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ENGAGING WITH GENOCIDE – THE CHALLENGE FOR ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Genocide has long cast a shadow over human history. Its currency and resurgence in the 20th century with its shocking photographic and cinematic records has brought its full horrors to public consciousness. Within this period, the Nazi Holocaust has come in many enduring ways to epitomise the crimes of mass extermination and ethnic cleansing. Current circumstances suggest genocide will continue to tarnish human civilization for some time to come. In this paper, we will examine some of the organizational issues raised by genocide and will indicate some of the lessons that management and organization scholars can derive from its political, psychological and moral dimensions. We shall propose that genocide far from constituting a tragic phenomenon at the margins of contemporary society raises questions that go to the heart of organization and management studies.

Genocide is sometimes thought of as an exceptional or rare phenomenon; but it is not. Genocide Watch (2008) estimates that since the foundation of the United Nations there have been 45 genocides and over 70 million dead. Environmental and financial disasters, depletion of raw materials, land erosion and the continuing movement and mixing of populations on an unprecedented scale make future genocides even more likely. But if killing on a mass scale were not common enough, genocide can assume other less direct forms. Depriving communities of their dignity and pride, of the means of maintaining their traditions and practices and of sustaining their natural environment, in short the wide array of practices referred to as necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003) or necrocapitalism (Banerjee, 2008) may constitute cultural and spiritual versions of genocide. No academic discipline has any excuses for turning its sights away from the topic, least of all organizational studies. Genocide, as we shall see, is a highly organized process, requiring bureaucratic resources to initiate, sustain and, often, cover it up. It generates resistance and compliance, it makes use of material and social technologies, it is imbued with its own cultural values and

assumptions and calls for its own morbid innovations and problem-solving. Genocide requires the collaboration of numerous formal organizations, including armies, suppliers, intelligence and other services, but also informal networks and groups. Far from being peripheral to the world of organizations, we shall argue that genocide is central to some of its core concerns.

At the outset, we must offer three qualifications. First, while several references are made to the Nazi Holocaust, the paper addresses more generally genocides, rather than the Holocaust in particular. There are wide-ranging and at times rancorous arguments as to whether the Jewish Holocaust can be seen as a special case of a more general phenomenon, just as there are arguments as to whether genocide is itself a special case of a more general phenomenon, such as modernity's rationalizing tendencies. These are some of the core issues that will be addressed in this paper. Second, in the paper we draw certain analogues between genocidal actions and the experiences of everyday life in organizations; for example, we indicate certain similarities between ethnic cleansing and symbolic cleansing in organizations, and between genocide and organizational downsizing. In drawing such comparisons we are acutely mindful of the need to respect the memories and experiences of victims and survivors of genocide. We are <u>not</u> arguing that genocide and the quotidian worklife in organizations possess the same 'ontological' qualities, or that 'hot' violence experienced by victims of genocide is commensurate with the violation experienced by victims of organizational bullying and downsizing. We will, however, make a case that there are profound similarities in the social, political and psychological dynamics that underpin both of these domains and that it is wrong to regard genocide as an exceptional event that calls for different categories from those of 'normal' human sciences. Third, there are currently heated debates on whether any lessons <u>at all</u> can be learnt from extreme or unique events. Some historians, like Novick (1999) and others such as Elie Wiesel have argued, from very different perspectives, that the Holocaust can hold no lessons. We understand concerns about the possibility of trivializing and obfuscating genocide through 'wild lessons' and rash conclusions and generalizations; yet, we strongly share the views of those who believe that genocide contains lessons both for humankind in general and for different academic disciplines including organizational theory. As leading Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer (2001, p. xiii) has argued, "the warning to humankind is written on the

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wall: beware and learn. Learning is crucial here, not only for Jews but for everyone, children as well as adults."

