

3 Genocide and ethnic cleansing

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Genocide and ethnic cleansing are forms of political violence because they politicize nationality, ethnicity, race and religion. Branded as traitors or feared as security threats, minority populations have been murdered and deported in astonishing numbers during Europe's long twentieth century. Why these phenomena accelerated and peaked in its first half, in particular, remains in dispute. The burgeoning scholarly literature on genocide and ethnic cleansing tends to fall into one of two categories. It is concerned either with one individual episode or perpetrating regime, or with comparing the phenomenology of different genocides across large tracts of time and space. With a few notable exceptions, it rarely explores extensive causal or contextual interconnections between different cases.¹ As a relatively small global region, the Europe of the long twentieth century is a spatio-temporal setting that lends itself very well to examining the relationship between ostensibly separate episodes and, along the way, problematizing or dismantling some of the simplistic explanations that have hitherto held sway about the relationship between specific sorts of ideology, regime and state form and the mass murder or violent eviction of civilian populations.

Contrary to the accumulated history of ideas of racism and ethnonationalism that often passes for explanation of genocide studies, the pure, abstract logic of exclusionary ideology is rarely sufficient to push even extremists into ethnic cleansing or genocide.² How and how far a goal of homogeneity is pursued depends upon the contingent course of events. Indeed, how far the malign trends in the high culture and intellectual life of our Europe gained popular and political purchase in the affected states had as much to do with geopolitical and economic fortune, and institutional arrangements, as with the force of ideas.

Consequently, it is important to avoid teleology in examining the various forms of xenophobia, nationalism and racism that obtained at this time. It is true that forms of discrimination, including forced assimilation of minorities by language policy, or expropriation, sporadic violence,

and entry restrictions into key professions, became de rigueur during peacetime in many different states in the first half of the twentieth century. But the logic of ethnic domination is distinguishable from the logic of destruction. While such measures of domination might ultimately have provided some psychological and practical preparation for removal measures during, say, wartime, and often did indeed prove to be just the beginning of an altogether more violent process, they were often ends in themselves and were certainly not always conscious preludes to ethnic destruction. Discriminatory policies up to and including equivalents of the Nazi 'Aryanization' of state and economy were standard practice in parts of Europe, consistent with contemporaneous notions of the very logic of independent statehood. Genocide and ethnic cleansing were different, first, because they were often triggered by interstate conflict rather than simply internal political agendas, and generally had ramifications beyond state borders in terms of regional destabilization and mass refugee movement; and, second, because of residual concern for the opinion of the outside world. There is no necessary contradiction between a state enthusiastically excluding minorities from its economy but baulking at murdering them – as for instance, was the case with the Turkish treatment of Jews during the Second World War era. The transition from one logic to the other needs to be explained historically in terms of the interaction of local, regional and continental contingencies.

Just as no particular ideology had a monopoly on genocidal tendencies, and just as there was no inevitable connection between exclusionary thought and murderous policy, neither was any particular type of state formation exempt from responsibility for genocide or ethnic cleansing. Contrary to the assertion of Michael Mann that democratizing states were especially predisposed to ethnic cleansing and genocide, the older dynastic regimes could show themselves capable of responding just as violently as anyone to perceived threats confronting their order.³ This propensity existed whether those putative threats were primarily internal, as with Ottoman Armenians and with Poles, Jews or ethnic Germans in Imperial Russian territory, or primarily external, as with Austria-Hungary and the Serbs, approximately 10 per cent of whom were vengefully deported for labour purposes by the Habsburgs at war. Conversely, the aspirations of new or would-be nation-states were not limited to their borders. They were also capable of acting like the 'imperial nations' at the nationalizing core of the dynastic empires,⁴ hungry for the acquisition of overseas territory or, more often, if they were 'lesser powers', neighbouring territory coveted or owned by other nearby states.

Our analytical narrative begins with the crisis and collapse of the dynastic land empires, and continues through the emergence in their

place of smaller and more ethnically-homogeneous nation-states. Their early state life, we then show, was heavily influenced by the intrusion of two new imperial forms into the spaces left by the collapse of the dynastic empires: the Nazi and Soviet regimes. The emergence and prospects of each new state in this new Europe depended upon a range of other factors, particularly the attitudes of major powers. Some of these powers were themselves land or maritime empires, indeed, empire-states whose internal institutional consolidating depended on economic and military projection outside Europe since the early modern period.⁵ Such exogenous factors were inevitable in the state-formation of any aspiring national-political project. Likewise,

Nazism's coercive empire facilitated the exclusionary tendencies of smaller states across the continent. The one consistently influential arbiter of national boundaries and nationality questions was Great Britain, which was not even on the continental landmass. Murders and expulsions committed for land and domination reflect the *interaction* of states and proto-state movements of different forms and strengths, as each tried to further its agenda.

Instead of conceiving of uniquely malign ideologies and state forms, we should think of an overall logic of state action at this time of heightened European crisis, as *all regimes* pressed harder upon their populations in their demands for unqualified loyalty and monolithic identity, not to mention heightened productivity in field, factory and battlefield. This 'logic' did not have equally murderous results everywhere, however. With the significant exception of the fate of the Jews, most of Western Europe in the period under consideration remained relatively unscathed by large scale violence against civilian populations on the basis of their ethnic identity. Part of the explanation is that the First World War did not bring the sort of total destruction, dislocation and, therefore, desperation and fragmentation, on the Western Front that it did on the Eastern Front; part is that Nazi occupation was less extensive and less murderous in the West; and part is that the states of the West had, generally, established themselves in more benign circumstances than the newer states of the East, and so did not grow with quite the same levels of fear and resentment of neighbouring states and competing peoples. Finally, their relative ethnic homogeneity, due to earlier state-formation, meant the absence of destabilizing minorities whose resentment could be instrumentalized by external powers as an internal fifth column.

That said, we should not fall into the trap of essentialism when accounting for the obviously ethnic quality of so much of the violence that occurred in Europe's long twentieth century in the political spaces

with which this chapter is particularly concerned. Ethnic identity, especially in the Ottoman Empire, but also in vast swathes of Central and Eastern Europe, was not as fixed as nationalist historiographies have contended. To a large extent, the violent upheavals that are traced in the early parts of this chapter *created* the firm national subjectivities and identities that were then projected backwards in times by nationalist historians to narrate their story of oppression at the hands of competing groups. At the opening of our period, for instance, the average Pontic Christian would have identified herself as a Christian or a ‘Rhomios’, meaning Roman, a carryover from Roman and Byzantine times, rather than as of Greek nationality. Even by 1900, Greek ethnicity only resonated among educated Pontic Christians: class status determined whether one learned Attic Greek. Greek identity was propagated by the Greek state and its agents, and Greek teachers went to Anatolia trying to teach Orthodox Christians to learn Greek, since many had long since become Turcophones. The traumas of ongoing war (1912–22) between Greece and the incipient Turkish state were a catalyst for ethnogenesis, both for Turks and Greeks.⁶

The end of the old dispensation and the onset of the first wave of violence

The rulers of the dynastic European empires faced the most complex issues of population management. Just as each of them allowed degrees of decentralization and cultural independence for subject populations, each possessed a territorial core and a ruling people holding the senior political, administrative and military posts. As each empire expanded, members of the core people, or other groups deemed sufficiently reliable or different to the new additional populations, were sometimes dispatched to break up demographic concentrations of subject peoples, and to defend border regions, most frequently in the Russian and Ottoman cases. The same empires also periodically removed people from borders or communications routes. In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, the Romanovs and the Ottomans actually agreed to the ‘transfer’ of particular Muslim groups from the Russian Caucasus into Ottoman territory. (Huge numbers of Muslims were also simply expelled into the dwindling Ottoman Empire by the expanding Russia, especially from the Crimean war period,⁷ with ‘Circassians’ the greatest victims by absolute numbers evicted – around a million – and numbers killed in the process – tens of thousands at a minimum.⁸)

Empires used particular population groups for particular functions. Aspects of the traditional economic dispensation for Europe’s Jews and

non-Muslim Ottomans were perpetuated into the modern period. Jews were disproportionately represented in financial and commercial functions in the Habsburg lands, since they were considered by the Austrian and Hungarian nobility to be a loyal minority with no territorial ambitions. As for the Ottoman Empire, as it was incorporated into the burgeoning global economy from the early nineteenth century, Christians filled important intermediary roles in relation to the outside world, which owed much to their language skills and their religious confraternity with the European powers. Ethnic Germans enjoyed social and economic dominance in the Baltic region of the Russian Empire. German agricultural labourers and those with particular commercial and technical skills also settled in the lower Volga region, in Volhynia, and in Bessarabia and Bukovina at the invitation of Catherine the Great and her successors. Jews were sometimes and in some places allowed by the Tsars to deploy their commercial and financial skills, though they were also the victims of repeated attacks for precisely those reasons. In the Russian and Habsburg empires, Jews tended to live in small rural towns.

Though often established by coercion, the hierarchies and ethnic divisions of labour 'worked' while the empires in question were in the ascendant. As they were challenged, however, their hierarchies were destabilized and either violently overturned or violently consolidated. The legacy of these hierarchies and divisions outlasted the empires, and the expectation of persisting ethnic domination or challenge to such domination would provide some of the main grievances upon which leaders of peoples acted as they expressed new forms of collective consciousness.

From the imperial perspective, or the perspective of new nation-states like Imperial Germany with large minorities, the growing nationalist consciousness of subject peoples presented an obvious dilemma. Not all were in the same position of power that permitted Imperial Germany to force its integrative agenda on Poles. The Habsburg Empire, or at least the more tolerant Austrian half of it, went furthest from the later nineteenth century towards accommodating the developing aspirations of its subject peoples through such measures as language and education reforms. It was home to the development of some of the more humane ideas then in circulation for the co-existence of different nationalities in a federal structure.⁹ Austrian policies found some posthumous reward in the relative moderation of Czech nationalist policy towards ethnic Germans and other minorities in the interwar period. By contrast, Slovak and Romanian nationalists proved significantly less tolerant of Hungarians in light of the vigorous 'Magyarization' programmes of the late nineteenth century in the Hungarian half of the empire. They also attacked Jews on the basis that their status in the empire made them

co-responsible for Magyarization, that is, that they were disloyal to the new Slovak and Romanian nation-states, a policy that did not spare Jews the wrath of Hungarian nationalists who accused Hungarian Jews of Bolshevik sympathies after the First World War.

Throughout its existence, and beyond into the Soviet period, the Russian empire was particularly noteworthy for the fluctuations in its population policy. One of many volte-faces was performed by Alexander III after the assassination of Alexander II by 'Populist' revolutionaries in 1881. This act resulted in a series of pogroms against Russia's Jewish population, which was held collectively responsible by many elements of Russian society.¹⁰ The assassination also precipitated anti-Jewish laws, including strict limits on Jewish entry to state schools and universities. Meanwhile, a continued drive for modernization and centralization went hand-in-hand across the provinces with general if uneven campaigns of linguistic Russification and repression from the 1880s.

In the nineteenth century, under pressure from Balkan Christian nationalism and Russian military advance, Ottoman population policy also began to oscillate along the two axes, ranging from greater integration to greater discrimination and from toleration of separateness to forced assimilation. In the mid-century *Tanzimat* period, reforms of the religious *millet* structure (where the Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian and Jewish communities had some self-governing autonomy) enabled greater inter-religious equality to keep Christians within the empire. But the attempt to modernize without removing this system of confessional organization backfired, because subject Christian nationalisms developed along the cleavages of the old religious framework. Moreover, Muslims, accustomed to primacy in the Empire, now felt that the legal equality was exploited opportunistically by the disloyal Christians who continued to organize communally, a charge that Christians laid against Jews in the Russian and Habsburg empires. And, portending the source of future violence, the Ottoman elite and many ordinary Muslims were tremendously resentful of external sponsorship of the reforms, particularly by Britain. The erosion of the established ethno-religious hierarchy, which Muslims experienced as normative and just, had gone quite far enough. A new course was heralded in light of the 'Eastern Crisis' of 1875–8, as we have seen.¹¹ Thus began the first of our waves of violence in the long twentieth century.

The aftermath of the Eastern Crisis

As important for our purposes as the massive, and particularly anti-Muslim, violence¹² of the Eastern Crisis itself was the way it was

resolved. Britain contrived to reduce both the territory Russia had gained on the Ottoman border, and that which Russia had allocated to Bulgaria at the abortive treaty of San Stefano earlier in 1878. Macedonia was accordingly placed back in Ottoman hands. In a move designed simultaneously to justify keeping the eastern Anatolian border regions under Ottoman control, and to illustrate concern for the Christians of eastern Anatolia (who had undergone much hardship during the 1877–8 war and in the decades before, especially at the hands of Muslim refugees from Russia), Britain pressed Istanbul to concede reforms for the Armenian population of the area. The result was the incorporation of largely unenforceable reforms in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin that concluded the Eastern Crisis. Britain even considered suggesting a measure that would later become a staple international solution to minority problems: a sort of population transfer, moving as many Armenians as possible into a few provinces where, as an outright demographic majority, they could be subject to a special regime.¹³ (France had suggested a similar scheme only a few years earlier regarding the Maronites in Lebanon.)

Even though Ottoman territorial losses to Russia had been reduced, it would remain an article of faith for the generation of Ottoman leaders that brought the empire into the First World War to recover the ‘lost territories’ of 1878 – Kars, Ardahan and Batum. And, far from protecting Armenians, the Armenian clauses of the Berlin Treaty, which invested them with a series of political, religious and civil rights under the control of the Great Powers, left them exposed to enduring Ottoman accusations of treachery for appealing to an external power, like Bulgaria, before.¹⁴ The reform clauses made no practical difference, as was shown by the impunity with which massacres of 80,000–100,000 Armenians were perpetrated in 1894–6.¹⁵ As external impositions, the ‘reforms’ merely made Istanbul mistrust Britain almost as much as Russia, since both states were seen as giving Ottoman Christians power by proxy.

