classic case Nazi Germany, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism during World War II," *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol 25, No 1, 2006, pp 63–83. Holocaust scholars are suddenly becoming experts on Islam: Richard Breitman, "Muslim anti-Semitism: historical background," *Current Psychology*, Vol 26, Nos 3–4, 2007, pp 213–222.
- 67 Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 2004); Künztel places his material on his webpage: <http://matthiaskuentzel.de/>. Herf wrote a gushing foreword for Mathias Künztel's, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11* (New York: Telos Press). The first chapter was published by the *New York Times* on January 5, 2008.
- 68 Jeffrey Herf, "The 'new world order': from unilateralism to cosmopolitanism," *Die Zeit* (2004): http://www.zeit.de/reden/weltpolitik/200409_herf, accessed January 15, 2008.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 <http://www.cambridge.org/us/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=9780521712910>, accessed January 15, 2008.
- 71 On Herf's own logic, the argument makes no sense. He maintains that German anti-Semitic measures "bore comparison" with US southern racism before 1939 at a time when he thinks Britain or France should have struck at Germany. On his assumptions, they should have struck the US as well to forestall a potential genocidal attack on African-Americans. Obviously he would not advocate *this* pre-emptive strike. So why advance such specious historical analogies?
- 72 E.g. Hersch Lauterpacht, *International Law and Human Rights* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1968).
- 73 Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*, p 6n21.
- 74 Richard Hofstadter, "The paranoid style in American politics," *Harper's Magazine*, November 1964, pp 77–86.

- 75 Eli Sagan, *The Honey and the Hemlock: Democracy and Paranoia in Ancient Athens and Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).
- 76 For a discussion of Weber and these distinctions, see my “Hayden White, traumatic nationalism, and the public role of history,” *History and Theory*, Vol 44, No 3, 2005, pp 311–332, and “The public relevance of historical studies: a rejoinder to Hayden White,” *ibid.*, pp 339–348.
- 77 Benny Morris, “The second Holocaust is looming,” *Israel Insider*, January 15, 2007, <http://web.israelinsider.com/views/10350.htm>, accessed January 15, 2008. For an antidote, see Steven Beller, “In Zion’s Hall of Mirrors: a comment on *Neuer Antisemitismus?*” *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol 41, No 2, 2007, pp 215–238.
- 78 Stephen Frederic Dale, “Religious suicide in Islamic Asia: anticolonial terrorism in India, Indonesia, and the Philippines,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 32, No 1, 1988, pp 37–59; Rudolph Peters, *Islam and Colonialism: The Doctrine of Jihad in Modern History* (The Hague, Paris, and New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), pp 39–104.
- 79 Henner Hess, “Like Zeolots and Romans: terrorism and empire in the 21st century,” *Crime, Law, and Social Change*, Vol 39, 2003, pp 339–357.

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