The term genocide was introduced by Polish scholar Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959), deriging from <u>genos</u> (meaning tribe or race) and <u>–cide</u> (to kill, to massacre) (Lemkin, 1944). From the start, genocide turned out to be one of these essentially contested concepts (Gallie, 1964), whose definition and ambit are subject to intense struggles. The widely-used United Nations definition of genocide as acts "committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethical, racial or religious group" (Article Two, United Nations Convention on Genocide January 1951) was itself the product of intense negotiation. Political killings were excluded from the definition, while religious killings, which did not form part of the original Lemkin definition, were included. The literature on genocide is wrought with contested and competing attempts to define the key dimensions of the phenomenon (Chalk and Jonassohn, 1990; Totten, Parson and Charny, 1997; Shaw, 2007). Some commentators have sought to identify different forms of genocide, for example, <u>politicide</u> (the extermination of a political class) or <u>gendercide</u> (the contrasting treatments and extermination of a particular gender within a targeted group or population as occurred in the Bosnian conflict). Two enduring and unresolved questions in defining genocide concern, first, whether it necessarily involves the physical extermination of every member of a group (or some determined number) and whether destroying its spiritual and cultural traditions constitutes genocide; second, whether the intention to destroy and to kill is necessary for genocide to occur or whether genocide can be an 'unanticipated consequence' of different policies and actions.

It is our view that the disciplines of management and organizational studies cannot remain passive audiences of these struggles, but must begin to debate genocide themselves, even at the cost of getting tangled up in awkward questions. In the past, academics in these disciplines have taken a partial interest in genocide. Yet, there are many ways in which genocide is a feature of their domain. While some genocidal incidents may appear to arise spontaneously and without premeditation, genocide is, generally, planned, organized and controlled. In order to exterminate large numbers of people, resources must be made available, actions must be co-ordinated, information must be shared and individuals must be motivated to perform various tasks. Victims

must be identified, corralled, killed; their bodies must be disposed and, often, evidence of the actions covered up. In all these ways, genocide entails extensive managerial and organizational processes. Thus, for example, genocides in the Twentieth Century - Armenia, the Nazi Holocaust, Stalin's purges, Mao's Cultural Revolution, Cambodian politicide, 'ethnic cleansing' in the Balkan conflict or Rwanda - have relied to a greater or lesser extent on management practices, ideas and philosophies typical of their times.

One of the reasons for organizational theorists' limited interest in genocide is that it is widely viewed as an extreme or exceptional event. But as Agamben (1998) has argued, the ability to define an event as exceptional is itself an act of organized power or sovereignty that calls for questioning. Furthermore, we will argue that many of the processes involved in genocide, political, social, psychological and moral, are not fundamentally different from those encountered in less extreme organizational phenomena. Thus, the implications of Milgram's (1974) well-known experiments into how humans can be managed, coerced or coaxed into participating in abhorrent actions are relevant for the study of genocide but also a broad range of other social situations. Complicity and compliance, ranging from enthusiastic engagement to passive acquiescence and silence, are features of genocide, but so too are resistance, passive and active, of both victims and potential perpetrators, a theme which has long been of vital interest to scholars of organizations. The moral questions raised by involvement in genocide may not be totally dissimilar from moral questions raised in the course of ordinary organizational lives by mass lay-offs and redundancies (Stein, 2001; Uchitelle, 2006), environmental destruction and economic exploitation (Farmer, 2005; Klein, 2007). In all these ways, genocide represents a challenge for organizational theorists in two regards – first, to unlock the organizational and managerial processes that make it possible, and, second, to investigate the extent to which these processes apply to non-genocidal situations.