The Eastern Crisis convinced the Istanbul elite that trying to incorporate its non-Muslim populations by inclusive reform was hopeless. This realization sped the new Sultan, Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), down the road of pan-Islamism (really pan-Sunniism), a neo-conservative doctrine in which Christians would be returned to their ‘rightful’, subordinate status. The massacres of 1894–6 were a means of putting the Armenians ‘in their place’ and of warning them against future appeals to the Christian powers, which some Armenian nationalist activists had attempted through ostentatious acts of terrorism. The massacres also showed that Istanbul had learned the lesson of the ethnic majoritarianism that had won the Balkan nations their independence: rather than the

abortive British design of creating predominantly Armenian provinces in eastern Anatolia, massacres, forced conversions and the strategic settlement of new Balkan Muslim refugees into the region across the Hamidian period reduced the concentration of Christians with a view to securing the lands within the empire. Though the empire awaited the secularizing revolution of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP: ‘Young Turks’), it was already becoming a ‘nationalizing state’, seeking to preserve the primacy of the Muslims – the *millet-i hâkime*, or dominant *millet* – by incremental demographic measures against competing groups.

One final effect of the Berlin Treaty was to leave Bulgaria with a sense of unfulfilled nationhood, an obsession with the San Stefano boundaries and the regaining of its ‘rightful’ territory in Macedonia. This obsession would be the driving force in Bulgarian foreign policy through to the Second World War, the main explanation for its alliance choices and one of the main reasons for the rightward, revanchist shift in internal population policy that the era of the world wars brought.

The last stage of the ‘Eastern Question’ that the ‘Eastern Crisis’ introduced also foretold the drawn-out problems of the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in East-Central Europe from 1918, namely the problems of minorities treaties and irredentism of newly-created, insecure nation-states. As to the Balkans, of all the conflicts there from 1875 onwards, the most violent were the wars of 1912–13. The first involved Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece allying against the Ottoman Empire and securing most of the territory of Macedonia and Thrace, with Bulgaria the greatest beneficiary as it sought to restore the San Stefano borders. The second war involved Bulgaria’s erstwhile allies turning against it, and dividing up Macedonia amongst themselves, while the Ottoman Empire took advantage of the situation to recover eastern Thrace up to Edirne/Adrianople. Thereafter, the new possessors of Macedonia started forcibly assimilating the land and its people: in Aegean Macedonia place names were Hellenized, and the name Macedonia and the Macedonian language were banned;¹⁶ Serbian Macedonia was dubbed ‘southern Serbia’.

The second violent wave: genocide and ethnic cleansing in the First World War era

During the Balkan wars, ethnic groups on the ‘wrong’ side of any border were used alternately as recruiting grounds for irregular warfare and targets for collective reprisals. ‘Alien’ populations in lands coveted or conquered by the participants were subjected to massacre, ethnic

cleansing, terror and forced conversion or assimilation to consolidate the conqueror's control. Many soldiers swapped sides to join their ethnic brethren. These wars were conducted 'at the high noon of mass ethnic nationalism, undertaken by states bent on shaping their territories in accordance with maximalist – and often fantastically exaggerated – claims of ethnic demography and committed to moulding their heterogeneous populations into relatively homogeneous national wholes'. Muslim civilians were again the primary – but by no means the only – victims of the massive violence, with tens of thousands of deaths and as many as 400,000 fleeing into Ottoman Anatolia.¹⁷

The wars marked the end of any vestige of inter-religious pluralism in the Ottoman Empire, and the beginning of an even more intense obsession with the ethnic constitution of the remaining lands. In 1913, a new organization, the Young Turk government, established the Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Immigrants within the Interior Ministry to settle Muslim refugees. In a further systematization of Abdülhamid's policy of strategic Muslim refugee settlement, the Directorate developed plans for the targeted deportations of non-Muslim groups from areas of concentration, where they constituted threatening pluralities or even majorities, in order to ensure Turkic-Muslim ethnic dominance in Anatolia. Even some non-Sunni and non-Turkish groups were scheduled for relocation, since the recent secession from the empire of predominantly Muslim Albania in 1912 made the new ruling faction in the Ottoman government, CUP, suspicious of even some co-religionists.

Many of the CUP members were atheists anyway, and believers in social Darwinism and sociological positivism – the idea that human problems were susceptible to scientific quantification, analysis and solution.¹⁸ Most of them hailed from the lands lost or under imminent threat in 1912–13, and accordingly were highly sensitized to the issues at stake. As we will see in other cases, ethnic hardliners often came from contested imperial frontier zones where ethnic conflict was imagined in zero-sum terms.¹⁹ Their goal to save the crumbling empire was now increasingly pursued with ethnonationalist policies, because 'ethnic security' now entailed geopolitical security. They were also in the process of creating a one-party state and penetrating the existing state framework to impose their ideology on the bureaucracy.²⁰

What about the lesser participants in the First World War that had emerged from the retreating Ottoman and Habsburg empires? Whatever their differences, the issues involved in going to war in 1914–18 and 1939–45 respectively were more similar than they were for the greatest protagonists. In both conflicts, new land and some of its human occupants constituted the primary stake for these less powerful states,

and their allegiance could be purchased on promise of the reward at the post-war reckoning. In their alliance choices in the First World War, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania all gave priority to the quest for adjacent territory. Italy did, too, with respect to Dalmatia and Albania though, in its pretensions to Great-Power status and dominance of the Eastern Mediterranean, it also craved much the same territory on the Turkish coast that Greece sought in fulfilment of its own *megali idea* (great idea), the vision of a greater state incorporating the Orthodox population of western Anatolia.

The Great Powers not only exploited the expansionist ambitions of smaller states (often cynically, giving false promises to Italy and Romania), they also stoked the fires of ethnonationalism and state paranoia in their attempts to attack weak points in the opposing alliance. The maritime empires were targeted in their colonies, and the land empires were targeted through their subject nationalities, with the intimation of liberation in return for rebellion – though perhaps most portentously of all, Imperial Germany also supported revolutionary political groups in Russia. Germany appealed to Ukrainian nationalists, Georgian Christians and Jews within the Russian Empire, and the republican Irish; together with the Ottoman Empire, Germany sought to incite the Muslims of the Caucasus, Central Asia and India; Britain appealed to Arab nationalism; France maintained links with Lebanese and Syrian Christians and some Armenian and Greek nationalists; Russia exploited the aspirations of Czechs, and, in Ottoman territory, of Armenians, Kurds and Assyrian Christians; almost everyone played on Polish nationalism.

Of all attempts to exploit minority sentiment, the most variable involved the Jews. Because of the power attributed to Jews – comprising a combination of longstanding stereotype in Christian culture and identification of Jews with many of the forces of modernity that had disturbed the status quo in late nineteenth-century Europe²¹ – their loyalty was a subject of particular concern to both warring sides. Russia, especially its intensely anti-Semitic military leadership, feared Jewish leftists of various persuasions and Jewish allegiance to the Habsburgs and to Germany, whence Russian Jews had found safe haven over the previous decades, and this suspicion was only reinforced by proclamations and appeals to Russia's Jews from the central powers' supreme command, endorsed by the German-Jewish 'Committee for the Liberation of the Jews of Russia'. The combination of established anti-Semitism, proximate 'provocation', the state's desires to remove Jews from economic positions and to remove putatively particularly hostile elements from newly-conquered territory, helps explain why, from late 1914,

troops from the Russian army and its Cossack regiments, as well as members of the local populations, were allowed to massacre large numbers of Jews in the Galician and Bukovinan territories taken from the Habsburg Empire. In a pattern that would become common in ensuing years, the imaginary Jewish fifth column was also blamed for Russian military failures.²²

The greatest immediate losers of the ill-fated obsession with insurgency were, however, the Armenians, with the Ottoman 'Assyrian' Christians (Süryani and Asuri) coming a close second.²³ As Germany and the Ottomans used Muslim 'self-defence' groups in the Caucasus to cause problems in the Russian military rear, so Russia toyed with stimulating minorities behind Ottoman lines, using special armed units of Russian Armenian subjects to appeal to the Anatolian Armenian communities. Like all other such policies, this one met with only slight success, but it fed pre-existing, chauvinist views of concentrated minority populations, serving as the focus of external irredentist claims or Great Power manipulation. The policy dovetailed precisely with the existing Ottoman suspicion of the Christian populations' associations with the Entente powers, and helped confirm the CUP's own view that these groups had no place in the Anatolian future.

Up to a point, CUP population policy in the First World War mirrored that of the Tsars. After a series of localized 'pacification' measures in their shared border regions from the outset of the war, and incursions into enemy territory, each regime radicalized its policies in spring 1915 as the war situation became critical. When the Entente attempted to invade the Ottoman Empire at the Gallipoli peninsula, and Russia likewise through eastern Anatolia, and as a new offensive of the central powers opened on the Eastern Front, both states began to deport hundreds of thousands of members of 'suspect' minorities from behind their lines. The fear of ethnic fifth columns that would aid and join with advancing enemy forces found expression in the Tsarist deportation not only of perhaps a million Jews from Russian as well as formerly Habsburg territory, but of Volhynian Germans, Poles, Latvians and Lithuanians, as well as Chinese and Koreans, and of Muslims in the Caucasus and Central Asia.²⁴ At about the time the major Armenian deportations began, the Russian authorities in the Caucasus considered deporting all of the Muslims of Kars and Batum – the Ottoman 'lost territories' – as a security measure.

Russian Caucasus policy did not go this far, but hugely violent excesses were possible, such as in the wartime emergency of 1916 when a conscription revolt of the Kyrgyz, accompanied by attacks on Russian settlers, was put down by the Russian army with up to 100,000 Kyrgyz

casualties and one-third of the people fleeing eastwards.²⁵ Measures of this type would be intensified in Bolshevik revolution and subsequent regime, in the absence of tension between military and civilian power that characterized the older imperial system of governance. In the Ottoman case as of 1915, the CUP was less institutionally-bound and further down the ethnonationalist road. The Young Turk faction had risen violently to an insecure hold on power with a determination to penetrate and control the Ottoman state according to its own political and ethnic priorities. It had a paramilitary arm – the Special Organization – that had served both to coerce political opponents and to terrorize the Aegean Greek population before the war, and which would now be one of the main instruments used in the murder of the Armenians.

It soon became clear that what was happening to the Armenians and Assyrians was qualitatively different from anything happening elsewhere at the time. These Christian groups were being targeted in their entirety: on 17 June 1915, CUP interior minister Talât averred the intention to use cover of war to finish for good with the empire's 'inner enemies', thereby removing forever the problems of external diplomatic interference.²⁶ Equally importantly, the deportation destinations of the deserts of Syria and Iraq were not remotely fit for habitation by large numbers of people from a temperate mountainous plateau. At the beginning of May 1915, the Ottoman leadership had considered as one option simply forcing Armenians over the Russian border,²⁷ but this idea was dismissed, presumably because they feared the Armenians would join Russian ranks and return with invading forces. So the deportation had to be arranged to ensure that the deportees would neither return nor remain an external threat, which meant keeping them within Ottoman control in an area where they would inevitably experience massive attrition.

This situation was also different to other simultaneous atrocities and movements of peoples because the deportees were systematically massacred en route, whereas massacres occurred *in situ* for most of the Assyrians and for Armenian men of fighting age. Women, children and the elderly were attacked by some units of the Ottoman army, the gendarmerie, paramilitary forces and some local Muslims (particularly Kurdish tribes loyal to the government) as they were forced into the deserts, with kidnap for sexual slavery or acculturation as Muslims the only alternative to murder during the march or at the desert destinations. In the deserts, a further round of massacres in the summer of 1916 finished off most survivors, with members of Chechen immigrant communities and Bedouins added to the list of primary perpetrators. The victim groups were targeted for ethnic destruction rather than the

earlier policy of ethnic domination. The small number of survivors would be so enfeebled and isolated as to be irrelevant as a collective. Between 1–1.2 million Armenians were killed out of a population of two million and, by some maximal estimates, 300,000 ‘Assyrians’.²⁸

Contrary to CUP propaganda, the property of the deportees was not kept safely, nor were the deportees compensated. Some of the proceeds of state sequestration went to line the pockets of corrupt officials, some to local landowners and bigwigs, and some to provide for the Muslim refugees fleeing wartime Russian measures in the Caucasus, and the victims of ethnic cleansing in the Balkan wars. In this capital transfer, we see genocide also paved the way for the complete fulfilment of the established policy of ethnic domination through expropriation.

The demographic re-engineering continued, though not necessarily through outright excision. Owing only partly to wartime upheaval, some one-third of the Anatolian population of more than seventeen million people migrated internally or was subject to ‘relocation’. Circassians, Albanian, Bosnian and Georgian Muslims, Kurds, ‘Gypsies’, and some Jews and Arab groups were moved around the empire, during and after the war, for purposes of assimilation and, in some cases, punishment, though none were so comprehensively dislocated as the Armenians, and none subject to the same near-total murder.²⁹ For instance, approximately 300,000 Muslim Kurds were deported westwards through Anatolia in 1917 and settled in Turkish areas to assimilate them. Under the orchestration of the Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Immigrants, a ‘10 per cent rule’ operated, whereby non-Turkish populations were not allowed to exceed that proportion of the local population.

It bears repeating that the Armenian and Assyrian genocides were extreme measures even by the standards of the time. The CUP policy illustrates the fusion of geopolitical, ethnic and economic considerations in strategic design, and the fallacy of any attempt to pinpoint one or other of the three factors as the independent variable, somehow decisive on its own. Moreover, it shows the range of population policies available to sufficiently radicalized states at crisis moments. Policies ranged from extensive mass murder of populations deemed too dangerous or unassimilable, through more-or-less coercive assimilation of populations considered sufficiently culturally similar or malleable, to material provision for the well-being of members of the ‘core people’ and their settlement in newly ‘secured’ areas.

In the aftermath of genocide, the fluctuations of the Russian–Ottoman front and the ensuing collapse of state rule in Anatolia brought the region to a point of anarchy in 1916–17. In this situation, a bewildering

array of ethnic groups cross-cutting in allegiance with political doctrines and Great Powers fought an entirely criminal set of small wars against each other. Aspects of the situation were replicated to the north of the Black Sea.³⁰

The unravelling of the west of the Romanov Empire and the eastern marches of the Habsburg Empire began around 1915, with German and then later Bolshevik designs for the region providing competing imperial models for the vacated space. The fluidity of the central powers' Eastern Front meant that huge areas from Poland eastwards were temporarily depopulated and their infrastructure devastated, rendering them more susceptible to economic crisis, inter-group antagonism, and the sort of socio-economic restructuring that any new imperial imposition would entail. The situation became most desperate for the civilian inhabitants from late 1917 during the civil war that the Bolshevik revolutionaries fought against local opposition armies and as a variety of foreign forces. It was the bloodiest European civil war of the century.

