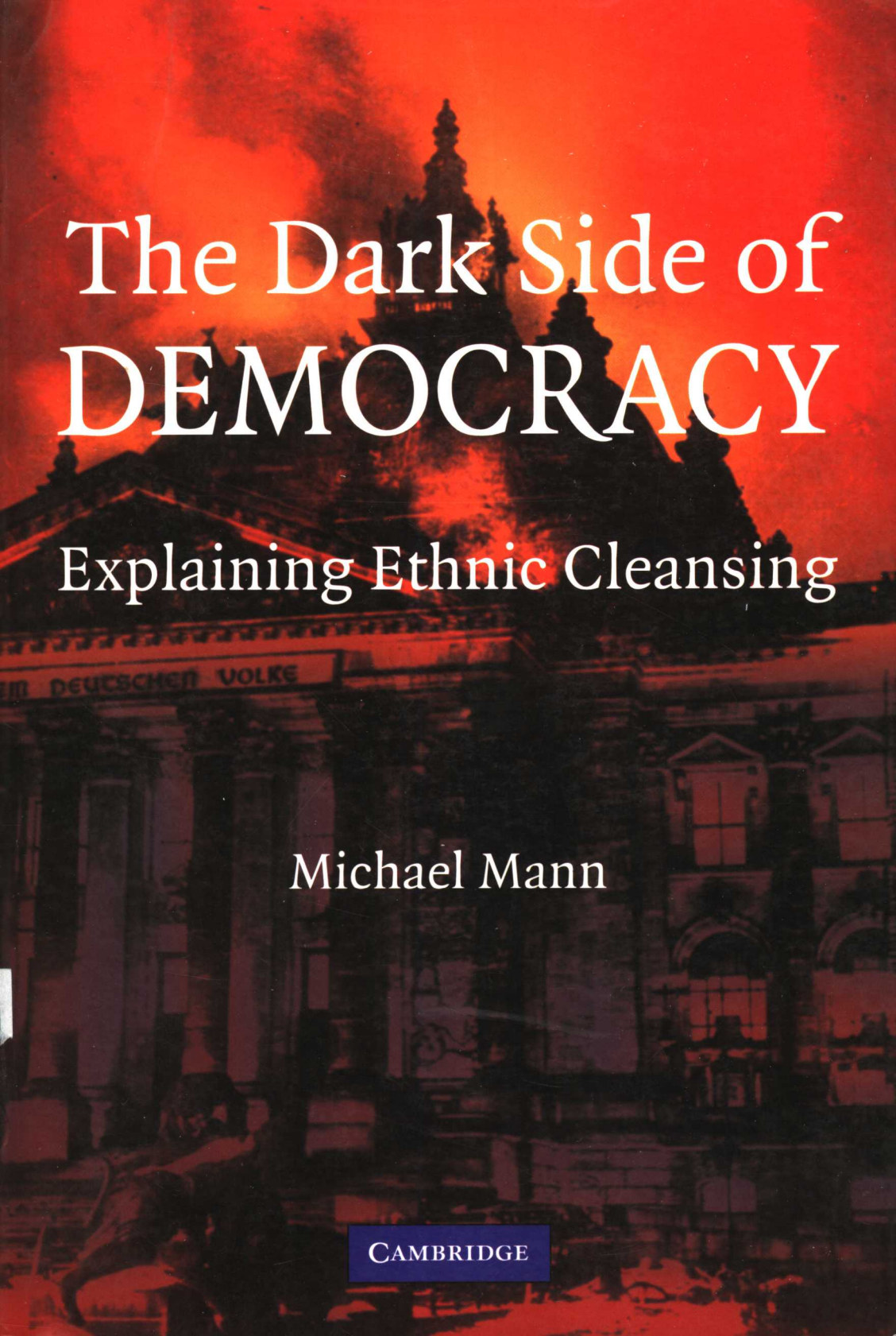
The Dark Side of
DEMOCRACY
Explaining Ethnic Cleansing
Michael Mann
CAMBRIDGE

The Dark Side of Democracy

Explaining Ethnic Cleansing

MICHAEL MANN
University of California, Los Angeles

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

First published 2005

Printed in the United States of America

Typeface Sabon 10/12 pt. *System* LaTeX 2ε [TB]