ORGANIZATION AND GENOCIDE

While organization and management studies have shown some limited interest in it (e.g.Burrell, 1997; Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2005; Grey, 2005, 2007; ten Bos,

1997), genocide has received thorough, extensive and ongoing attention by other disciplines. Discussions on genocide and the Holocaust, are constant in the pages of the mass media; images, films, television programmes, books, magazine articles, museums and other cultural artifacts dedicated to genocide (and, in particular, the Nazi Holocaust) saturate contemporary culture. In mid-2009, Amazon listed 6,600 books with 'holocaust' in the title, 1500 with 'Auschwitz', a number greater than that with 'General Motors' (1200). Scholars have turned their attention in increasing numbers to the phenomenon. Historians, political theorists, psychologists and, increasingly, sociologists, have provided many important insights into thinking and behaviour relating to genocidal atrocities. A new field of Genocide Studies has been rapidly growing and evolving with numerous journals dedicated to it. Within this field, Holocaust Studies is a privileged and distinct subfield. In April 2009, ISI World of Science listed over 6,500 scholarly articles on the Holocaust (a number only slightly lower than the 6,800 for 'globalization') and over 1,600 on genocide. Since the early pioneers of Holocaust research (Hilberg, 1985; Reitlinger, 1953; Schleunes, 1970), the volume of historiography has escalated exponentially, with some contributions (see, for example, Bauer, 2001; Finkelstein, 2000; Friedländer, 1997; Goldhagen, 1996; Novick, 1999) reaching mass audiences. In addition to academic scholarship, genocide studies has generated diverse commentaries and genres, including novels, factual historical accounts, inmate and guard diaries and notebooks, survivors' stories and autobiographies, films, documentaries and memoirs (ibid, and also Levi, 1958/1987, 1986/1988; Frank, 1947/2007; Orphuls, 1971; Keneally 1982; Spielberg, 1994; Miller and Touryan-Miller,1999; Hatzfeld, 2005; Wallach, 2006). It is curious, then, that with very few notable exceptions the disciplines of organization and management have remained largely indifferent.

Killing on a large-scale inevitably raises issues of organization, management, logistics, ethics, power, hierarchy and resistance. Some of these are common to other large-scale, mass-produced and mass-administered organizational projects. But core concepts from organizational and managerial theory, such as power, structure, bureaucracy, hierarchy, goals, record-keeping, identity construction, control, morality, motivation and ideology are all revealed to have new meanings and new nuances within a 'management of the business of genocide' and a 'genocidal organization'. In developing this nexus, theorists of organization and management have turned to two

influential theses, Hannah Arendt's (1963) thesis of the 'banality of evil' stemming from her work <u>Eichmann in Jerusalem</u> and Zygmunt Bauman's argument on 'adiaphorization', or the blunting of the moral impulse effected by bureaucratic rationality, developed in <u>Modernity and the Holocaust</u> (1989) and other works. Arendt's influence has been very pervasive in approaching terrible acts not as the motivated actions of a diabolical intelligence, but rather as outcomes of actions perceived by many of their perpetrators as normal and routine. This links with Bauman's view that genocide represents a natural outcome of modernity, the application of rational and scientific organization to mass extermination. The execution of genocide presents itself primarily as a <u>mass</u> phenomenon – a generic, homogenised and stratified phenomenon. In its logistical aspect, genocide is therefore akin to comparable modernist mass projects of production, consumption and administration.

Bauman, relying, like Arendt, extensively on the 'functionalist school' historiography (Hilberg, 1985; Schleunes, 1970), viewed the Holocaust not as a regression from modernity into barbarism, but quite on the contrary, as an outcome of modernity and in particular the type of means-ends rationality (Weber's Zweckrationalität) that came to dominate it:

> We need to take stock of the evidence that <u>the civilizing process is, among other things, a process of divesting the use and deployment of violence from moral calculus, and of emancipating the desiderata of rationality from interference of ethical norms or moral inhibitions</u>. As the promotion of rationality to the exclusion of alternative criteria for action, and in particular the tendency to subordinate the use of violence to rational calculus, has been long ago acknowledged as a constitutive feature of modern civilization - the Holocaust-style phenomena must be recognized as legitimate outcomes of civilizing tendency, and its constant potential. (Bauman, 1989, p. 28)

Drawing on Bauman's work, Grey (2005, p.25) has argued:

> … the genocide instigated by the Nazi's represents the extreme application of a bureaucratic logic. For what makes the Holocaust so peculiarly appalling is the way in which it was constructed industrially – with a systems of rules, impersonally applied, which made it as technically efficient as genocide could be.