Intertwined with the communist–anti-communist war were established nationalist dynamics focused on territorial control. A major territorial victor of the transition from Romanov to Bolshevik empire was Romania that, in addition to gaining Transylvania from Hungary, and Dobruja from Bulgaria, acquired Bessarabia and Bukovina in 1920. In 1919, Ukrainian nationalists enjoyed a brief period of sovereignty, fighting Bolshevik and counter-revolutionary 'White Russian' forces to entrench independence, and fighting Polish forces for contested territory. Losing to Poland over eastern Galicia and Volhynia, in April 1920 Ukrainian forces then allied with Poland against the Bolsheviks. Fluctuating fortunes in the Bolshevik–Polish conflict combined with the more decisive defeat of the Ukrainians to produce a Bolshevik–Polish peace treaty in March 1921 in which Ukrainian territory was divided between the two signatory powers. Poland also gained Vilnius at Lithuanian expense in 1922, and the act was given international sanction within a year.

All sides committed atrocities in all of these conflicts. Jews were routinely targeted by 'white' forces and at the very least 50,000 were murdered in countless pogroms. (Though communists murdered a – relatively small – number of Jews, nationalists and counter-revolutionaries were not shaken from their conviction about 'Judeo-Bolshevism', which was intertwined with accusations that the Jews were German agents.) Meanwhile, the Bolshevik counter-insurgency against Cossacks in the Don region in 1919, which targeted the population as a whole for terror and extermination, claimed tens of thousands of lives before it was halted.³¹

After the Russian civil war, pacification was the order of the day as the Bolsheviks tried to consolidate control of some of the former Romanov border regions. The next two years saw a concerted de-Cossackization campaign in the North Caucasus to ensure that they would not again threaten the revolution. In 1921, they used gas to subdue the 'Antonov' peasant rebellion southeast of Moscow in which 15,000 were killed and 100,000 deported. Campaigns of similar scale and mortality continued in the North Caucasian mountains into the mid-1920s.³²

Like the Ukrainians, the peoples of the southern Caucasus experienced a brief independence between the end of Tsarist dominion and the imposition of Bolshevik rule on one hand and between the Ottoman defeat and the nationalist Turkish resurgence under Kemal on the other hand. And like the Ukrainians, they took advantage of this liminal moment to establish the new states of Armenia and Azerbaijan, all the while fighting amongst themselves over border territory and ethnically cleansing any such territory of other ethno-religious groups. And again, like the Ukrainians at the hands of the Bolsheviks and Poles, they lost their autonomy when the Turkish advance into the Caucasus in 1920 resulted in the recovery of the 'lost territories' of 1878. This episode seemed like a continuation of the earlier genocide in its violence against the Caucasian Armenians.

This Turkish advance was not uncontested and, as usual, the Great Powers attempted to mould the region in their own interests. Britain sought to use the Greek forces, in Turkey to claim western Anatolian territory and counter similar Italian claims, to destroy the burgeoning Kemalist resistance to its projected imperial division of Anatolia. They were very useful proxies for Britain in the 'pacification' of all Anatolia. The net result was a vicious ethnic war in Anatolia in 1921–2, in which both Greeks and Turks targeted civilians extensively and hundreds of thousands perished. Having survived the world war with only a relatively small number of deportations from sensitive coastal regions, which was attributable to Greece's neutrality until 1917, the Anatolian Greek orthodox population was now cast, in the eyes of the Turkish nationalists, as the next in a long line of fifth columns of an external power. It was driven off with the defeated Greek armies in 1922 and 1923.

The process of ethnic cleansing was completed and made mutual as Greece and Turkey built on the pre-war Ottoman–Bulgarian precedent of population exchange. This was now an internationally-mandated official affair, however. The formalized exchange agreement, approved by all of the signatories to the 1923 Lausanne peace treaty that guaranteed Turkey's new borders, was partly recognition of the reality on

the ground. That reality entailed continuing refugee movements until around 1926 when some 1.25 million Ottoman subjects of the orthodox faith and 356,000 Greek Muslims had traded countries. Because of the tensions between Greece and Turkey, the appalling conditions in which so many passed both ways across the Aegean, and the lack of resources to cater for the refugees' arrival 'home', the exercise bore no relationship to the envisaged controlled process.³³

Needless to say, the suffering of the resettled Greeks and Turks did not feature in British advocacy of later population exchanges. Nor did that of the approximately 280,000 people exchanged at the same time by Greece and Bulgaria over western Thrace, nor again that of the inhabitants of Aegean Macedonia, where the settling of Ottoman Greek refugees became part of the ongoing Athenian policy of Hellenization. As the most influential Great Power, Britain saw the Lausanne exchange as a convenient way to wash its hands of a catastrophe of its own making, particularly as it was starting to think of moving back towards a position of friendship with Turkey as a regional bulwark against Bolshevism. The Greek–Bulgarian exchange was a way of compensating Greece and punishing Bulgaria for its respective wartime allegiances, for Woodrow Wilson's original intention had been to award western Thrace to Bulgaria owing to Bulgarian ethnic predominance there. This British thwarting of Wilson's principle of self-determination is but one illustration of how the politics of the international system continued to shape the destinies of weaker states and minorities, and to channel what many then thought of as the inevitable force of nationalism. The genocidal nature of Turkey's wars of independence, as the 1914–22 conflicts were called from within, was conveniently forgotten as Kemal foreswore any further territorial expansion that might disrupt the international system.

The Treaty of Lausanne set an important precedent in a number of respects. Now new states could engage in internal homogenization so long as they did not threaten international relations. The Turkish republican regime, for instance, applied itself to the task of consolidating its rule internally in Anatolia via a series of increasingly violent programmes of forced assimilation through demographic engineering directed towards the Kurds. Later, in the Second World War, massive engineering appealed to policy-makers across the political spectrum: from democratic politicians such as Winston Churchill or Edvard Beneš who sought to resolve the minority issues in East-Central Europe once and for all, to Italian fascists and future nationalist leaders like David Ben Gurion. More ominously, the mass population redistribution of the First World War also provided a precedent for demographic planners in the Nazi empire.³⁴

The interwar 'peace' and the prologue to the third violent wave

Unlike the end of the Ottoman and Romanov empires, the unravelling of most of the Habsburg Empire began more as a controlled dissolution into nation-states. This outcome was central to the geopolitical designs of the victorious powers, all the more as the Bolsheviks re-absorbed swathes of the western marches of the former Russian Empire. Britain wanted to sustain the Habsburg Empire because it was worried about potential German and Russian influence in any smaller and weaker successor states, but centrifugal forces within the empire itself and the competition between Lenin and Wilson to promote national self-determination scotched these aspirations. Even so, boundary decisions in 1918 were not simply made on the basis of the pursuit of ethnic majority alone. The principle was qualified by the requisites of stability as understood by the victors: namely stability angled to their interests.

Where territorial viability and majoritarianism conflicted at Versailles, as in the Danzig corridor, or where ethnic ownership was simply contested, as in Alsace or the huge areas lost by Hungary from the crown lands of Saint Stephen, adjudications over sovereignty tended to go against the defeated states, creating irredenta in the process. Elsewhere, Bulgaria still cast covetous eyes on Greek Thrace and Serbian Macedonia. Bulgaria's location, and its revisionist agenda, pushed it into Italy's orbit for, uniquely among the victors, Italy ignored the post-war gains that it had made to the north – in Istria, Trieste, Trentino and the South Tyrol – to bemoan its failure to achieve Albania, Dalmatia and parts of western Anatolia. Rectifying the 'mutilated peace' and establishing dominance in the Mediterranean became the main goal of Italian foreign policy after 1919, an aim that was instrumental in the Italian Fascists' rise to power.

The peacemakers were aware of the potential for disgruntled minorities to upset the new appletart of peace, just as they knew that each state would inherit substantial minorities in the minute ethnic patchwork of the region, irrespective of how boundaries were set. This situation was held to be inevitable because population transfer was not yet considered acceptable in the heart of Europe in the way it was for Turks and Balkan-dwellers. Nevertheless, the Allied boundary-makers clearly hoped migration would defuse the issue as they stipulated that minority inhabitants of the post-1918 states should leave their new state within a year if they were unhappy. Some ten million people indeed got on the move, voluntarily or not, but the remaining 'national minorities' still

comprised twenty-five to thirty million people, sometimes over one-quarter of the combined population of the newly-created states.

To be officially classified a minority was a matter of power or favour as much as size. The name Czechoslovakia did not reveal that the state contained more Germans than Slovaks. Yugoslavia, or 'The kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes', as it was first called, did not reveal that it contained Bosnian Muslims ('Bosniaks'), Montenegrins, Macedonians (all three of which groups of people were claimed by the Karađorđević state as kinds of Serb), Jews, Albanians and Romanies. But power-political tensions also existed between the titular, *de jure* dominant national groups of these two state experiments in ethnic pluralism. The make-up of the state bureaucracies and political and military elite and, in the Czech case, the economic elite too, indicated that Serbs and Czechs were the dominant groups within their respective states, an impression not lost on Croats and Slovaks, whose nationalists felt they had emerged from one sort of subordination only to be plunged into another. As with the multi-national empires of old, the potential existed for both states to be undermined by manipulation of their ethnic divisions.

As for the minorities 'proper', their continued dwelling in their birthplaces should not be taken to signal contentment with the new geopolitical arrangement. It simply shows that ordinary people had priorities other than ethnic homogenization, just as later on many South Tyrolean ethnic Germans preferred to remain *in situ* rather than go 'home' to Hitler's Reich. For such minorities, the Great Powers built on the ill-fated precedent of 1878: minorities treaties, the interwar guarantees for protection of minority rights on language, religion and communal institutions, supposedly to be enforced by the new League of Nations.³⁵

Not every state was intolerant to the same degree, and the minority treaties frequently remained unenforced. But they still encountered objection from the states in question as an infringement of sovereignty. Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia were instantly as resentful of the Versailles minorities treaties as they were of certain minorities, Czechoslovakia less so. Indeed, in the interwar years, Czech citizens were permitted to choose their own nationality on censuses rather than submitting to pseudo-objective impositions based on their language and culture. Even so, while the Czech Germans were not generally subjected to the same threats and abuse as elsewhere in East-Central Europe, Germans were decidedly second-class citizens.

Many of Europe's ethnonationalists accorded their Jewish minority exceptional attention. For Hungarian nationalists, who in their reduced

territory no longer needed the Jews to bolster their numerical and economic strength against large Slavic minorities, the notion of making special efforts to protect the cultural status of its Jews in the aftermath of the brief Béla Kun revolutionary regime, with its disproportionately large Jewish leadership, seemed a perverse joke. Having just expanded by its own military efforts to incorporate Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania and Dobruja, Romania was even less happy than on independence in 1878 to be told how to deal with the many Jews, Russians, Ukrainians, ethnic Germans and Bulgarians living in these places. The state having doubled in size, Romania's minority population also increased from a pre-1914 total of about 8 per cent to about 28 per cent. In Jewish policy alone, it spent much of the interwar period indulging in harsh measures in both its new eastern and western territories on the grounds of the Jews' alleged sympathy for Soviet and Hungarian rule respectively. In October 1942, at the height of the Holocaust, the then Romanian leader Ion Antonescu would accuse the 'Yids' of having conspired with Britain and the United States to dictate the Versailles peace terms. He would also observe that his own predecessor, the first Ion Brătianu, had been obliged to grant civil rights to Jews in 1878, which 'compromised the Romanian economy and the purity of our race'.³⁶

After more than 100 years of partition, Polish nationalists were similarly displeased to encounter limits on their sovereignty, and the more so where this concerned 'effete' Jews, who they thought had not earned their national rights by fighting, and who had relied on the distinctly underhand channels of international diplomacy.³⁷ Moreover, the notion of international Jewish power was almost a *sine qua non* in these anti-Bolshevik states. Both beliefs furthered the established perception of Jewish 'difference' as somehow different to other forms of ethnic difference – a phenomenon that has been dubbed 'allosemitism' – though it should not be forgotten that the major Polish demographic concern was the large Ukrainian population in the east.³⁸

Ethnic relations were also influenced by material challenges. Almost all of the new states were afflicted by grievous economic problems, which were worsened, but not caused, by the Great Depression of the early 1930s. The depression itself hit hardest in the industrialized states, including most obviously Germany, which was still coming to terms with the economic effects of the peace settlement. In contrast to Germany, most of the new Eastern European states had predominantly agrarian economies, many overpopulated in terms of their capacity to provide for their populations at more than a subsistence level. Their populations could not generate surplus capital for investment, nor provide much of a market for manufactured goods, as the wilting industry

in the formerly-Russian parts of Poland proved after 1919. The erstwhile Habsburg provinces emerged from an enclosed economic bloc, where economic functions had been divided between provinces, into the full glare of integration into the world economy. To say conditions were unpropitious would be an understatement. The very geopolitical functions the new states were supposed to fulfil – containment of the defeated powers – meant economic incorporation with their natural regional trading partners would be stymied from the outset by resentments and fear of external control.

In the medium term, isolation left each new state easier prey to the sort of economic penetration that had characterized pre-First World War designs for a German dominated *Mitteleuropa* and, later, to Hitlerian expansion. The depression-era restriction of Western European trade actually forced Germany to look eastwards economically as well as racially. In the shorter term, Eastern European isolation expressed itself through autarky, or economic nationalism – a route that Germany and Austria tried to take together from 1931, as the two attempted to form a customs union, in an approximate precursor of the *Anschluss* that would occur under Hitler in 1938, and an approximate repeat of their rapprochement during the depression of the 1870s.³⁹

There was a close but not inevitable relationship between the ideology of economic nationalism and the imperative to ensure ethnic control of the economy. In the quest for economic emancipation to ward off economic colonization, Romania passed a series of laws limiting foreign ownership. Suspiciously ‘cosmopolitan’ minorities also fell victim to such logic. Jews and some Ukrainians with economic influence were targeted in the drive to expand the small Romanian bourgeoisie in a process openly called ‘Romanianization’ while, like the Polish interwar regime, the radicalized Magyar elite also sought to marginalize Jews with the aim of achieving ethnic economic control. A few years later, Slovakia also pursued ‘Slovakianization’ of its economy, or ‘Christianization’, as it was also known.⁴⁰ As well as providing a European context for German ‘Aryanization’ in the 1930s and for Austrian anti-Jewish economic policy from even before the *Anschluss*, each programme also mirrored aspects of republican Turkish policy from the 1920s to the 1950s. One of the peaks of Turkish economic discrimination came in 1942 in the form of *Varlık Vergisi*, a property tax aimed at the remaining Anatolia Greeks and Armenians, and Turkish Jews.⁴¹

The great stock market crash of 1929–31, the fall of the largest Eastern European bank, the Austrian *Creditanstalt*, and then the world depression, only confirmed Eastern Europe’s ethnonationalists in their

mistrust of the international system that had simultaneously sought to thrust bourgeois democracy, minority protection and the free market onto them. It was not the Nazis alone who saw Jews presiding over and benefitting from those 'alien' impositions. The impression of a 'Jewish conspiracy' was ironically only furthered by the efforts of some international Jewish organizations to help their Eastern European brethren through the crisis years.⁴² If the assault on democracy, laissez-faire economics and minorities was collective and transnational, it was Germany, however, that spearheaded the attack first on the interwar system and then on Europe's Jews.