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Mann, Michael, 1942–
The dark side of democracy : explaining ethnic cleansing / Michael Mann.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-521-83130-X – ISBN 0-521-53854-8 (pb.)
1. Political atrocities. 2. Genocide. 3. State-sponsored terrorism. 4. Ethnicity – Political aspects. 5. Democracy – Moral and ethical aspects. I. Title.
HV6322.M36 2004
304.6'63 – dc22

2004045626

ISBN 0 521 83130 X hardback
ISBN 0 521 53854 8 paperback

The Dark Side of Democracy

This book presents a new theory of ethnic cleansing based on the most terrible cases – colonial genocides, Armenia, the Nazi Holocaust, Cambodia, Yugoslavia, and Rwanda – and cases of lesser violence – early modern Europe, contemporary India, and Indonesia. Murderous cleansing is modern – it is "the dark side of democracy." It results where the *demos* (democracy) is confused with the *ethnos* (the ethnic group). Danger arises where two rival ethnonational movements each claims "its own" state over the same territory. Conflict escalates where either the weaker side fights rather than submit because of aid from outside or the stronger side believes it can deploy sudden, overwhelming force. But the state must also be factionalized and radicalized by external pressures like wars. Premeditation is rare, since perpetrators feel "forced" into escalation when their milder plans are frustrated. Escalation is not simply the work of "evil elites" or "primitive peoples." It results from complex interactions among leaders, militants, and "core constituencies" of ethnonationalism. Understanding this complex process helps us devise policies to avoid ethnic cleansing in the future.

Michael Mann is a professor of sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is author of *The Sources of Social Power* (Cambridge, 1986, 1993) and *Fascists* (Cambridge, 2004).

Advance praise for *The Dark Side of Democracy*...

"Michael Mann is a purveyor of big ideas, and this big book is full of them, brilliant, powerful, and provocative. Starting from its title, *The Dark Side of Democracy* launches a debate that will reshape our understanding of the worst of human history in the light of the best, and of the ancient in the light of the modern. Mann combines close empirical insights with a magisterial conceptual grasp. Every page offers points to applaud, dispute, and reflect on. We will be arguing about this work for years, and whatever conclusions we reach will be sharper for it."

– Ben Kiernan, Director, Genocide Studies Program, Yale University

"One of our most distinguished political analysts has turned his attention to the darkest corners of political life, to murderous ethnic conflict. As sketched in this superb book, Mann's account of such cases is timely, provocative – who, for instance, would want to believe that ethnic cleansing bears the imprint of democracy – and ultimately persuasive. A must, if disturbing, read."

– Doug McAdam, Department of Sociology, Stanford University

"Michael Mann's new book is sweeping in its coverage and daring in its argumentation. Its central theme – that murderous ethnic cleansing has accompanied the rise of salvation religion and modern democracy – flies in the face of some broadly held assumptions, namely, that such extreme actions can be explained by recrudescent ancient hatreds or the cynical manipulation of authoritarian elites. Well-researched and compellingly written, this is one of the best recent books on the subject available today."

– Beth A. Simmons, Harvard University

Preface

Since my previous work had neglected the extremes of human behavior, I had not thought much about good and evil. Like most people, I had tended to keep them in entirely separate categories from each other as well as from ordinary life. Having studied ethnic cleansing, I am now not so sure. Though I am not attempting here to morally blur good and evil, in the real world they are connected. Evil does not arrive from outside of our civilization, from a separate realm we are tempted to call "primitive." Evil is generated by civilization itself.