Grey developed the argument that the Holocaust should not be viewed as some form of abhorrent mutation of western society or as a regression to barbarism but as the climax of bureaucratic logic in the field of mass extermination, an outcome of modern Western society's accumulated organizational, managerial and bureaucratic expertise '… a manifestation of the habitual ways of organizing within that culture.' (Grey, ibid.) Thus, in line with Arendt's hypothesis of the banality of evil, a great deal of social suffering can be brought about without anyone consciously acting in a consciously evil or sadistic way. The radical separation between means and ends, the former liable to an ever-rationalizing logic, the latter inoculated from critical inquiry, is central to what Bauman refers to as 'Holocaust-style phenomena'; but it can also be observed in numerous other spheres of violence, such as that perpetrated by military organizations (Jones, Parker, ten Bos 2005; Stokes 2007). The separation, or distancing of the perpetrator from the victim renders the act of killing more remote and therefore possible because the perpetrator is 'conveniently' unable to see the consequences of his or her own actions clearly. This is precisely what Bauman means by 'adiaphorization' (1989, p. 219ff), the instilled indifference of bureaucratic officials to the suffering resulting from their actions. This is greatly amplified where the perpetrator and the victim have no face to face contact with each other.

The uncoupling of means from ends is a feature of most contemporary work settings wherein people take actions without being mindful (or perhaps being wilfully mindless) to the ends, implications or consequences for other. In relation to Bauman's work, Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis (2005: 178-179) argue that:

> At the heart of the moral question is the interpretation of power and ethics. Why do ordinary people in organizations do morally bad things when

asked to do so? What aspects of an organization make unquestioning obedience feasible? (2005: 179)

In this vein, they argue that all total institutions (where every aspect of members' lives is shaped and controlled by the organization) have equally overpowering effects on both the controlling members and the controlled.

Our discussion so far suggests that the theses of adiaphorization and banality of evil, drawn from the study of the Nazi Holocaust, may have important ramifications for non-genocidal phenomena. Yet, the theses themselves are contested by numerous genocide scholars, something that organization theorists sometimes forget at their peril. While acknowledging that Arendt's book is "arguably the single most influential history of the Holocaust" (2005, p. 34), Michael Thad Allen argues that her "cliché of Eichmann as the banal bureaucrat … has more to do with intellectuals' anxieties about the modern corporation than it has to do with the Holocaust or the institutions of genocide" (Allen, 2005, p. 30). Far from being a banal mindless bureaucrat, an automaton or a 'thoughtless cog', Allen argues that Eichmann and those working under him were committed, intelligent and enthusiastic managers, who problem solved and showed initiative and imagination as members of an organizational culture that highlighted and valued these qualities. Far from being a declassé mediocrity, as portrayed by Arendt, Allen, using detailed analysis by Safrian (1995) shows Eichmann "in Berlin" rather than "in Jerusalem" to have been a self-confident and enthusiastic member of a National Socialist vanguard with a mission to change the world. Eichmann's 'banality' is further put into question by an analysis of his Rorschach profile by Robert McCully, which reveals numerous features "uncharacteristic of an ordinary, banal mind" (1980, p. 311), including aesthetic sensibilities, pretentiousness, grandiosity, cunning and deceitfulness.

Scholars of organization should be aware that, in spite of its popularity, Arendt's portrayal of Eichmann is now viewed as a 'caricature' (Allen, 2002) by a new generation of scholars who have questioned the view of the Holocaust adopted by the earlier generation of historians, as an inexorable, bleak and bureaucratic process, and those, like Bauman who based their analyses on their work. Four particular criticisms

are relevant here – first, earlier studies underestimate the importance of 'hot', sadistic violence and emphasize the impersonality of killing; second, they exaggerate the efficiency of genocidal bureaucracy; third, they consistently underestimate the resistance of the victims; and fourth, they ignore the role of ideology and especially racist ideology in establishing the victim as Other and denying him/her most human rights.