New imperial forms in the Second World War era: I: Nazi Germany

Germany, like Italy, allied with the Balkan and East-Central European losers of the post-1918 settlement to reverse the prevailing balance of power in each part of the region. In establishing alliances and puppet regimes, Hitler and Mussolini played on all of the ethnic resentments already stimulated since the days of nineteenth-century imperial modernization. Sometimes, these dynamics required vigorous agitation, as in Czechoslovakia; sometimes less encouragement was needed, as in the first stages of the dismemberment of Yugoslavia in 1941, or in relation to Bulgarian and Hungarian irredentism.

Even before war, Nazi racism emboldened extreme nationalists and proto-fascists in other countries, notwithstanding marked differences between national cases. Between 1938 and 1941, Slovakia and Hungary progressed from anti-Jewish laws based on religious definitions to closer approximations to the racist Nazi Nuremberg Laws, reversing the emancipation Jews had enjoyed since 1867. Italian laws copied aspects of earlier German legislation, forbidding marriage between Jews and non-Jews and removing Jewish teachers from public schools. Poland, then enjoying reasonable relations with Germany, also felt the knock-on effects of the Nuremberg Laws. In 1936–8, its anti-Semitic parties took advantage of the atmosphere to pressure the government to further restrict the rights and commercial and professional opportunities of Jews.⁴³

Jewish policy in Poland was soon taken out of Polish hands, however, as Germany and the other major revisionist power, the USSR, together applied the *coup de grâce* to the interwar international system by invasion and partition. The executioner's axe was the infamous Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of August 1939, which divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence, and secretly arranged for the partition of most

of the former Romanov and Habsburg land therein. The following months saw the Soviet annexation of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and eastern Poland, while Germany took western and central Poland up to approximately the line rejected by the Bolsheviks in the first Brest-Litovsk *Diktat* in 1918. The defeat of France in 1940 allowed Germany and the USSR to impose the reduction of Romania, as the USSR regained Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, while Germany's acolytes, Hungary and Bulgaria, retook northern Transylvania and southern Dobruja respectively. The USSR then invaded Finland to complete the restoration of the state's pre-Versailles borders. The revisionist empires had struck back.

Summary population engineering followed swiftly on these developments, sometimes in the form of formal population exchanges between the partitioning powers. Germany set to work re-ordering the population of Poland into strips of ethnically homogeneous territory by isolating the Jewish population in preparation for an as yet undefined 'final solution', systematically murdering the Polish political and social elite, and importing some ethnic Germans from the Soviet Empire. Some 128,000 western Poles were transferred into the Soviet zone in 1940, with Moscow's agreement, in return.⁴⁴ The USSR began its own form of demographic engineering, deporting up to 600,000 people from its areas of pre-1939 Poland to remove political opposition and class obstacles to Bolshevik rule. Other deportations from the Baltic States, Bessarabia and Bukovina were also assaults on 'class' and 'social' enemies, and were thus selective, if large, in scale.⁴⁵

Beyond Poland, a de facto population exchange occurred as some 100,000 Romanians were obliged to leave Hungarian northern Transylvania to 'make space' for a similar number who left Romanian southern Transylvania. Having learned the lessons of the border settlement and population exchange with Greece in the mid-1920s, Bulgaria followed up its successful territorial revisionism with the more formal 1940 exchange of 100,000 Romanians and 61,000 Bulgarians around the new Dobruja boundaries. Romania agreed as a way of limiting its own territorial losses.⁴⁶

The Dobruja episode gives us a clue about the dynamics of ethnic policy among Germany's allies. They are dynamics that we have encountered earlier in the shatterzones of the former dynastic empires: the desire to create demographic *faits accomplis* in newly-acquired territory – particularly territory to which some historical claim was made – to secure that territory for the future. The expulsion of minorities – and in the case of many Jews, their eventual murder – was made all the easier at these times of flux because the minority inhabitants of new

territories often did not possess citizenship of the titular nation, so there were few legal obstacles to their deportation, as well solidarity with them by other residents.

This pattern would characterize the behaviour of Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania regarding claims to disputed territory in the space created when Yugoslavia and Greece fell to Germany in April 1941 and then Germany invaded the USSR in June. The main goal was national consolidation and expansion. Hungarians, Bulgarians and Romanians only acquiesced in Nazi demographic goals when and insofar as it suited their nationalist agenda. Whatever the level of indigenous anti-Semitism, then, the specifically Jewish factor of ethnic policy was often of only secondary significance to the greater goal of national consolidation and expansion. So where Jews resided in contested areas, and where they were of foreign citizenship, they were particularly likely to suffer the most extreme of fates given the premium put by Germany on an increasingly radical and Europe-wide 'solution' to the Jewish question.

The outbreak of the German–Soviet war afforded Hungary the opportunity to expel Jews into the German-conquered Ukraine from the areas previously gained from Slovakia. While the Hungarians did not deport Jews from the areas they occupied in Yugoslavia, they did on occasion attack these Jews in a way that they did not domestically, as in the murder of thousands of Jews and Serbs in the city of Novi Sad in January 1942. Most Jews of Hungarian nationality living within the central Hungarian lands were relatively safe under Magyar rule.

Bulgaria did not deport Jews of Bulgarian nationality. In 1943, it did expel to German control, and subsequent death, more than 11,000 non-Bulgarian Jews from the Macedonian territories it had annexed from Yugoslavia and the Thracian territories taken from Greece in 1941 in its third bid to restore the San Stefano boundaries of 1878. At least as important for Bulgarian goals in these territories were the harsh policies enacted against Greeks and Macedonians. Like Hungary, Bulgaria was happy to exploit Jewish men for forced labour, and to expropriate Jews and remove them from key positions in the capital's economy: it deported some 20,000 from Sofia to the provinces during 1943. It should be reiterated that in 'old Bulgaria' – i.e. within the boundaries of post-1920 Hungary – ethnic domination rather than ethnic destruction motivated these expropriations, though the post-war Bulgarian regime was not distraught when most of the Bulgarian Jewish population left for Palestine. Jews of Hungarian nationality were not so fortunate, as German occupation from March 1944 co-opted part of the Hungarian administration, including some very willing Magyar ethnic-cleansers,

into yielding up more than 500,000, most to die at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Around 1,000 Romanies were likewise deported.⁴⁷

The Second World War chapter of Romania's national story began differently to those of Hungary or Bulgaria, but developed in a similar direction. Romania emerged from the conflict as the greatest murderer of Jews in absolute terms in Europe after Nazi Germany. 270,000 Jews under Romanian control, most of them non-Romanian citizens or at least not 'full' citizens, were killed or allowed to die in the region as a result of Romanian and German measures. Simultaneously, the vast majority of the Jewish population of the 'old' Romanian lands of Moldavia and Wallachia – around 375,000 people – survived the war because of a series of decisions made in Bucharest from the second half of 1942 onwards as the fortunes of war shifted decisively towards the Allies, and the Romanian regime decided that its treatment of Jews would be an important factor in how it was treated in the post-war settlement. Ultimately Romania defected to the Allied side in 1944.

Romanian Jewish policy was shaped by two factors. The first was the aforementioned desire to ethnically consolidate contested territory – the territory in question being Bessarabia and Bukovina, which had been lost to the USSR in 1939 and whose recovery was one of the prime stimuli to Romania joining the Axis. The second was an anti-Semitism that had intensified since separation from the Ottoman Empire, with Jewish immigration from Russia, the impact of the minorities clauses of 1878 that stirred up suspicion of relations between the Great Powers and the Romanian Jewish community, and then the Bolshevik revolution, which spurred belief in Judeo-Bolshevik links. The two factors came together as Romania retook Bessarabia and Bukovina, with its large Jewish community, from the Bolshevik state in 1941.

With Germany's more subordinate partners, Slovakia and Croatia, we have two polities that only came into existence in 1939 and 1941 respectively. Both were dependent on Germany, and in the Croatian case Italy as well, and yet both retained independence in many matters of internal policy, including ethnic policy. Both ultimately participated of their own volition in the Holocaust, though in very different ways. Even if no Jews were killed on Slovak soil, it became the first state outside of direct German control to agree to the deportation of its Jews. Some 59,000 people were deported, almost all to their deaths at Auschwitz. In the 'Independent State of Croatia', most of the remaining 32,000 Jewish victims were murdered in local concentration camps, and 7,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz.

If Romania murdered the largest absolute number of Jews beyond Germany, the Croatian Ustaša regime killed the largest number of Jews

relative to those under its control. And Jews were not even the main target. The regime killed nearly as many Romanies (28,000) as Jews; but the primary objects of Croatia's race laws and victims of racial murder were Serbs, depicted by the Ustaša as both inferior and oppressive when the boot had been on the other foot in the interwar years. The regime probably killed in the region of 330,000–390,000 Serbs in a genocidal policy designed to remove them entirely from a greater Croatia by massacre, forced dispersal and forced conversion to Catholicism.

The Ustaša was an unpopular imposition for much of the Croat population, for whom its rule brought little but instability and violence – for more opportunistic elements it brought much in the way of plunder from the regime's victims. In fact, the Ustaša was not a monolithic organization but rather a coalition of extremist Catholic nationalists whose agendas did not always cohere. The sheer brutality of their politics encouraged both armed resistance and responses in kind from Serbian royalist-nationalist partisans, the Četniks, who carried out revenge massacres of Croats, as well as killing some Jews and Muslims, particularly Albanians. Serbs also fell victim to atrocities by Bosnian Muslims, a number of whom formed their own *Waffen-SS* regiment. (In terms of absolute numbers, Muslims suffered fewer deaths than Croats, and many fewer than Serbs in wartime Yugoslavia.) Added to the mix were Tito's communist partisans, who fought the Četniks, Ustaša and German and Italian forces, thereby encouraging further the ruthless anti-insurgency violence of the main Axis powers. The situation was complicated further by the way the different factions fitted into the uneasy imperial cooperation of Germany and Italy: many Croat nationalists resented the loss of Dalmatia to Italy, and actively undermined Italian authority in its zone; in turn, this activity encouraged the Italians to intensify contacts with the Četniks. The overall result was to turn 'Croatia' into a chaotic charnel house for much of the war, without any of the minimal internal stability that might be achieved by other allies of the Nazis.⁴⁸

Tiso's Catholic regime in Slovakia was somewhat more moderate. Its policy towards the Jews was to reverse the perceived ethnic hierarchy: whereas under Magyar and then Czech rule Jews had been the masters, they would now be made to serve the Slovak people. This discriminatory but not genocidal goal was to be achieved by legislation regulating social, economic and professional life. Without the input of the German policy advisor on the Jewish question, it is unlikely Slovakia would have deported its own Jewish nationals. Deportation to German control for supposed labour in Poland, as Germany portrayed it, was as much as anything a way of solving the self-created problem of the

immiseration of the Jewish population that was the logical result of economic Slovakization policy.

The non-combatant collaborator, France, presents an interesting variation on the theme. French administrators and police were heavily implicated in the German deportation of more than 56,000 non-French Jews (out of a total of around 135,000, mostly refugees from Germany or Eastern Europe), 8,000 French children of non-French Jews, 8,000 naturalized Jews, and 1,500 Jews born in Algeria. The zeal with which these people were rounded up by primarily French police and administrators has long and rightly held the attention of scholars of the subject. From the French perspective, this ruthlessness was a way of filling (sometimes overfilling) deportation quotas while not deporting Jews of 'true' French nationality. The motivations for the distinction were twofold: the now-familiar determination not to compromise national sovereignty and its prerogatives, and the less familiar aim of not agitating sympathetic Gentiles, of whom there were not a few, judging by the number of Jews who survived the war in hiding.

French deportation policies served to preserve in some form the contract between nation-state and citizen that the original French revolutionaries had bequeathed to the world, and simultaneously to illustrate the harsh logic of *any* nationalist morality, wherein the distinction between citizen and non-citizen was all-important. The point should not be pressed too far, though, for by 1944 Vichy Prime Minister Pierre Laval gave up even on the attempt to protect French Jews, when he had earlier done so quite vigorously. Nevertheless, the at least partial influence of the idea that 'fully French' Jews were as French as anybody else had the following statistical and human consequences: of a pre-war French Jewish population of 195,000, 16,500 French-Jewish citizens as formally defined, and 'only' 6,500 Jews born in France to French Jews, were passed into German hands and thus to their deaths.⁴⁹

The dynamics of Jewish persecution were different in each of the national cases outside the German Empire. In Serbia, for instance, (male) Jews and Roma were killed in 'reprisals' in significant part because it would upset the local population less than if Serbian men were killed. In France, pressure from Berlin to take a hardline stance against the killing of German soldiers intensified measures against Jews so that the military government in Paris could preserve its jurisdiction; but, again, foreign Jews were chosen because the local population would get less agitated.⁵⁰

Direct German rule in Eastern Europe contributed fulsomely to exacerbating inter-ethnic tensions by a policy of divide-and-rule. Like Italy, with its harbouring of Balkan terrorists, Germany had fostered

pre-war ties with the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which wrongly viewed Germany as the power most likely to pave the way to independent Ukrainian statehood in the face of Polish claims. The territory of Ukraine was transferred from Soviet to Nazi hands by the German invasion of June 1941, along with Belarus and the Baltic States to the north. The collaborators they provided in the Holocaust outnumbered the German personnel in these territories many times over. Ukrainian nationalist activists ended up as footsoldiers in the killing of 200,000 Volhynian Jews, almost the entire pre-war population. Many later went on, on their own account, to murder Poles.⁵¹

A broad spectrum of motives promoted collaboration in occupation and genocide. Beyond venal or mundane incentives – the quest, say, for loot, or the power status that an official capacity brought – additional motivations were provided in the East over those available in Western Europe: threat and compulsion, consistent with the German attitude towards the population as a whole. Independent indigenous policies of murdering Jews, however, tended to develop when the ‘Jewish question’ fitted into overlapping nationalist dynamics, which may explain why Belarus, with no strong nationalist tradition or movement, produced many collaborators but few pogroms outside of the more predominantly Polish western areas.⁵²

The other lands taken from the USSR had very divergent historical attitudes to their Jews. Lithuanian–Jewish relations were traditionally much more cordial than Ukrainian–Jewish ones, despite interwar ‘Lithuanianization’ policies. What the lands shared was more extensive nationalist sentiment than in Belarus. Furthermore, all had lost their independence at various points to the Soviet Union, as had the eastern territories of Poland in 1939, and they had experienced the privations, persecutions, deportations and summary economic re-ordering associated with Soviet rule and particularly the extremely violent Soviet withdrawal. In each instance, prior Soviet rule and its hardships were equated with the political ascendancy of Jews. Together, these factors suggest why, in June–July 1941, Latvia, Lithuania, ‘western Ukraine’ and parts of the northeast of Poland (most infamously the town of Jedwabne⁵³), experienced a wave of locally-organized massacres of Jews with the arrival of German forces. In Lithuania, massacres occurred even before German control was established.