Consider the words of three prominent historical figures. We tend to think of President Thomas Jefferson as embodying Enlightened reason. Indeed, it was in the name of the advance of civilization that he declared that the "barbarities" of the native American Indians "justified extermination." A century later, President Theodore Roosevelt, a decent modern man, agreed, saying of the Indians, "extermination was as ultimately beneficial as it was inevitable." Forty years on, a third leader said, "It is the curse of greatness that it must step over dead bodies to create new life." This was SS Chief Heinrich Himmler, who is rightly considered as the personification of evil. Yet he and his colleague Adolf Hitler said they were only following in the Americans' footsteps. As I will argue here, murderous ethnic cleansing has been a central problem of our civilization, our modernity, our conceptions of progress, and our attempts to introduce democracy. It is our dark side. As we will see, perpetrators of ethnic cleansing do not descend among us as a separate species of evildoers. They are created by conflicts central to modernity that involve unexpected escalations and frustrations during which individuals are forced into a series of more particular moral choices. Some eventually choose paths that they know will produce terrible results. We can denounce them, but it is just as important to understand why they did it. And the rest of us (including myself) can breathe a sigh of relief that we ourselves have not been forced into such choices, for many of us would also fail them. The proposition underlying this book is that murderous ethnic cleansing comes from our civilization and from people, most of whom have been not unlike ourselves.

In trying to understand them, I owe debts to many. This is mainly a work of secondary analysis, depending on the primary work of others. My research

is at the dismal end of a terrible subject matter, focusing on perpetrators, not on heroic resisters or even dignified victims. I can only admire many of my sources – the fortitude of survivors who bore witness to the horrors they experienced, the bystanders who carefully described what they saw, those who contributed to independent reports and judicial courts of inquiry, and those scholars who have dedicated their careers to comprehending what happened.

I have received much stimulation over the last few years from the Sawyer Seminars on Mass Violence held at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, California. My thanks go to Norman Naimark, Ron Suny, Stephen Steadman, and Bob Zajonc, my co-organizers, to Doug McAdam, the director of the Center, and to all the Seminar's students and visiting speakers. They have all contributed intellectually to this book.

I owe a more particular debt to Hilmar Kaiser for inspiring me with his brilliant yet passionate scholarship on the Armenian genocide. I also thank Raymond Kévorkian for his kindness in giving me his major unpublished manuscript and Ödul Bozkurt for her translations from the Turkish. For help on the Nazi genocides I thank Ian Kershaw and Michael Burleigh for authoritative research guidance, Christopher Browning and George Browder for criticisms of an earlier manuscript, and Martin Tahany for German translations and Peter Stamatov for Magyar translations. Mark Lupher provided helpful criticisms of an earlier draft on Communist cleansings. Aleksandra Milicevic often corrected my outsider's ignorance of the Balkans, and I was privileged to discuss with Scott Straus his remarkable research in Rwanda. Patricia Ahmed helped me collect materials on India and Indonesia. I also thank David Laitin for his vigorous and helpful criticisms of my central arguments, though I fear my amendments will still not have satisfied him. UCLA provided me with generous research funds and talented students (I have named four of them here). As always, John Hall has given general intellectual encouragement, while Nicky and Louise Hart and Gareth and Laura Mann kept me sane amid such a disturbing research project.

Los Angeles, December 2003

Contents

1

The Argument

74-year-old Batisha Hoxha was sitting in her kitchen with her 77-year-old husband, Izet, staying warm by the stove. They had heard explosions but did not realize that Serbian troops had already entered the town. The next thing she knew, five or six soldiers had burst through the front door and were demanding "Where are your children?"

The soldiers began beating Izet, "so hard that he fell to the floor," she said. While they were kicking him, the soldiers demanded money and information on the whereabouts of the couple's sons. Then, while Izet was still on the floor looking up at them, they killed him. "They shot him three times in the chest," recalled Batisha. With her husband dying before her, the soldiers pulled the wedding ring off her finger.

"I can still feel the pain," she said. They fired shots . . . and finally they kicked Batisha and a 10-year-old boy who was staying with them and told them to get out.

"I was not even outside the gate when they burned it." . . . Her husband's body was in the flames. In that moment she was paralyzed. She was standing on the street in the rain with no house, no husband, no possessions but the clothes she was wearing. Finally, strangers passed in a tractor and bundled her into their wagon. Batisha's daughter later found her in a refugee camp in northern Albania.