Blok (2001), an anthropologist known for his work on the Mafia, has observed that some acts of supreme violence are perpetrated against groups that are neighbours (and in many cases friendly neighbours) for years or centuries, a phenomenon that is confirmed by ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda, where perpetrators and victims frequently were on personal terms. Blok links this phenomenon to what Freud (1921c; 1930a) terms 'narcissism of minor differences', the 'hot and personal' aggression displayed towards groups or individuals most like oneself as a way of affirming the group's identity. Further doubt on the adiaphorization and banality of evil theses is cast by the evidence that runs contrary to the 'mechanization of murder' argument. Far from being a well-oiled machine, Yehuda Bauer (2001, p. 78), one of the leading Holocaust historians, has argued that Nazi bureaucracy was "often a fumbling, ineffective, contradiction-ridden machine, where each fiefdom in the Nazi state had its own interests and fought against every one else to preserve them." Contesting Bauman's thesis of the modernity of the Holocaust, Bauer argues that

> Because of total German military and police dominance, the Nazi dictatorship overcame problems of inherent inefficiency by using brute force, not unlike the Mongols in the thirteenth century. It is the combination of modern means and brutal inefficiency that is so characteristic of much of the Holocaust. (Bauer, 2001, p. 78)

Some historians (e.g. Dammann, 2007; Snyder, 2009) now believe that a minority of those killed in the Nazi Holocaust were killed in gas chambers, the large majority killed through forced marches, summary executions or torture. In addition to cold

bureaucratic extermination, therefore, scholars must consider the hot violence as a contributor to some genocides.

Another criticism that has been raised against Bauman's and Arendt's theses is that they consistently ignore Jewish resistance, treating the victims as entirely passive. In this, they share criticism raised against Raul Hilberg (1985, originally published 1961) whose classic work The Destruction of the European Jews, continues to be viewed as the foundation stone of Holocaust historiography. Historians (as well as numerous others) have criticized Hilberg for arguing that throughout the war the Jews went passively to their death and that the Jewish Councils in occupied territories (the Judenräte) were part of the machinery of destruction. An ever-increasing amount of historical research has revealed a broad range of resistance acts, individual and collective. This included smuggling food and people, underground presses, mutual sacrifice within families to avoid starvation, a wide range of cultural, educational and political activities aimed at preserving morale, as well as armed struggle (of which the uprising of the Warsaw ghetto is the most important). A large part of the resistance was aimed at maintaining morale and sanctifying the dignity of life. For all of these phenomena, Yehuda Bauer uses the term Amidah. Amidah then represents 'standing' firstly in the literal and then in the figurative and metaphorical senses. It is the name of the central prayer of Jewish Sabbath services. The congregation stand when saying/singing it as a mark of its significance and importance. Reaching this point involves a substantial spiritual and mental preparation and, as a sign of respect Amidah, is usually capitalized. Bauer employs it in this spirit – standing is a proactive one, a choice to act; he then makes it the starting point of his analysis of Jewish resistance.

> It means literally 'standing up against', but that does not capture the deeper sense of the word. When I speak of resistance, I mean amidah, and that includes both armed and unarmed actions and excludes passive resistance, although that term is almost a non-sequitur, because one cannot really resist passively. When one refuses to budge in the face of brutal force, one does not resist passively; one resists without using force, and that is not the same thing. (Bauer, 2001, p. 120)