On this logic, non-Jewish ethnicities could be made scapegoat for ethnonational humiliation as well, as committed nationalists and not a small number of ordinary civilians were equally prepared to vent their spleen. For independent Lithuania, as for Ukraine, Poland had been as great an imperial threat as the USSR. The most painful reminder

of historical Polish dominance was the larger Polish population in the historic 'Lithuanian' capital Vilnius, the city annexed by Poland in 1922. Though Vilnius also had a large Jewish population, which was instantly targeted by Germany and its Lithuanian auxiliaries, the Jews were not generally attacked on Lithuanian initiative in June 1941, in contrast to events in the other major Lithuanian city of Kaunas where 3,800 were murdered from 23–7 June. In Vilnius, it was the Polish population that was targeted according to a longstanding Lithuanian nationalist agenda. This attack took the form of some massacres, and many more evictions. Germany played its part, deporting many thousands of Poles for forced labour. The USSR deported the majority of the remaining Poles from Vilnius after the war.⁵⁴

What was true for Vilnius was true for the whole of the western Ukraine, which Poland had ruled and that still had a large Polish population. Notwithstanding the 12,000 or so Jews murdered in the area on local initiative, and the mutual Ukrainian–Moldavian violence of the Second World War, Polish–Ukrainian relations were much more important in the eyes of the OUN for the longer term prospects of a Ukrainian state. Indeed, there were large tracts of western Ukraine, such as Volhynia, where, despite the collaboration of thousands with the SS in the German final solution, anti-Semitism did not generally erupt into pogroms, but where Ukrainian anti-Polish violence reached terrible proportions (see below).

Nazi population policy itself possessed some of the spatial logic of the other mass murders and ethnic cleansings taking place simultaneously. Even the genocide of the Jews fitted the pattern up to a point. Hitler claimed to be a *Raumpolitiker*, a geopolitician, concerned with huge imperial spatial goals. He disdained so-called *Grenzpolitiker*, those ordinary politicians concerned with relatively minor border revision.⁵⁵ In fact, Nazi foreign policy contained both facets. The acquisition of Austria and the Sudetenland (1938), western Poland (1939), Alsace-Lorraine and Luxembourg (1940) and northern Slovenia (1941), all possessed aspects of a familiar ethnonationalist irredentism as pursued by a revisionist power. As Hitler put it in the *Reichstag* on the conquest of Poland, 'the most important task [is] ... a new order of ethnographic conditions, meaning a resettlement of the nationalities, so that at the conclusion of developments better boundaries result than is the case today'.⁵⁶ He also said this situation would provide the context in which to solve the 'Jewish question'. The other side of the coin of the implied ethnic cleansing programmes was the attempt to bring 'home' ethnic Germans in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The purified greater

Germany would serve as the core of the much larger *imperium* Hitler envisaged in the shatterzones of the Habsburg and Romanov empires.

Of course, Germany itself was also the object of extensive segregation and 'cleansing', according to the related rationales of ethnic homogeneity and the eugenic strength of the titular population. Mass enforced sterilization and greatly-reduced state expenditure on the mentally and severely physically ill were introduced immediately on the Nazi accession, and were followed by concentration camp incarceration of supposedly hereditary 'asocials', the 'workshy' and recidivists. German Romanies were sometimes attacked as 'asocials', as sociological and criminological categories blended ever-more closely with 'racial' ones. The abiding obsession with 'purity' within Germany meant that the official concern with the 'Gypsy plague' was particularly directed at 'miscegenation'; the Sinti were ultimately also subject to the Nuremberg racial laws of 1935. It would be different abroad: in Poland, Yugoslavia and particularly the USSR itinerant Roma and Sinti were murdered – in numbers probably reaching 200,000 – on the centuries-old canard that they were spies for the enemy.⁵⁷

Jewish policy was at the centre of the domestic German 'racial' agenda. The vigour with which it was pursued illustrates the blend of new biological racial thought about contamination with decades-old continent-wide concerns about Jews as political subversives, reinvigorated in Germany by the military defeat of the First World War and subsequent political instability, against a civilization-wide backdrop of religiously- and culturally-infused beliefs about the exploitative character of the Jews. With the conquest of Poland, and then the invasion of the USSR, the pattern and direction of persecution fundamentally changed from the familiar Central-Eastern European lines of internal segregation through stigmatization and forced emigration, along with many other aspects of Nazi population policy.⁵⁸

German expansion eastwards paved the way for new power constellations because the existing non-German elites and structures were, to one degree or another, removed. The Germans who profited from the power transfer were drawn from the ranks of the most radical elements: senior Nazi party men and their acolytes, and the SS. War also 'legitimized' more draconian measures against 'inner enemies' in both occupied and German territory, and provided cover and pretext for disposing of the human 'ballast' of the mentally ill. Some 90,000 would be murdered in the official T-4 euthanasia programme, with tens of thousands more perishing from starvation and decentralized murder campaigns, and in the child euthanasia programme and the housing drive

of the final war years. Inmates of asylums in the occupied east were generally murdered out of hand by the military as well as the SS.⁵⁹

Another consequence of territorial acquisition, particularly in the east where Hitler's ambitions lay, was that it encompassed more 'racial inferiors' and Jews, undermining earlier 'success' in 'cleansing' and 'securing' the Reich. The ambition and frustration of Nazi demographic designs both increased in direct relation to the growing scale of the population problems. After the consolidation of the newly-expanded German borders, the greater eastern empire was scheduled to be run in the longer term according to the principle of settler-colonialism, the most detailed and grim vision of which was laid out from 1940–2 by SS planners in the RKF in various versions of the *Generalplan Ost*, a design for a utopia of blood and soil. Its vision, to be implemented over the next twenty to thirty years, involved transplanting Reich Germans and members of related Nordic peoples, and deploying some local *Volksdeutsche*, all of whom would live in a neo-feudal system on farms and model villages interspersed with SS outposts along two main communication routes leading from the Reich to Leningrad and the Crimea respectively. Urban areas would be greatly reduced. The local populations that could not be incorporated were scheduled for expulsion in the number of scores of millions, except for a minority to be used as helots.⁶⁰ It is possible that mass sterilization would have been used to prevent the reproduction of huge parts of the Slavic peoples: such a prospect was certainly brought closer to reality when SS doctors began experimenting with new sterilization techniques in Auschwitz from July 1942.⁶¹

The practice of imperial rule differed from the theory, however. Even where the most extensive and enduring Germanization attempts occurred, in the annexed Polish areas, with hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans imported and hundreds of thousands of Poles deported, concessions had to be made to war labour needs, just as they did in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Further east, Himmler's colonial designs were stymied by wartime exigency, resource limitations, not least the number of eligible and willing ethnic Germans, and political opposition from within Alfred Rosenberg's civilian eastern ministry. Experiments with German settlements in the Crimea, western Lithuania, the Ukraine and the Lublin province in central Poland (the *Generalgouvernement*) were relatively small-scale affairs. Moreover, in the former Soviet territories the wartime 'settlement pearls' of *Volksdeutsche* and the *reichsdeutsch* mentors sent to improve their cultural consciousness proved inviting targets for partisan attack. The bulk of the settlement programme was scheduled to take place after a successful conclusion to the war anyway. The grander schemes were

put on ice – permanently, in the event – after the German defeat at Stalingrad when Hitler suspended all further planning.⁶²

Even many of the schemes for *wartime* exploitation of the east remained dead letters, given the primacy of changing wartime security and economic needs. Mercifully, one of the mooted designs put into abeyance was the starvation of many millions of urban Soviet civilians. By some estimates, thirty million or even more people would die to remove pressure on resources needed in the short and medium terms for Germany and the occupied areas. Pragmatism alone militated against the enactment of this aptly-named ‘Hungerplan’: the logistics and lack of manpower for sealing off whole urban areas from their agricultural hinterlands; and the recognition that the policy might lead to mass rebellion anyway.⁶³ Fears of arousing rebellion were also behind the postponement of various ideas floated in 1942–3 for the murder of Poles with tuberculosis, or of particular categories of elderly Poles and children.⁶⁴

The context of war made the occupation murderous in a different way. Like Japanese imperialism in Southeast Asia, German rule was geared to short-term hyper-exploitation in a conflict against enemies with greater natural resources and against a subject population seen as intrinsically inferior and hostile, which, in turn, ‘justified’ the most brutal ‘pacification measures’. The viciousness of criminal German war-making techniques frequently entailed massive, summary collective ‘reprisals’ against settlements suspected of harbouring partisans. Some 350,000 people died in Belarus alone in the ‘anti-partisan’ war, the vast majority of them civilians. Huge numbers – many millions – also perished as a result of major military operations, wartime privation and forced labour. The victims of more spatially limited *de jure* or *de facto* starvation policies than the general, abortive Hungerplan included the following: the populations of Athens, Kharkov and Kiev while under occupation; the population of Leningrad as it was besieged for two-and-a-half years, leading to perhaps one million deaths; Soviet POWs – ‘useless eaters’ – as they were incarcerated and died in numbers exceeding three million from summer 1941; children in Belarussian orphanages; and Jews, as they were isolated from the surrounding populations in closed ghettos in Poland from early 1940, a measure resulting in one in eleven of all Jewish deaths in the Holocaust.⁶⁵

After the conquest of Poland, it had still been temporarily possible for a few German Jews to flee westwards, but most of them, alongside all of the Polish Jews, were scheduled to be deported to the easternmost part of the German empire – which at that time was Lublin. Madagascar was temporarily considered as a destination for most of the continent’s Jews

after the defeat of France in 1940 seemed to pave the way for German domination. Ghettoization of the Jews occurred as a provisional measure as it became apparent that such mass population movement would not be logistically easy, particularly with the temporary priority given to the exchange of Poles (and some Slovenes and even Alsatians) for ethnic Germans up to spring 1941. With preparations for the invasion of the USSR, all population transfers were put on hold. The intention now was that after a summary victory, Europe's Jews would be pushed over the Ural 'border' between Europe and Asia, there to perish in a generation or two in the unforgiving lands of the Gulag archipelago to the north.⁶⁶

Mass murder of adult male Soviet Jews began immediately on the invasion, but the intention was not to wipe out all Jews, and the subsequent escalation of measures was not planned from the outset. The initial aim was simply decapitating the Jewish community and the 'Judeo-Bolshevik' state and pre-empting potential resistance. Almost simultaneously, the German military authorities in occupied Serbia also used Jewish and Romany men as hostages and murdered them in 'reprisal' for partisan action. This paranoid, racist security policy was intrinsically unstable and susceptible to radicalization.⁶⁷ In the USSR, the circle of victims rapidly expanded owing less to central orders than to the radical ethos of the SS-police forces and their open-ended remit, although SS chief Himmler frequently toured the Eastern Front to exhort his men to greater extremities, seizing the moment to entrench an SS order in the east.⁶⁸ The killing escalated yet further, and started to spread back westwards into civilian-controlled Poland, as the German plan for swift victory was foiled. Nevertheless, the transition to total murder was not linear and logical; in the words of one of Adolf Eichmann's subordinates, it 'did not take place from today to tomorrow, but gradually, and it only culminated in spring 1942'.⁶⁹ The idea of a Jewish reservation in the east only slowly metamorphosed from a real intention to a euphemism for murder in a death camp.

Moves from the occupation authorities rather than Berlin were still vital. Autumn 1941 saw the beginning of a series of local initiatives in annexed Poland and the *Generalgouvernement* to establish murder facilities using gas to dispose of indigenous ghettoized Jews who were too ill, young or old to work. Here, economic concerns acted in two directions: those incapable of work were murdered partly because they were seen as burdens; those capable of work were kept alive in the interests of the war economy until they were no longer physically useful. During spring 1942, the idea developed at both local and central levels of murdering outright Western and Central European Jews who were

deported into the space created by these horrific 'culls' developed during spring 1942.⁷⁰

The pressure for these 'culls' was intensified by the drive from the German *Gauleiter* to deport Jews to Poland from their areas, out of a combination of the ideological desire to become Jew-free (*Judenrein*), and to impress the *Führer* with their radicalism. The local authorities in Poland faced logistical problems because the ghettos were deliberately undersupplied with food, and so opted to murder any Polish Jews who could not work due to weakness or illness, thereby setting in train a dynamic of constant sifting of the Jewish population for murder.