Looking tenderly at her one photograph of herself and Izet, Batisha murmurs: "Nobody understands what we have seen and what we have suffered. Only God knows."[1]

This is how murderous ethnic cleansing was wreaked on one household in the village of Belanica in Kosovo in the very last year of the 20th century. The perpetrators were Serbs, using murder and mayhem to terrify the local Albanians into flight. Then the land could be occupied by Serbs, as was "our historic right," they said. Now the Kosovo boot is on the other foot. Since 1999 Albanians have been kicking out Serbs. Kosovo is now cleansed, not of Albanians but of almost all its Serbs.

Change the names of the people and places and the incident could have occurred almost anywhere in the world over the past few centuries – in

[1] We know too – thanks to *Los Angeles Times* reporter John Daniszewski, whose graphic report on Belanica appeared on April 25, 1999.

Australia, Indonesia, India, Russia, Germany, Ireland, the United States, Brazil. Ethnic cleansing is one of the main evils of modern times. We now know that the Holocaust of the Jews – though unique in important ways – is not unique as a case of genocide. The world's genocides remain thankfully few, but they are flanked by more numerous cases of less severe but nonetheless murderous cleansing.

This book offers an explanation of such terrible atrocities. For the sake of clarity, I lay it out up front now, in the form of eight general theses. These proceed from the very general to the particular, from the macro to the micro, successively adding parts of an overall explanation. I hope to prove these in the course of the book by examining in detail the very worst cases of cleansing, those that have involved mass murder.

1. My first thesis concerns the broad historical era in which murderous cleansing became common. *Murderous cleansing is modern, because it is the dark side of democracy.* Let me make clear at the outset that I do not claim that democracies routinely commit murderous cleansing. Very few have done so. Nor do I reject democracy as an ideal – I endorse that ideal. Yet democracy has always carried with it the possibility that the majority might tyrannize minorities, and this possibility carries more ominous consequences in certain types of multiethnic environments.

This thesis has two parts, concerning modernity and democracy. Ethnic cleansing is essentially modern. Though not unknown in previous history (and probably common among the very small groups who dominated prehistory), it became more frequent and deadly in modern times. The 20th-century death toll through ethnic conflict amounted to somewhere over 70 million, dwarfing that of previous centuries. Additionally, conventional warfare increasingly targeted entire peoples as the enemy. Whereas civilians accounted for less than 10 percent of deaths in World War I, they rocketed to over half in World War II and to somewhat above 80 percent in wars fought in the 1990s. Civil wars, mostly ethnic in nature, were now taking over from interstate wars as the main killers. Perhaps 20 million have died in them, though it is impossible to be precise (figures have been hazarded by Chesterman, 2001: 2; Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Gurr, 1993, 2000; Harff, 2003; Markusen & Kopf, 1995: 27–34).

Ethnic and religious conflicts continue to simmer as I write in 2003 – in Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Algeria, Turkey, Israel, Iraq, Chechnya, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Burma, Tibet, Chinese Xinjiang, Fiji, the southern Philippines, various islands of Indonesia, Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, the Sudan, Somalia, Senegal, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi. Over half of these cases involve substantial killing. As you read these words, one ethnic crisis probably will be exploding into violence on your television screen or newspaper, while several other explosions will not

be deemed newsworthy. The 20th century was bad enough. Perhaps the 21st will be even worse.

The mayhem committed on September 11, 2001, and the "war against terrorism" that it triggered, have imprinted the horror of murderous ethnic and religious strife on the consciousness of the entire world. It has especially struck home in the prosperous countries of the North, shielded from such things over the past half-century. Neither the attack of September 11 nor the retaliatory attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq had as their intent ethnic cleansing, but they promptly became entwined with ethnic-religious conflicts involving cleansing between Israelis and Palestinians, Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims, Iraqis and Kurds, Russians and Chechens, Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus, and various Afghan tribes. In fact, some seem to be leading by the nose the foreign policies of the Great Powers.