Historians have established that resistance varied in extent and range from ghetto to ghetto and from community to community. To be sure, it was not effective at stopping the killing and Bauer warns that we must "strike a reasonable balance between the nostalgic hero worship of Jews in the Holocaust and attempts to downplay all forms of Amidah. The importance lies, among other things, in the need for truthful analyses of reactions of victims of genocide generally to further the educational process that may provide at least an outside chance of preventing future tragedies." (Bauer, 2001, p. 166)

In addition to exaggerating the passivity of the victims, Bauman and other accounts of genocide that approach it as an outcome of impersonal bureaucratic processes, have been criticized for disregarding two vital things, the importance of local initiatives and the motives and ideologies of the perpetrators. Both of these criticisms exist both in extreme and in more moderate forms. Some historians have gone as far as arguing that "regional, uncoordinated initiative provided a key and perhaps the key impetus in the Final Solution. 'In the end', writes Sandkühler, ' the endeavour to build gassing installations must be sought in local initiative'. In such accounts the Holocaust evolves out of the overwhelming disorganization of German institutions at the fringes of German society." (Allen, 2008, p. 7) Allen, uses extensive testimonies of prisoners ('grey-collar workers', of whom more presently), to question such accounts – he acknowledges, however, that local initiative was essential in resolving numerous unexpected problems and difficulties that arose in putting into effect a central plan. He argues that "rather than a world of petty-minded bureaucrats in an institutional straightjacket, Nazi Germany unleashed a groundswell of initiative from below. This should be no surprise, for multi-functional bureaucrats and the enthusiasm they bring to their work were and are normal in modern institutions." (Allen, 2005, p. 47) Far from being the mechanical output of a Weberian bureaucratic monolith operating sine ira et studio, Allen argues that the Nazi genocide relied on many committed, intelligent and enthusiastic managers and professionals (including engineers, architects, chemists and others) who problem-solved, innovated and showed initiative and imagination as members of an organizational culture that valued these qualities. Emotion, including highly irrational emotion, was central to the Holocaust and, in all likelihood, all genocide.

Allen is one of a new generation of Holocaust historians who has brought current insights from organizational theory, notably of organizations as having cultures, as engaging in collaborative relations with each other and as engendering emotion and passion, in short as <u>institutions</u> rather than as grey armies of mindless organization men acting as automata. This approach has cast serious doubts on the views of functionalist historians, such as Hilberg, Schleunes and Mommsen, and those like Arendt and Bauman who relied on their work to portray the Nazi genocide as the work of banal bureaucrats. But these views have been further questioned by intentionalist historians, who look at the Holocaust as the result of the rise of the Nazi Party and its radical, exterminational antisemitism to power. According to this view, expressed in the most extreme form in Goldhagen's (1996) notorious book, the Holocaust happened because Hitler wanted it to happen and because the Germans' eliminationist antisemitism enabled him to turn a murderous vision into reality. Goldhagen's monocausal explanation of the Holocaust has been extensively challenged (not least from other intentionalist historians). It acts, however, as a useful corrective to the adiaphorization/banality theses which treat the victim as 'throughput' to bureaucratic processes, calling for a closer examination of the relations between the 'Same' and the 'Other'.

<u>OTHERING</u>

'Othering' is a concept that occupies an important place in contemporary philosophical, gender, postcolonial discourses. It refers to the process of casting a group, an individual or an object into the role of the 'other' and establishing one's own identity through opposition to and, frequently, vilification of this Other. Othering is a process that goes beyond 'mere' scapegoating and denigration – it denies the Other those defining characteristics of the 'Same', reason, dignity, love, pride, heroism, nobility, and ultimately any entitlement to human rights. Whether the Other is a racial or a religious group, a gender group, a sexual minority or a nation, it is made rife for exploitation, oppression and indeed genocide by denying its essential humanity, because, as the philosopher Richard Rorty put it, "everything turns on who counts as a fellow human being, as a rational agent in the only relevant sense – the

sense in which rational agency is synonymous with membership of our moral community" (Rorty 1993:124).