Jews were the target of genocide – in terms of deliberately creating the conditions for mass death from environment and starvation – as soon as large reservation plans were discussed, from around September 1939. Jewish policy was the only policy against major population groups *in the occupied east* (though not necessarily in countries allied to German) that became ever more intensive irrespective of the circumstances. The key questions in assessing the development of the 'final solution', then, are: how extensive was this attrition was to be; which European Jewish populations it was to include (just *Ostjuden* or others too); and whether Jews were to be killed or simply allowed to die. Rather than a decision or series of decisions crystallizing as 'total, immediate genocide', the process was marked by the acceleration and radicalization of measures within an already tacitly genocidal mindset.⁷¹

The spatial setting of the planned Nazi eastern empire was significant for the murder of the Jews, most of whom lived within the eastern realms. While the 'final solution' clearly developed a fully continental ambition, the main thrust of murder was against the Jews around the old Tsarist Pale of Settlement, where Nazi rule was direct and the future Nazi empire was to be erected. This was the core and main object of the genocide, as shown by Himmler's repeated interventions in 1942 to accelerate the murder of the Polish Jews even as he was prepared to halt deportations from France.⁷²

The successes and failures of German military-imperial objectives shaped the practical parameters within which the developing policy could be pursued. But as Nazi extermination plans were at their most expansive, from spring 1942, the enthusiasm of Germany's allies for killing Jews dwindled alongside prospects of German victory, and so did Germany's ability to influence its allies. And while it is certain that, from some undefined point in early 1942, there was a clear central intention that almost every individual Jew (and certainly every community) under German control would be murdered immediately or after labour exploitation, there were also European Jews that the Nazis

would find it difficult to reach. Tens and hundreds of thousands of them dwelled in the major and minor Axis allied states ('old Romania' and 'old Bulgaria'), and in states, like France, in which Germany exercised huge influence. In other words, not a few were actually within grasp *had* the Nazis been prepared (as they were not, contrary to the popular view) to compromise the war effort to reach them.

The point is not disproven by the horrors following the German invasion of Hungary (and Slovakia) in 1944, as 438,000 Jews were deported in six weeks, mostly to their deaths at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Of course, it was inevitable on the invasion that the SS's Reich Security Head Office would kill as many Hungarian Jews as they could, but the prospect of deporting Jews was not a significant factor in the decision to invade. Invasion was instead to prevent the Hungarian leadership making peace with the Allies. The German attitude towards Hungary and its Jewish question was different to that regarding, say, the French and Danish Jewish questions. There, the Jewish issue had never been associated with defection to the other side, merely greater non-compliance among the French and Danish people. Hungary had already wobbled, and now Germany pressured the Hungarian government into action to prove its allegiance to Germany.⁷³

The delicate balance of alliance politics was about to shift again, with Romania's defection to the Allied side on 23 August. Not only did the consequent German troop redeployments remove the railway capacity for further deportation of Jews, Germany could not push the Jewish question for fear that Hungary might follow Romania's example. As it was, Hungary actually took the opportunity to re-emphasize its commitment to Germany because it now saw the opportunity to gain territory at Romania's expense. On 25 August, in tune with the mood in Budapest, Himmler strictly forbade further deportations. (The gas chambers of Auschwitz found employment in August, however: all of the remaining 2,900 inhabitants of the Romany enclosure were murdered there.)

New imperial forms in the Second World War era: II: the USSR

The Soviet Union was the other revisionist empire that asserted itself against the West and international order. After abandoning the dream of world revolution in the 1920s, its leaders, above all Stalin, determined to construct 'socialism in one country' and construct an autarkic economy that could hold out against the West.

Born of revolution, Bolshevik elites were possessed by a political imaginary that divided the population into loyal and dangerous elements, an intensification of the Tsarist military mentality of distinguishing between reliable and unreliable national minorities, especially in border areas. The experience of the civil war substantially formed the Bolshevik habitus. Henceforth, not only was insurgency to be repressed, as it was with the 'Decossackisation of the Don' in 1919, but it was to be prevented by actively removing (perceived) enemy elements, usually called bandits or kulaks.⁷⁴ Some 25,000 people were executed when Soviet authorities systematically 'filtered' the population after the war. This state of hyper-vigilance was compounded by the Bolshevik perception that it was in a state of latent warfare with Western powers. In this regard, modernizing the economy was of paramount importance. This aim entailed addressing the food supply, which had been a cause of crisis, including widespread famine accounting for millions of lives, during the civil war. Indeed, the Antonov rebellion in 1921 had been triggered by Bolshevik forced requisitioning of grain. In particular, the Bolsheviks, whose powerbase was in urban centres, distrusted the peasantry, which constituted the overwhelming proportion of the population that had benefited from the subdivision of large private estates after 1918. It was intolerable that such a 'reactionary' social class – especially its richer strata, the kulaks – should control such a strategic asset, especially in view of their 'backward' farming techniques. The solution was to rapidly industrialize and to 'liquidate' the kulak control of agriculture.

The aim of the first five-year plan, instituted in 1928, was rapid industrialization, financed by capital generated from exploitation of the farming sector. But artificially depressing prices sparked resistance among the peasantry, which withheld goods from the market, reminding Bolsheviks of the city's vulnerability to the countryside during the famines of the civil war. Stalin responded in late 1929 by ordering the sudden and coercive collectivization of agriculture. These measures also met with fierce resistance, and the secret police recorded almost 23,000 'terrorist acts' – attributed to kulak sabotage – for 1929 and 1930. Consequently, the Bolsheviks sentenced over 20,000 people to death in 1930 and deported 1.8 million kulaks in that year and the next, though many only within their own region. Their labour was to be exploited in forced industrialization and some were used for colonization of the Russian interior. As food production plummeted, forced confiscation of grain and other foodstuffs exacerbated the crisis in the countryside and led to widespread famine.

Worse still was the famine of 1931–3, which some observers, particularly Ukrainian nationalists, consider a genocidal contrivance rather than the unintended consequence of a misguided policy – though intense debate remains around the question. In Ukraine, as well as the North Caucasus grain-growing region, Stalin intensified the requisitions in the summer of 1932, and may have done so in part to break the back of secessionist movements among Ukrainian communists, incensed as he was by what he regarded as the ‘war of sabotage, a war to the death against Soviet power’.⁷⁵ The military and police forces were stationed to prevent Ukrainian and North Caucasian peasants leaving their areas, fating them to starvation. At least 2.6 million Ukrainians died from hunger – of the between five and six million Soviet famine fatalities over all – and nearly 100,000 were incarcerated for resisting the forced requisitions.⁷⁶

If the main priority of Soviet repression until 1933 had been class warfare, namely, eliminating kulaks (actually a synonym for any social refractory element), after 1933 national security concerns led the Bolsheviks to suspect national groups living in sensitive border areas of engaging in espionage and potential sabotage. The Ukrainian famine provides the transition, as Soviet policy was also driven by anxieties about cross-border influence from Poland, which contained a large Ukrainian population. Class and national criteria overlapped. 60,000 Kuban Cossacks were deported for failing to meet grain quotas.⁷⁷ Now the priority was ‘cleansing and making secure frontier regions’.⁷⁸ As a multi-national empire, the Soviet Union contained innumerable minority nations related to co-nationals on the other side of the border, especially Finns, Germans, Baltic peoples and Koreans, who, it was feared, would be instrumentalized by foreign powers against the Soviet Union.

The first of the ‘national operations’ began in 1935 with the establishment of a 7.5km ‘forbidden border zone’ in the west in which no one was permitted to live. German and Polish citizens of the USSR were disproportionately resettled. Even though deportations entailed moving tens of thousands of peoples into interior territories like Kazakhstan, they were not total at this point, except for the Koreans, who were feared to be potential supporters of Japanese imperialism in the far east, and who were ‘administratively resettled’ in 1937 into the interior.

These campaigns just preceded the Great Terror of 1937–8, which cracked down on ‘counter-revolutionary’ activities by a process of ‘social purification’ of ‘foreign’ (political refugees from abroad or anyone with a suspicious foreign link) or ‘socially-harmful’ (class) elements like former Tsarist officials, white officers, clergy and so forth. Of

the 1.5 million people arrested then, 800,000 were executed but they should not be confused with the inner-communist purges that led to far fewer deaths than usually supposed.⁷⁹

Suspicion of smaller, non-Russian nationalities in border areas increased dramatically after the invasion by the German army in mid-1941. At least 750,000 ethnic Germans were summarily deported to the east. The small Muslim nations of the North Caucasus also bore the brunt of Soviet security concerns. Accused of collaborating with the retreating German army in 1943, entire peoples were branded as enemy nations who were to be punished 'in perpetuity' by banishment. Herded into cattle cars after their villages were raided by Soviet security and military forces in the winter of 1943–4, a million people, comprising Chechens, Ingush, Kalmuks, Crimean Tatars, Karachais and others, were sent off to far-flung corners of the Soviet Empire. Certainly, the violence with which they were carried out – at points NKVD troops who could not deliver their human cargo to the railway depots stuffed them in barns and burned them down – and the systematic and coordinated campaign marked a level of intensified brutality and ruthlessness, even by Soviet standards. Large numbers died under conditions of transit and some at particularly inhospitable destinations, which not all destinations were (some went to Siberia, many to Central Asia).⁸⁰ Finally, as political circumstances changed – the war ended and, most importantly, De-Stalinization arrived – deportations could be reversed, as was the case with most of the 'punished peoples' in the 1950s, though notably not the Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks nor, less surprisingly, the Volga Germans. The traumatic memories of the 'punished peoples' about their experienced nurtured resentments that would explode in Russian faces in the 1990s, as we will see below.

The violent roots of post-war peace: expelling Germans – and others

The Bolshevik treatment of the ethnic Germans leads us to the wider plight of ethnic Germans in Central Europe at the end of the Second World War. Considering that episode shows, first, the scale of the *continuing* unweaving and homogenization process even after Hitler's Holocaust. Second, it illustrates the contingent interaction of the unweaving with the prevailing international environment and power constellation – in this case, Great Powers prepared to countenance mass ethnic cleansing as a swift route to international stability and German containment. After both world wars, the Allies desired a Germany restricted in territory and eastern influence, but this aim was increasingly seen as

impossible so long as the *restrictive boundaries imposed by the Allies in their own interests* placed large ethnic German populations *outside* Germany. Since Germany was not allowed to expand, the ethnic Germans had to be removed. This narrative should give pause to those who contend the ethnic Germans were expelled solely because of their complicity in Nazi rule. (Many *were* complicit, and more benefited, though many also suffered because of Nazi demographic engineering.) Although the fact and nature of Nazi rule were the catalyst for the expulsion, and made it more violent than it might otherwise have been, reason for the expulsions, in which at least 500,000 ethnic Germans perished, was the geopolitical calculations of the victorious Great Powers.⁸¹ If the fourth wave of political violence in Europe that we identify during the Cold War elsewhere in this volume did not extend to genocide and ethnic cleansing, that is in substantial measure because so much blood had already been shed at the conclusion of the Second World War.

In many states ethnic Germans were seen before the war as just as problematic as any minority on the basis of their 'difference' and, relatedly, of their economic roles in some places. (Even in Czechoslovakia, which deserves some credit for trying to make multi-ethnicity work in the interwar period, ethnic Germans there were still tellingly defined as a minority despite outnumbering Slovaks.) The eviction of more than 200,000 ethnic Germans from Hungary from 1945, conducted by many of the same Hungarian personnel who had helped deport Jews in 1944, had been envisaged as early as 1934 by the then regent Admiral Miklós Horthy as part of a reciprocal exchange, and had been discussed with the Nazis during the war.⁸² Hungary also used the end of the war to divest itself of some of its Slovaks, and the 'favour' was returned.

As to Poland, one might contend that the eviction was only the last and largest chapter in a battle begun in the 1870s over ethno-political identity in what were now Poland's western borderlands. It is hard to imagine many Polish nationalists mourning the loss of their ethnic Germans through expulsion (or that of their Jews through murder). Indeed, the nationalist organizations that sprang up in reaction to Imperial German cultural policies were instrumental in the eviction of the Germans.⁸³

What the Polish nationalists did mourn was the loss of up to three million ethnic Poles under Soviet and German rule in 1939–45, and many thousands more in one of the lesser known tales of ethnic violence in the Second World War era: the Polish–Ukrainian conflict that emerged over the longstanding issue of dominance in the old Habsburg–Romanov border territories. From early 1943, a 'homogenization' process had been conducted on the changing Polish–Ukrainian borders in

Volhynia and eastern Galicia by local participants at first, though with heavy Soviet involvement at the war's end. Poles were the chief victims during the war itself, though many Ukrainians acted according to the memory of Warsaw's policy during Poland's interwar rule over the western Ukraine.⁸⁴ The prediction on which the OUN's policy of ethnic pre-emption was based was that, if Germany were defeated, Poland would look to re-expand to its pre-war boundaries, with all the usual consequences for Ukrainian national identity. Such was precisely the plan of the Polish 'Home Army'. From later in 1943 through to the end of the world war, mutual violence, on a scale similar to that dubbed genocide in the Yugoslav disintegration of the 1990s, resulted in up to 100,000 deaths in the two communities and some 1.4 million expulsions.⁸⁵

The post-war communist Warsaw regime used internal deportation westward as its means of dispersing the remnant of Ukrainians, the easier to assimilate them. The overall result was the forcible resettlement of some 94 per cent of Poles in what became Soviet Ukraine and 95 per cent of Ukrainians in what became Poland. With the additional loss to the USSR of areas of heavy Lithuanian and Belorussian population in the east from 1945, the Polish population became almost entirely ethnically Polish, where pre-war Poland had been about one-third non-Polish. Millions of these Poles in turn were internal refugees from the now-Soviet east, and many of them found accommodation in the properties vacated by Poland's ethnic Germans.

The Central European trope of troublesome minorities extended to the Balkans. Greek nationalists during the civil war (1946–9) justified their assault on dissident Macedonians by labelling them 'Sudetens of the Balkans'.⁸⁶ Some 150,000 'Pomaks' were also ushered out of Bulgaria at the end of the war alongside other non-Bulgarian Christian Slavs. In the ensuing years, in another former Ottoman province, Palestine, which was the recipient, *inter alia*, of an influx of Bulgarian Jewish immigrants, the nascent Israeli state 'cleansed' the lands of 700,000 Arabs and went on to deny them the UN-authorized right to return. In and around Palestine, Arab Muslims objected not only to the influx of a European population, but to the unprecedented imposition of Jews as rulers of Muslims. Within Yugoslavia, in Fiume/Rijeka (which Italy had taken in 1924), Dalmatia (occupied by Italy during the Second World War) and Istria (allocated to Italy in 1919), 200,000 or more Italians fled a calculated campaign of terror and subsequent discrimination in 1945–60, at the outset of which up to 10,000 were killed by locals or by Marshal Tito's partisan forces, which were also responsible for revenge killings of Germans, Hungarians and Croatian militia members.