Thus, unfortunately for us, murderous ethnic cleansing is not primitive or alien. It belongs to our own civilization and to us. Most say this is due to the rise of nationalism in the world, and this is true. But nationalism becomes very dangerous only when it is politicized, when it represents the perversion of modern aspirations to democracy in the nation-state. Democracy means rule by the people. But in modern times *the people* has come to mean two things. The first is what the Greeks meant by their word *demos*. This means the ordinary people, the mass of the population. So democracy is rule by the ordinary people, the masses. But in our civilization the people also means "nation" or another Greek term, *ethnos*, an ethnic group – a people that shares a common culture and sense of heritage, distinct from other peoples. But if the people is to rule in its own nation-state, and if the people is defined in ethnic terms, then its ethnic unity may outweigh the kind of citizen diversity that is central to democracy. If such a people is to rule, what is to happen to those of different ethnicity? Answers have often been unpleasant – especially when one ethnic group forms a majority, for then it can rule "democratically" but also tyrannically. As Wimmer (2002) argues, modernity is structured by ethnic and nationalist principles because the institutions of citizenship, democracy, and welfare are tied to ethnic and national forms of exclusion. I concede that some other features of modernity play more subsidiary roles in the upsurge of cleansing. We will see that some modern professional militaries have been tempted toward wars of annihilation of the enemy, while modern ideologies like fascism and communism have been similarly ruthless. But underlying all this is the notion that the enemy to be annihilated is a whole people.

I clarify this first thesis with some subtheses.

1a. Murderous ethnic cleansing is a hazard of the age of democracy since amid multiethnicity the ideal of rule by the people began to entwine the *demos* with the dominant *ethnos*, generating organic conceptions of the nation and the state that encouraged the cleansing of minorities. Later, socialist

ideals of democracy also became perverted as the *demos* became entwined with the term *proletariat*, the working class, creating pressures to cleanse other classes. These have been the most general ways in which democratic ideals were transmuted into murderous cleansing.

1b. In modern colonies, settler democracies in certain contexts have been truly murderous, more so than more authoritarian colonial governments. The more settlers controlled colonial institutions, the more murderous the cleansing. This will be demonstrated in Chapter 4. It is the most direct relationship I have found between democratic regimes and mass murder.

1c. Regimes newly embarked upon democratization are more likely to commit murderous ethnic cleansing than are stable authoritarian regimes (Chua, 2004, also makes this argument). When authoritarian regimes weaken in multiethnic environments, *demos* and *ethnos* are most likely to become entwined. In contrast, stable authoritarian regimes in such contexts tend to govern by divide-and-rule. This leads them to seek to balance the demands of powerful groups, including ethnic ones. However, a few highly authoritarian regimes deviate. They mobilize majoritarian groups into a mass party-state mobilizing the people against "enemy" minorities. The Nazi and Communist regimes discussed in Chapters 7–11 were dictatorships, not democracies, though they did emerge out of would-be democratizing contexts, which they then exploited. They mobilized the people as *ethnos* or proletariat. They are partial exceptions to this subthesis.

1d. Stably institutionalized democracies are less likely than either democratizing or authoritarian regimes to commit murderous cleansing. They have entrenched not only elections and rule by the majority, but also constitutional guarantees for minorities. But their past was not so virtuous. Most of them committed sufficient ethnic cleansing to produce an essentially mono-ethnic citizen body in the present. In their past, cleansing and democratization proceeded hand in hand. Liberal democracies were built on top of ethnic cleansing, though outside of the colonies this took the form of institutionalized coercion, not mass murder.

1e. Regimes that are actually perpetrating murderous cleansing are never democratic, since that would be a contradiction in terms. These subtheses therefore apply beforehand, to the earlier phases of escalation of ethnic conflict. Indeed, as escalation proceeds, all perpetrating regimes become less and less democratic. The dark side of democracy is the perversion through time of either liberal or socialist ideals of democracy.

In view of these complex relations, we will not find any simple overall relationship in the world today between democracy and ethnic cleansing – as Fearon and Laitin (2003) confirm in their quantitative study of recent civil (mostly ethnic) wars. But mine is not a static comparative analysis. It is historical and dynamic: murderous cleansing has been moving across the world as it has modernized and democratized. Its past lay mainly among Europeans, who invented the democratic nation-state. The countries

inhabited by Europeans are now safely democratic, but most have also been ethnically cleansed (as in thesis 1d). Now the epicenter of cleansing has moved into the South of the world. Unless humanity takes evasive action, it will continue to spread until democracies – hopefully, not ethnically cleansed ones – rule the world. Then it will ease. But if we wish to ease it more quickly from the world, we now have to face squarely up to the dark side of democracy.