Theorizing the Other has drawn extensively on the work of three theorists who influenced each other – psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, ethnographer Claude Lévi-Strauss and philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. Lacan (1988) examined how the ego is formed during the early stage of infancy as each child comes to contemplate its own face in a mirror. The child first encounters him/herself as an Other and misrecognizes himself as a subject, thereafter sustaining this recognition in the gaze of the other. Othering is a process that may be applied to oneself, whereby one experiences oneself as a stranger, indeed Lacanian theory views this 'self-othering' as the process whereby the symbolic order is established – the unconscious is the stranger within ourselves. A man, for example, has no choice but to silence or even kill the 'woman in him'. Lévi-Strauss (1955/1992) proposed that throughout human history, people have employed two strategies in dealing with the Other, the foreign, the deviant or the stranger – one is to incorporate them, as in the case of cannibalism, eliminating any boundaries between the same and the other; the second strategy it to expel them and exclude them ('spit them out') by erecting strong boundaries and special institutions in which they are kept in isolation. These strategies can be observed in many contemporary situations. Finally, Levinas (1969) based his moral philosophy on the face-to-face encounter with another human being, viewing the moment of this encounter as the one irreducible and concrete way of establishing a relation with the Other, as against relying on abstract and impersonal rules of ethics to do so.

Discourses on the Other have proven extremely important in postcolonial theory; the politics of race, of colonial exploitation and postcolonial oppression are rooted in constructing the other as something less than human (Agamben, 1998; Banerjee, 2008; Prasad, 2003). Postcolonial authors have argued that Western identity and culture are fundamentally forged by an othering logic, one that dehumanizes or devalues other people, such as primitives, uncivilized, orientals, blacks, non-believers, women and so forth. An essential feature of othering is denying the Other his/her own voice, denying him/her the opportunity to speak for him/herself and instead attributing qualities, opinions and views that refer to one's own identity and culture. Mbembe, focusing particularly on colonial and postcolonial contexts, builds on Foucault's

notion of biopower postulating the concept of <u>necropolitics</u> wherein the ultimate expression of sovereignty is the power over the right to kill or allow to live. Mbembe views this othering process as culminating in the logic of the elimination of the other:

> It has been argued that the complete conflation of war and politics (and racism, homicide, and suicide), until they are indistinguishable from one another, is unique to the Nazi state. The perception of the existence of the Other as an attempt on my life, as a mortal threat or absolute danger whose biophysical elimination would strengthen my potential to life and security—this, I suggest, is one of the many imaginaries of sovereignty characteristic of both early and late modernity itself. Recognition of this perception to a large extent underpins most traditional critiques of modernity, whether they are dealing with nihilism and its proclamation of the will for power as the essence of the being; with reification understood as the <u>becoming-object</u> of the human being; or the subordination of everything to impersonal logic and to the reign of calculability and instrumental rationality. Indeed, from an anthropological perspective, what these critiques implicitly contest is a definition of politics as the warlike relation par excellence. They also challenge the idea that, of necessity, the calculus of life passes through the death of the Other; or that sovereignty consists of the will and the capacity to kill in order to live. (Mbembe, 2003, p. 18)

Othering is integral to genocidal processes. The Other threatens and invokes the separation of self between perceived 'authentic self' and 'inauthentic self'; the Other is designated and signified as non-authentic and problematic and therefore susceptible to marginalisation, pathologization and eradication. In denying them <u>voice</u>, othering turns its targets, whether they are children bullied in the schoolyard or victims of genocide, into 'abjects' (Kristeva, 1982), i.e. parts ready to be cast off and treated with disgust and horror.