The fifth violent wave: the unweaving continued in Yugoslavia and the Caucasus

The demise of the Soviet Union brought with it the final unravelling of empire in the long twentieth century. As former republics of the Union held elections in the early 1990s, the lure of nationalist populism was too great to resist for many politicians, including former communists, in their search for votes. In fact, appeals to ethnic nationalism had been gathering steam in the 1980s as the attraction of communism diminished. As so often in the shatterzones of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, the nation-state was imagined as culturally homogeneous, and minorities as a problem to be managed: hopefully assimilated, but potentially expelled. A feature of post-imperial politics was not only the aspiration of independence for formerly 'subject' peoples, but also irredentism: the incorporation, into an enlarged state, of co-nationals who were minorities in neighbouring countries, a phenomenon that so destabilized interwar Europe. Intervening militarily in adjacent states to 'protect' co-nationals became a common practice in the Balkans and Caucasus after 1990, as well.

As in the first half of the twentieth century, the interests of the Great Powers – now institutionalized in the UN's Security Council – set the parameters of peacemaking by taking sides and supporting, or not supporting, particular peace initiatives. In the post-imperial dynamics of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and in the Caucasus, ethnic cleansing and genocidal massacres became the policy option of aggrandizing states as well as of members of minorities that wanted to join them. But if such practices were the product of initiatives from above as well as below, they were only imaginable by the restructuring and internationalization of political space after the unravelling of the multi-national Soviet polity.

Yugoslavia was itself a miniature empire of sorts, a multi-ethnic/national polity run until 1980 by a de facto emperor, the former partisan leader Josip Broz Tito, who ensured that the interests of its constituent peoples – Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Muslims, Montenegrins and Albanians – were roughly balanced. A structural characteristic of the Yugoslavian state was that it basically organized along ethnolinguistic lines – the names of the republics reflected the names of some of the constituent peoples, though all republics contained variable mixtures – while Bosnia-Herzegovina in the middle comprised most of these peoples, despite the fact that in constitutional terms the 'constituent peoples' there were only the Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, and Croats. Kosovo, a Serbian province in the south, was about 90 per cent

Albanian. But while the seeds of secession were arguably planted in the constitution of the country, they were nurtured by the unresolved traumas of the Second World War. Here were historical grievances that had been ignored rather than worked through during the superficially harmonious post-war years under Tito.

After Tito's death in 1980, when the presidency was to be rotated among the provinces, economic stagnation led to disaffection with and within the ruling communist party. Communist leaders began to pitch for 'their' republic in federal wrangling. Serbian leaders resented the fact that their numerical domination could not be directly translated into favourable national policy, and that a third of Serbs lived as minorities in other provinces. Perhaps above all, they chafed at the autonomy Tito had granted to Kosovo, where the Serbian minority complained of Albanian oppression. Major intellectuals even decried a demographic genocide in Kosovo, imagined as the cradle of the Serbian nation since its heroic defeat by Ottoman forces 600 years earlier. Croatia and Slovenia complained about having to financially subsidize the poorer south and began to regard the federation as a vehicle of Serbian domination, much as Croats had in the run-up to the Second World War.

With the first free elections in 1990, nationalist parties in Slovenia and Croatia won sufficient votes to push for independence. Inevitably, however, matching political borders precisely with ethnic homogeneity was impossible. Wherever Serbs became a minority in a secessionist state, such as in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Yugoslav army (JNA) – effectively a tool of the Serbian province – invaded or supported local Serb militias to incorporate the territory into a 'Greater Serbia'. Because Slovenia had no significant Serb minority – only 2 per cent of the population – its secession in June 1991 only provoked a half-hearted invasion by the JNA. The situation could not be resolved so easily in Croatia, which proclaimed independence on the same day. Serbs, who comprised some 12 per cent of its population – about 600,000 – living in Slavonia in the east and in Krajina, which bordered Bosnia, understandably feared for their well-being after the election as president of Franjo Tudjman, a revisionist historian who downplayed Serbian victims of the Ustaša and revived the symbolism from the fascist period.

As the crisis unfolded, the JNA swiftly overran the Serb-dominated areas with the cooperation of Serbian irregulars, while Croatians who had resided with Serb neighbours took to the road with whatever belongings they could carry. In Vukovar in eastern Slavonia, Serbs slaughtered 260 Croatian men. The atrocities and refugee crises of the Yugoslav wars had begun.

Croatia was effectively partitioned with the declaration, in August 1991, of the independent republic of Krajina, comprising a third of the country. A ceasefire was brokered by the UN in January 1992 and 14,000 UN troops were stationed to keep the uneasy peace. This state of affairs obtained until 1995 when Croatian forces, with the approval and support of the United States, attacked them and drove out the Serbs, replete with atrocities, leading now to hundreds of thousands of refugees who headed east into Serb-controlled northern Bosnia. The international seal of approval on the secession of Croatia and Slovenia was given by German recognition of the new states, an example to be emulated.

If the logics were repeated in Bosnia, events were far more complex there, partly because of its demographic mosaic – 44% Muslim, 31% Serb, 17% Croat, the remaining 5% ‘Yugoslav’, Jews and Roma – but also because of the autonomy, ruthlessness and strength of ethnic militias or irregulars, especially the Bosnian Serbs led by Radovan Karadzic. Often comprising local thugs or, in the Serbian case, criminals imported from Belgrade, these irregulars conducted the most violent and brutal ethnic cleansings, clearing out villages of ‘enemy’ nationalities by murdering men, raping women and terrorizing the rest to flee.

The situation was disastrous for the Bosnian Muslims, assailed by Serbs on the one side and Croats on the other. Tudjman and Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic wanted to partition the territory between them, and Tudjman was more anti-Muslim than the Ustaša had been. While all sides engaged in ethnic cleansing, the most successful were the Bosnian Serbs who, with JNA assistance, eventually controlled 70 per cent of Bosnian territory and declared a ‘Serbian Republic’. Bosnian resistance was hampered by a UN arms embargo that starved them of weaponry. Evicted from their homes, hundreds of thousands of Bosnians crowded into the few areas controlled by their government.

The European Community (as it was then known), the UN, the United States and Russia differed on how to solve the crises. Russia sympathized with the Serbs, their Orthodox co-religionists, and Britain and France were anxious not to isolate Serbia lest Russia become actively involved. What is more, ‘taking sides’ would endanger UN peace-keepers, who were trying unsuccessfully to keep the peace. Economic sanctions against Serbia were the lowest common denominator of international agreement.

Peace initiatives, such as the Vance-Owen plan of January 1993, which aimed to maintain a unitary state divided into autonomous ethnic regions, were rejected by the Bosnian Serbs who had no incentive to relinquish their territorial gains. Increasingly frustrated, the

United States unsuccessfully advocated air strikes against Serb positions – though a no-fly zone policy was agreed to – but clever diplomacy eventually changed the military calculus. Inducing Tudjman to ally Croatians with the Bosnians, Serbs were pushed eastwards during 1994 and 1995 while, as mentioned above, the Serbs of Krajina and Slavonia were ethnically cleansed with effective US approval in 1995. Milosevic saw the futility of persevering in the face of the new alliances arrayed against him, and agreed to the Dayton Accord of November 1995. It evenly split Bosnia between a Serbian Republic and a Muslim-Croat Federation, although, as before, the Bosnian Serbs refused to compromise.

Despite this diplomatic success, the UN's record in the conflicts displayed the usual patterns of Great Power rivalry, preventing decisive 'humanitarian intervention' and shows of strength to protect civilians. The most dismal example was the shocking massacre of some 8,000 Muslim men and boys by Bosnian Serb forces in Srebrenica in July 1995, a supposed UN safe area guarded by only 600 lightly-armed Dutch troops who surrendered the civilians to their fate. The women and children were bussed out of the area and, as usual, the Muslim cultural presence was destroyed.

The massacre hardened Western opinion against Serbia and led to the approval of US air strikes against the Serb positions shelling Sarajevo, another a development that also pushed Milosevic to negotiate. But Great Power involvement should not just be conceived in its humanitarian intervention modality. As throughout the twentieth century, Great Powers did often take sides to influence military outcomes, and ethnic cleansing could occur in the midst of ensuing campaigns, as the 160,000 Serbs who fled Krajina in August 1995 discovered.

The tension in Kosovo persisted, despite the 'resolution' in Bosnia. To give the 10 per cent minority of Serbs the upper hand there, Milosevic had ended Kosovo's autonomy in 1989 and, predictably, Serb repression provoked an Albanian resistance movement, which radicalized in 1996 with the foundation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). European and NATO disquiet about the fighting and civilian massacres culminated in peace negotiations in Rambouillet, France, in 1999, which Serbia rejected because the western plan foresaw the possible secession of Kosovo and stationing of NATO troops. In late March that year, NATO began an aerial bombing campaign to force Milosevic to withdraw his forces. In this case, the 'humanitarian intervention' actually precipitated ethnic cleansing, as Milosevic used the chaos to carry out large-scale expulsions, accompanied by massacres, of Kosovo Albanians, many hundreds of thousands of whom made for

the Macedonian and Albanian borders. Eventually, the NATO bombing of military targets and civilian infrastructure, including in Serbia itself, took its toll and the Serbian military campaign was called off on 10 June, leading to the reflux of Albanian refugees and expulsion of Serbs and Roma, as the KLA moved from partly terroristic resistance to co-author of de facto ethnic cleansing. Now only some 5 per cent of Kosovars are Serbs, living in a few armed enclaves. With UN and European Union support, the province effectively seceded from Serbia in 2008, much to the chagrin of Russia.

As might be expected, Russia resisted the breakup of the multi-national polity that it dominated. Although it could not prevent Georgian independence in 1990, it could destabilize the new country by supporting the minorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which had enjoyed autonomy in the Soviet Union. The Muslims of Abkhazia on the Black Sea coast and South Ossetia now feared domination by Georgians when the new state asserted its sovereignty. Separatists in Abkhazia waged war with Georgian ethnic militias and government forces in 1992 and 1993, while ethnic Armenians and Russians supported the Abkazi, who constitute a minority in their own country. When the separatists captured the capital, Sukhumi, in September 1993, they expelled some 200,000 ethnic Georgians. Although unofficially supporting the Abkazis, the Russian government dispensed humanitarian aid – and arms – to all sides.

The same pattern of events occurred in South Ossetia in 1991, with tens of thousands of civilians from both sides fleeing the civil war, and only threatened Russian intervention led to an uneasy peace a year later. Tensions mounted thereafter, as Russia consolidated the de facto South Ossetian independence from Georgia, which never relinquished its sovereign claim. In August 2008, Georgian forces shelled the capital Tskhinvali, killing Russian peacekeepers, upon which Russian divisions invaded South Ossetia and cleared out the Georgian troops. Both sides accused one another of ethnic cleansing, even genocide, as civilians in their control zones were expelled. South Ossetian authorities did not want to allow Georgians, who comprised about 30 per cent of the population, to return, because they intended their co-nationals, who languished as refugees in Ingushetia in the north, to return in their stead. The rulers of South Ossetia indicated that they would like the state to be absorbed by their Russian rescuers rather than be a persecuted minority in a Georgian state. If Kosovo can be severed from Serbia because it is overwhelmingly Albanian, so South Ossetia can secede from Georgia, Russian authorities argued.⁸⁷ Like the Serbs in Kosovo, the violent Georgian assertion of its sovereignty over a separatist

province backfired, leading not only to the expulsion of its co-nationals but the loss of the province.

A similar proposition applied to Chechnya, a tiny Muslim country in the North Caucasus, when it declared independence in November 1991. The successor state of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation (formed in 1993), refused to accept this secession, as the multi-national state could not afford such a precedent, and 25 per cent of the Chechen and Ingush population were ethnic Russians. The desire for independence was fuelled by memories of the Soviet treatment of the Chechens in the Second World War, but also during the Russian conquest of the mountainous region between the 1830 and 1850s. The Russian invasion in 1994 was interpreted by nationalist Chechens as a 'third genocide', mainly due to the very high level of civilian casualties – between 30,000 and 90,000 out of a population of 700,000 – as Russian forces shelled and bombed the capital, Grosny, and other urban areas. Surprisingly, the Chechen guerrilla resistance wore down the Russians, who withdrew in 1996, but the Islamist takeover of the Chechnya and incursion into neighbouring Dagestan in 1999 provoked a renewed Russian invasion. With unrelenting severity, the Russian army mounted a counter-insurgency campaign that included the 'filtering' of the population to isolate and kill resistance fighters, a policy that led to indiscriminate torture and murder of thousands of civilians, 200,000 of whom fled, mainly to neighbouring Ingushetia, which remained within the Russian Federation.

The Ingushi, likewise a tiny Muslim minority, hoped that their loyalty would be rewarded with the return of their historical Prigorodnyi District, which was incorporated into North Ossetia after their deportation in 1944. With democratic freedom, Ingushis in North Ossetia sought the return of their properties, occupied by Christian North Ossetians but also now by tens of thousands of South Ossetians who had fled Georgian oppression. Ingush attacks in 1992 culminated in a week-long war in early November in which 60,000 Ingushis were cleansed by Ossetian police and paramilitaries, with Russian military assistance. Again, a violent campaign to redress a demographic balance or perceived historical injustice only compounded the injury.

Conclusions: continuous themes

It is often said that genocide is a matter of killing people simply because of their human identity. Yet in many cases, *where* the victims lived (and what they owned) was vital to heightening the salience of *who* they were. Where territory was contested – either recently acquired or liable

to be lost – then people not belonging to the titular national group of the state in question were at particular peril. Muslims in Serbia ‘proper’ were usually left untouched even as Serbian forces and Bosnian Serbs murdered and expelled Bosnian Muslims. Armenians stood a greater chance of survival if they lived in the western parts (and particularly the western cities) of the Ottoman Empire than the eastern provinces, which the CUP realized were most likely to fall to Russian military advance and post-war Great Power partition. The life chances of Jews in Bulgaria or Romania in the Second World War were largely determined by the length of time their dwelling places had been under Sofia’s and Bucharest’s control respectively.