2. *Ethnic hostility rises where ethnicity trumps class as the main form of social stratification, in the process capturing and channeling classlike sentiments toward ethnonationalism.* Cleansing was rare in the past because most big historic societies were class-divided. Aristocracies or other small oligarchies dominated them, and they rarely shared a common culture or ethnic identity with the common people. In fact they despised the people, often considering them barely human. The people did not exist across class lines – class trumped ethnicity.

Even the first modern societies were dominated by the politics of class. Liberal representative states first emerged as a way of compromising class conflict, giving them a plural sense of people and nation. They tolerated some ethnic diversity. But where the modern struggle for democracy involved a whole people struggling against rulers defined as foreign, an ethnic sense of the people arose, often capturing class resentments. The people was seen as a proletarian nation asserting fundamental democratic rights against upper-class imperial nations, which retorted that they were bringing civilization to their backward peoples. Today the Palestinian cause is decidedly proletarian in its tone, seeing its oppressor as an exploiting and colonial Israel – backed up by American imperialism – while Israelis and Americans claim they are defending civilization against primitive terrorists. The arguments are similar to those of class enemies of former times.

Ethnic differences entwine with other social differences – especially of class, region, and gender. Ethnonationalism is strongest where it can capture other senses of exploitation. The most serious defect of recent writing on ethnonationalism has been its almost complete neglect of class relations (as in Brubaker, 1996; Hutchinson, 1994; Smith, 2001). Others wrongly see class as materialistic, ethnicity as emotional (Connor, 1994: 144–64; Horowitz, 1985: 105–35). This simply inverts the defect of previous generations of writers who believed that class conflict dominated while ignoring ethnicity. Now the reverse is true, and not only among scholars. Our media are dominated by ethnic strife while largely ignoring class struggles. Yet in actuality these two types of conflict infuse each other. Palestinians, Dayaks, Hutus, and so on believe they are being materially exploited. Bolsheviks and Maoists believed that landlord and Kulak classes were exploiting the nation. To neglect either ethnicity or class is mistaken. Sometimes one or the other may come to dominate, but this will involve the capturing and channeling of the other. The same can be said of gender and regional sentiments.

Indeed, murderous cleansing does not occur among rival ethnic groups who are separate but equal. Mere difference is not enough to generate much conflict. It is not Christians against Muslims that causes problems, but contexts in which Muslims feel oppressed by Christians (or vice versa). If South Africa had actually lived up to its own apartheid claim to produce separate but equal development of the races, Africans would not have revolted. They revolted because apartheid was a sham, involving racial exploitation of Africans by whites. For serious ethnic conflict to develop, one ethnic group must be seen as exploiting the other. And in turn, the imperial oppressor will react in righteous outrage against the threat of having its "civilization" overwhelmed by "primitivism" – just as upper classes do when threatened with revolution.

3. *The danger zone of murderous cleansing is reached when (a) movements claiming to represent two fairly old ethnic groups both lay claim to their own state over all or part of the same territory and (b) this claim seems to them to have substantial legitimacy and some plausible chance of being implemented.* Almost all dangerous cases are bi-ethnic ones, where both groups are quite powerful and where rival claims to political sovereignty are laid on top of quite old senses of ethnic difference – though not on what are generally called *ancient hatreds*. Ethnic differences are worsened to serious hatreds, and to dangerous levels of cleansing, by persistent rival claims to political sovereignty. I characteristically identify four major sources of power in societies: ideological, economic, military, and political. Murderous ethnic conflict concerns primarily *political power relations*, though as it develops it also involves ideological, economic, and finally military power relations too. Mine is essentially a political explanation of ethnic cleansing.

4. *The brink of murderous cleansing is reached when one of two alternative scenarios plays out. (4a). The less powerful side is bolstered to fight rather than to submit* (for submission reduces the deadliness of the conflict) *by believing that aid will be forthcoming from outside* – usually from a neighboring state, perhaps its ethnic homeland state (as in Brubaker's, 1996, model). In this scenario both sides are laying political claim to the same territory, and both believe they have the resources to achieve it. This was so in the Yugoslav, Rwandan, Kashmiri, and Chechen cases, for example. The current U.S. war against terrorism aims at eliminating such outside support, labeling it *terrorism* (see Chapter 17). *(4b) The stronger side believes it has such overwhelming military power and ideological legitimacy that it can force through its own cleansed state at little physical or moral risk to itself.* This is so in colonial settler cases, as in the North American, Australian, and Circassian cases considered later. The Armenian and Jewish cases mixed these two scenarios together, since the dominant Turkish and German sides believed they had to strike first in order to prevent the weaker Armenian and Jewish sides from allying with far more threatening outsiders. All these terrible eventualities were produced by interaction between the two sides. We

cannot explain such escalation merely in terms of the actions or beliefs of the perpetrators. We need to examine the interactions between the perpetrator and victim groups – and usually with other groups as well. For few even bi-ethnic situations lead to murderous cleansing. One or both sides must first decide to fight rather than conciliate or manipulate, and that choice is unusual.

5. *Going over the brink into the perpetration of murderous cleansing occurs where the state exercising sovereignty over the contested territory has been factionalized and radicalized amid an unstable geopolitical environment that usually leads to war.* Out of such political and geopolitical crises radicals emerge calling for tougher treatment of perceived ethnic enemies. In fact, where ethnic conflict between rival groups is quite old, it is usually somewhat ritualized, cyclical, and manageable. Truly murderous cleansing, in contrast, is unexpected, originally unintended, emerging out of unrelated crises like war. Conversely, in cases where states and geopolitics remain stable, even severe ethnic tensions and violence tend to be cyclical and manageable at lesser levels of violence – as we see in Chapter 16 in present-day India. But where political institutions are unstable and affected by war, violence may lead to mass murder – as Harff's (2003) study of political cleansings across the world confirms.

There are different forms of political instability. Some states were fragmenting and factionalizing (like the Hutu state of Rwanda); others had been seized and were being newly consolidated, determinedly repressing dissidents and factionalism (like the Nazi state). In some brand-new states, consolidation was very uneven (as in the new Bosnian and Croatian states). But these were not stable and cohesive states, whether democratic or authoritarian. Nor were they often the failed states that political science researchers have shown are most likely to generate civil wars (the Congo at the beginning of the 21st century is an exception). Ethnic cleansings are in their most murderous phases usually directed by states, and this requires some state coherence and capacity.

6. *Murderous cleansing is rarely the initial intent of perpetrators.* It is rare to find evil geniuses plotting mass murder from the very beginning. Not even Hitler did so. Murderous cleansing typically emerges as a kind of Plan C, developed only after the first two responses to a perceived ethnic threat fail. Plan A typically envisages a carefully planned solution in terms of either compromise or straightforward repression. Plan B is a more radically repressive adaptation to the failure of Plan A, more hastily conceived amid rising violence and some political destabilization. When these both fail, some of the planners radicalize further. To understand the outcome, we must analyze the unintended consequences of a series of interactions yielding escalation. These successive Plans may contain both logical and more contingent escalations. The perpetrators may be ideologically determined from quite early on to rid themselves of the ethnic out-group, and when milder methods fail, they

almost logically seem to escalate with resolute determination to overcome all obstacles by more and more radical means. This was true of Hitler and his myrmidons: the Final Solution of the Jewish question seems much less of an accident than the logical escalation of an ideology ruthlessly overcoming all obstacles in its path. For the Young Turks, however, the final solution to the Armenian problem seems much more contingent, flowing out of what they saw as their suddenly desperate situation in 1915.

To downplay intentionality like this is morally uncomfortable, often involving me in arguing against those who speak in the name of the victims. Genocide of the Jews, the Armenians, the Tutsis, of some colonized native peoples, and of others was deliberately accomplished. The evidence is overwhelming. But surviving victims like to emphasize premeditation by their oppressors. This probably derives mostly from their need to find meaning in their sufferings. What could be worse than to regard such extreme suffering as accidental? In *King Lear*, Edgar says of his sufferings: "Like flies to wanton boys are we to the gods." I find that a tempting theory of human society, but I doubt many victims do. I am not actually arguing that murderous cleansing is accidental, only that it is far more complex and contingent than blame-centered theories allow. It is eventually perpetrated deliberately, but the route to deliberation is usually a circuitous one.