The matter of location tells us much about the political calculus underpinning genocide and ethnic cleansing. The targeted groups clearly suffered because of their ethnic difference, but this does not mean that in all cases the perpetrators were convinced of the inherent and irredeemable enmity of the victim populations in their entirety. At crucial points, collective ‘reprisal’ measures against populations that included some political activist enemies or guerilla fighters was simply more expeditious than a prolonged and uncertain battle for hearts and minds. But in a world where other states and peoples were also playing the irredentism card, collective measures in sensitive border areas could also result from the fear (or the observation) that one’s opponent was using the population in question collectively as a wedge for *its* policies. French ‘civic nationalists’ in interwar Alsace might be driven to acting identically to ‘ethnic nationalists’ in measures of forced assimilation simply by their fear of the loyalty of other Alsatians to Germany. The Soviet authorities considered nationalism to be a social construction and in principle rejected it outright (even while at times supporting cultural diversity), but still deported entire national populations from the state’s peripheries because of paranoia or vengefulness about the putatively collectively disloyal sentiments of those populations. Whatever the variety of governing ideologies and constitutional make-ups in Europe’s state system, every state was prepared to sacrifice population groups in the interests of internal security, uniformity of purpose and territorial integrity.

The international community – the Great Powers in their successive constellations – was (and remains) generally more tolerant of state brutality against subject populations to maintain existing borders. Where those borders seem particularly unstable or indefensible, localized wars of secession were permitted in the interests of a more stable future, even though ethnic cleansing of the weaker group in the new state was likely. As a general principle, irredentism was to be opposed because it

transgressed boundaries previously agreed by the power constellation and always brought the risk of more general war by upsetting regional power orders. The international community has explicitly or tacitly sanctioned ethnic cleansing in contested territory where that is thought likely to reduce the risk of future war by removing irredentism through removing the people used to substantiate the claim. The community may claim, as it periodically has done, that sanctioning ethnic cleansing ('population transfer') is a last resort to forestall still greater evils and that, at least under its watchful eye, the removal of peoples will be conducted less violently than otherwise.

While no doubt Western statesmen at successive peace conferences have persuaded themselves of the truth of their words, there are good reasons to question a neat distinction between internationally-sanctioned, controlled ethnic exchanges or transfers in the name of peace, and ethnic cleansing perpetrated unilaterally by regimes seeking to create demographic *faits accomplis* in their own narrow interests. First, people rarely emigrate without reason: after all, the Versailles peacemakers had stipulated that minority inhabitants of the post-1918 states should leave within a year if they were discontented with the new dispensation; yet most remained in place and remained discontented. Some violence is required *pour encourager les autres*, as proved to be the case initially against Germans in Poland and Czechoslovakia and, almost simultaneously, on 'partition' in India and in Palestine. The second reason is that international endorsement of ethnic cleansing effectively endorses the belief that ethnic homogeneity corresponding to national borders is necessary for peace. The idea of 'exchange' as a diplomatic solution of last resort encourages nationalists (like the KLA) who wish it as a point of political principle. It serves as a precedent for what leaders can hope to achieve at the negotiating table if they are sufficiently brutal or intransigent to make it seem the only remaining option.⁸⁸

The accumulated tensions outlined in the previous two paragraphs are best illustrated by concrete examples. Many of the Hungarian bureaucrats involved in deporting Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz amid the expressions of Allied outrage in 1944 were the very same people involved in expelling ethnic Hungarian Germans to Germany at the war's end with Allied sanction. The Lausanne precedent upon which Winston Churchill seized to justify the mass expulsion of the ethnic Germans was not only embraced by Italian and German fascists and nationalists of the Second World War era; the Vance-Owen plan bore some of its imprint. We can also see its active embrace by some of the architects of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. In

1991, the Croatian nationalist Anto Valenta published *The Division of Bosnia and the Struggle for Unity*, which advocated a Lausanne-like exchange of hundreds of thousands of people in various directions in order to create more homogeneous Croat, Serb and Muslim 'regions' from the former Socialist Yugoslavian Republic. His ideas were put into practice by Croatian paramilitaries in May 1993 as he advised Mario Cerkez, the commander of the Croatian Defence Council's Vitez brigade, about the ethnic cleansing of Muslims.⁸⁹ Lausanne was praised particularly highly at the time by Shükrü Kaya, who oversaw the Muslim–Orthodox population exchange from within the Turkish Interior Ministry. He had been a section chief within the Interior Ministry during the earlier world war, whence he orchestrated the deportation to their deaths of the Ottoman Armenians. After Lausanne, and as Interior Minister in the 1930s, he strategized the internal deportation of Kurds from eastern Anatolia, a 'pacification' process of an unruly periphery that also entailed the massacre of tens of thousands of resisters by the military. From his view, a perfectly consistent set of policies, namely the removal of the Christian Armenians and 'Greeks', and the forced assimilation of the more ethnically-related Kurds, met with very different reactions from the outside world, from outrage in the Armenian case to endorsement in the Greek case to studied indifference to the internal actions of a non-expansionist sovereign state in the Kurdish case.⁹⁰

Because it was not limited to particular territories, the murder of European Jewry by Nazi Germany provides something of an exception to these general observable 'rules' about patterns and logics of violence. The lesser significance of geography in the Jewish case was partly due to the dispersion of the Jews, partly to the particular patterns of (Christian) European anti-Semitism that attributed clandestine, conspiratorial power to Jews precisely because of their lack of territorially-situated 'normalcy'. (But it is telling that the other major stateless minority, the Roma and Sinti, were also widely targeted by Nazi Germany, and only a little less systematically.) In this view, while Jews could be the instruments of, say, the British, Americans, Russians and the Bolsheviks, they could also be the puppet-masters.

The exceptional transnational quality of the 'final solution' is only partial, however, and again for two reasons. First, until its final and most unrestrained phase, the 'final solution' was paralleled and shaped by more common forms of ethnic violence, such as expulsion and the murder of elites and adult males. Only as murder within German-controlled territory became total in its aims was there a part reversal of the general, gendered pattern of violence in genocide, as some men were

temporarily kept alive over women and children for labour purposes. Second, to say that geography was of less significance is not to say it had no significance. The Holocaust was not perpetrated with equal vigour across the whole of Europe, though the somewhat contingent murder of the Hungarian Jews in 1944 gives the impression that it was. The main focus of Germany's destructive endeavours were the lands that it sought to incorporate directly into the 'greater Reich' and the lands that were to be ruled as its eastern empire.

The gradual development of the 'final solution' reminds us that categories like genocide and ethnic cleansing are only distinct in hindsight, and even then the categorizations can conceal as much as they reveal. The 'final solution' began as ethnic cleansing and developed into genocide; the Armenian 'Aghet' was a genocide that was conducted pursuant to an ethnic cleansing agenda. Other instances of ethnic cleansing might well have developed into genocide had they not been immediately successful. The dynamics of Soviet ethnic cleansing – where, however violent the authorities themselves could be, local bystander populations were often forcibly demobilized – were very different to the dynamics of ethnic cleansing at various points in the Balkans and Anatolia, where bystanders were often encouraged to participate, from Kurds in the vicinity of Armenian deportation convoys to Serbian tourists joining the besiegers of Sarajevo to take pot-shots at the Muslim inhabitants.

The general structure of perpetration varied according to a number of criteria: the infrastructure of the perpetrating state; the level of control the state had over its peripheries and any occupied territories; the legitimacy that the perpetrating regime enjoyed within its own state and society; and the immediate context of the act, be it in a warzone, during peacetime, or in the netherworld of military or colonial rule. Rather than general categorizations like industrial genocide or bureaucratic genocide or – worse still – modern genocide, it is more analytically useful to imagine each of the cases we have touched upon as possessing a different blend of technology, administrative sophistication, and breadth of state–society complicity. The blend of these characteristics could also vary across place and over time within any given genocide, which serves as another reminder that such episodes are better viewed as protean processes than unitary, predetermined events.

Where a regime had a monopoly on state power, as in the USSR, it was perfectly possible to rely on state employees alone to conduct mass murder and ethnic cleansing. The same was true of the Nazi regime that, additionally, had greater popular legitimacy than the Soviet

Communist Party. However, since Germany murdered many more people directly than the USSR, the core German perpetrating agencies (the SS and police) sometimes needed to rely on auxiliaries from Eastern Europe for some of the 'dirtiest work'. The motivation of those auxiliaries varied from local forms of anti-Semitism, through prospect of material gain, to fear of their overlords, since more draconian discipline was imposed on collaborators than on German units, which were expected to operate according to established norms of police and military discipline. In both the German and Soviet bureaucracies, many rather non-ideological administrators contributed to the dynamics of genocide and their own career advancement simultaneously, simply by accepting the regimes' targeting of particular groups as a given and working out how best to forward the targeting process. Conversely, when a regime did not have full or certain control over its state machinery and majority population, as was the case with the Ottoman CUP and at points in Yugoslavia, proportionately more genocidal tasks were contracted out to irregular forces. Paramilitaries with strong ideological links to the political leaders of genocide, along with violent criminals specially recruited for their brutal tasks and motivated often by ordinary criminal and/or material motives, filled the gaps in the machinery of destruction, while their presence intimidated parts of the wider population into silence or quiescence and generally aided the process of social polarization.⁹¹

Within the matrix of motivations and incentives, sexual violence fulfils an important position, and one that has only latterly been accorded much attention. The Holocaust is again a partial exception to a general rule, because the Nazi laws on 'racial shame' strictly forbade 'miscegenation' with Jews, and accordingly rendered all sexual relations illegal. Nevertheless, the very fact that the SS had repeatedly to issue reminders on this score suggests that some of its members transgressed, as undoubtedly did ordinary Germans with forced Eastern European labourers; besides, there are well-documented instances of rape by German soldiers and SS men of non-Jewish 'racial inferiors' and concentration camp inmates (in camp 'brothels').

As with any assessment of causation in genocide, an analysis of sexual violence should distinguish between the overall genocidal 'logic' and the motivation of any given individual perpetrator. At the individual level, sexual violence, and the variable combination of physical excitement and exultation in temporary power that it brings, may be more of a motivation for involvement than any deep 'hatred' of the group to which the victim belongs. At the structural level, sexual violence and bodily mutilation, particularly against women (though it is frequently also

directed at younger men), furthers the purposes of genocide by striking at the most literal embodiment of the means of human, and therefore group, reproduction. Impalement of women through the vagina, often after rape, is a repeated occurrence while, across an equally wide variety of cultures and huge tracts of time, pregnant women have become targets for specific forms of violence such as disembowelment, as the unborn child is ostentatiously murdered along with its mother.

Impregnation is rarely the primary intent of rape, but the very act of ‘colonizing’ the female body brings with it a possibility of forcing the woman into conceiving a child of different ‘blood’. Sexual slavery, which was the fate of many Armenian women, was a means to forcibly assimilate not just the women but any offspring into Islamic society. But we are dealing with much more than an act of purely political calculation. The symbolism of rape is at least as important, as the language of rape as ‘invasion’ illustrates. As the chauvinistic logic goes, rape illustrates the impotence of the males within the group to protect their most vulnerable members, striking at the ‘honour’ of those men along with that of ‘their’ women, turning the former away from the latter, and thus weakening bonds of group solidarity.

Where personal motivation and structural logic come together is in those instances of enthusiastic abuse and murder that feature in every genocide, when individual participants find a route to active expression of their communal identity by harming ‘others’. More common at the individual level, however, was participation according to some other more local or mundane motivation, such as – depending on the organizational structures involved – fear, conformity, obedience or the prospect of self-enrichment.

In some instances, particular population groups did prove disproportionately to be vectors of violence. Principal among these were refugees, who had been victimized in one state only to call for revenge when finding refuge amongst their ethnic brethren in a neighbouring state (as with Caucasian and Balkan Muslim expellees who went on to attack Ottoman Christians in 1913–23). Second were the communities that remained as minorities in the lands of their birth: not only could they be used as the objects of propaganda for expansionists, but their leaderships could develop embattled, aggressive-defensive mentalities that made them potential allies in mass crime (as with ethnic Germans in Eastern Europe). But the importance in some cases of what Michael Mann calls social ‘key constituencies’ like these should not lead us to conclude on the general demotic appeal of mass violence against stigmatized groups, or that the *principal* drive for violence came from the societal level. After all, even in Yugoslavia of the early 1990s (that is to

say a place with living memories of the most extreme inter-ethnic violence), many Serbian mothers kept their sons from enlisting in the JNA, while the Albanian 'President' of Kosovo, Ibrahim Rugova, contrived to lead a genuinely grassroots campaign of non-violent resistance against Milosevic.⁹²

There were some midpoints between obviously statist violence and more purely societal violence. Polish-Ukrainian massacres at the end of the Second World War, or the general violence in eastern Anatolia in the second half of the First World War, or during the Russian civil war, all occurred when state authority was more or less absent. In the bilateral and often multilateral nature of these conflicts, the predominantly one-sided killing that we (stereo-)typically associate with genocide was *not* the pattern. The state was clearly not necessary for colossal anti-civilian violence. And yet it is also true that many of the militias and armed forces participating in the conflicts pre-dated the collapse into anarchy, and their leaderships had often had significant political, military or paramilitary roles beforehand, too. Meanwhile, in each of these instances, the social and ethnic cleavages along which mass violence was perpetrated had been agitated by previous state policy, not to mention interstate war. Ryan Gingeras and Gyanendra Pandey have established in the western Anatolian and Indian contexts respectively that 'communal' mass mobilization in fact results from prior state intervention 'since it is the state that gives significance to the geographical and social characteristics of given territory ... Even the notion of "minorities" or "majorities" within a specific political or geographical space is subject to the categories and constructs of the state'.⁹³ Relatedly, the social polarization occurring during the periods of anarchy was as much the result as the cause of multilateral conflict, since, without the protection that a state framework can provide (for someone on the right side of it), aligning with one or other armed movement was a prerequisite for self-preservation as the most radical elements on all sides set the political tone.

For states, which were the primary arbiters of mass political violence in our period and place, eruption of populations did not just serve the function of 'protecting' the perpetrating polity from allegedly immediate danger. Then, as now, genocidal violence could also help consolidate the ringleaders' control of the state by coercing, compromising and otherwise co-implicating other social and functional elites. Finally, it can help impose a monolithic identity onto wider society by the annihilation of 'others', disciplining the people for future struggles in a world of hostile forces.⁹⁴ Extreme as genocide and ethnic cleansing are, they are *one* logical expression of the drive that had earlier sought

to minimize localism, regionalism and heterogeneity even in the vernacular of the titular peoples, changing 'peasants into Frenchmen' and Anatolian Sunnis into Turks, by way of creating the critical mass of demographic strength necessary to repel and expand.⁹⁵ It was states, rather than people, that were incapable of tolerating plural identities at these crucial points of their development.