7. *There are three main levels of perpetrator: (a) radical elites running party-states; (b) bands of militants forming violent paramilitaries; and (c) core constituencies providing mass though not majority popular support.* Elites, militants, and core constituencies are all normally necessary for murderous cleansing to ensue. We cannot simply blame malevolent leaders or ethnic groups en masse. That would be to credit leaders with truly magical powers of manipulation or whole peoples with truly remarkable single-mindedness. Both assumptions are at odds with everything sociologists know about the nature of human societies. In all my cases particular elites, militants, and core constituencies are linked together in quite complex ways, forming social movements that (like other social movements) embody mundane power relations. Power is exercised in three distinct ways: top-down by elites, bottom-up by popular pressures, and coercively sideways by paramilitaries. These pressures interact and so generate mundane relations like those found in all social movements – especially of hierarchy, comradeship, and career. This has a big impact on perpetrators' motives, as we will see in a moment.

The notion of core constituencies reveals that murderous cleansing resonates more in environments favoring combinations of nationalism, statism, and violence. The main core constituencies are ethnic refugees and people from threatened border districts; those more dependent on the state for their subsistence and values; those living and working outside of the main sectors of the economy that generate class conflict (who are more likely to favor class over ethnonationalist models of conflict); those socialized into acceptance of physical violence as a way of solving social problems or achieving

personal advancement – like soldiers, policemen, criminals, hooligans, and athletes; and those attracted to machismo ideology – young males striving to assert themselves in the world, often led by older males who were socialized as youths in an earlier phase of violence. So the main axes of stratification involved in cleansing movements are region, economic sector, gender, and age. Radical ethnonationalist movements tend to contain a normal class structure: leaders come from the upper and middle classes, the rank-and-file from lower down – with the real dirty work often performed by the working class. I explore all these groups' motivations, careers, and interactions.

8. Finally, *ordinary people are brought by normal social structures into committing murderous ethnic cleansing*, and their motives are much more mundane. To understand ethnic cleansing, we need a sociology of power more than a special psychology of perpetrators as disturbed or psychotic people – though some may be. As the psychologist Charny (1986: 144) observes, "the mass killers of humankind are largely everyday human beings – what we have called normal people according to currently accepted definitions by the mental health profession."

Placed in comparable situations and similar social constituencies, you or I might also commit murderous ethnic cleansing. No ethnic group or nation is invulnerable. Many Americans and Australians committed murderous cleansing in the past; some Jews and Armenians – the most victimized peoples of the 20th century – have perpetrated recent atrocities against Palestinians and Azeris (and, in turn, some of these victim groups are also perpetrators). There are no virtuous peoples. Religions tend to stress the presence in all humans of original sin, the human capacity for evil. Indeed, placed in the right circumstances and core constituencies, we are almost all capable of such evil – perhaps even of enjoying it. But original sin would be an insufficient explanation for this, since our capacity for evil becomes realized only in the circumstances explored in this book. In the case of cleansing, these circumstances are less primitive or ancient than modern. There is something in modernity releasing this particular evil on a mass scale.

Given the messiness and uniqueness of societies, my theses cannot be scientific laws. They do not even fit perfectly all my case studies. For example, Nazi genocide does not fit neatly into thesis 3, since Jews were not claiming sovereignty over any part of Germany. In Chapter 7 I offer a modified, indirect version of thesis 3 in which Jews seemed to German ethnonationalists to be implicated as conspirators in other groups' claims to political sovereignty (especially as so-called Judeo-Bolsheviks). In each case I investigate the extent to which my theses apply, pointing out necessary differences and modifications. Chapters 2 and 3 present a brief history of cleansing from ancient to modern times, showing how ethnic cleansing was originally quite rare but then became endemic in the world of the Europeans, at first in rather mild ways that remained subordinate to class conflict. Mass murder has been ubiquitous if uncommon throughout most of human history. But murder in