> The abjection suffered in the camps horribly illustrates the threat of exclusion which weighs on all interlocution. On the school playground,

the child to whom the others say 'We are not playing with you' experiences the unspeakable suffering. He suffers a wrong equivalent, on its own scale, to a crime against humanity. (Lyotard, 1993, p. 145)

Each genocide generates unique patterns of othering (although, as we shall see presently, they often go through similar stages), depending on the material, ideological and political circumstances that separate perpetrators from victims. Rejecting levels of savagery and brutality as setting the Jewish Holocaust apart from other genocides, Bauer (2001, 44ff) argues that one of its chief qualities was the absence of any major economic or material rationale (although this should not obscure the wide seizure and sequestration of Jewish money, property and valuables by the Nazis – the Nazi Holocaust was very much part-financed by its victims in terms of money, assets, (forced) labour as well as lives). This sets it apart from the more recent genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda (Adelman, 2000; Gourevitch, 2004; Keane, 1995), where land and power were at stake. Bauer, along with many 'intentionalist' historians, then goes on to emphasize the role of ideology as one of the factors behind the Holocaust. Unlike Goldhagen, he rejects the view that German antisemitism was more virulent than those of other European nations (notably France) and argues, along with Friedländer (Friedländer, 1997) that what set it apart was its 'redemptive' quality.

Redemptive anti-Semitism was born from the fear of racial degeneration and the religious belief in redemption. The main cause of degeneration was the penetration of the Jews into the German body politic, into German society, and into the German bloodstream. Germanhood and the Aryan world were on the path to perdition if the struggle against the Jews was not joined; this was to be a struggle to the death. Redemption would come as liberation from the Jews - as their expulsion, possibly their annihilation. (Friedländer, 1997, p. 87)

The Nazi regime (following a long history in which Richard Wagner plays a vital part) sought through the annihilation of the Jews to respond to deep-rooted collective fears of pollution and defilement. If the Jews represented no political or economic

threat to the Germans, they were experienced as representing a mortal risk in terms of racial health and hygiene. Genocide was a form of grotesque hygiene aimed at racial purification and redemption. A similar argument has been developed by psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton. Building on Mary Douglas's classic theory of pollution and purification, Lifton (1986) argued that that the Nazi genocide was an attempt to purify Germany from what was seen as the contagious sickness represented by the Jews, the Gypsies and all other social pathogens. Doctors colluded and even spearheaded this in the belief that they were helping heal the nation's body by ridding it of pathogens.

> The 'disease' with which the Nazis were attempting to cope was death itself, death made unmanageable by the 'modern necrophilia' of the First World War. … One way to deal with a death-saturated environment is to embrace death itself as the means of cure. … Genocide requires both a specific victim group and certain relationships to that group. … Nazi perpetrators had to see their victims as posing absolute danger, as 'infecting' the 'German national body'. … The victim will destroy not only the perpetrator, it is claimed, but everyone and everything else. (Lifton, 1986, pp. 476-7)

The perpetrators of genocide, argues Lifton, thought that purification would restore Germany to wholeness and perfection. "Genocide" he concludes "is a response to collective fear of pollution and defilement. It depends upon an impulse toward purification resembling that given collective expression in primitive cultures." (Lifton, 1986, p. 481)

Ethnic cleansing provides a convenient if grotesque expression to describe genocidal activities. It would, however, be inaccurate to argue that all genocide derives from fears of pollution. In fact, scholars are now acknowledging that different genocides have their particular physiognomies. Revenge may play a major role in some (such as Rwanda, see Adelman, 2000; Gourevitch, 2004; Keane, 1995) score-settling, imperialist expansion, racist and religious ideologies in others. In the next section, we shall examine some common features in the planning and execution of different genocides. However, in treating all genocide as subject to similar regimes of

organization, mobilization, politics and emotion, we must remain aware of the uniqueness rather than allow our revulsion to lead us to rash generalizations. As Moshman has argued:

> Given that every genocide is unique, any prototype-based notion of genocide will distort one's understanding of some genocides as it filters them through whatever genocide is taken as central and defining. (Moshman, 2001, p. 432)

Acknowledging this point, Moses (2004) argues that scholars (including historians) are now accepting that it is permissible to make <u>comparisons</u> between genocides, however abhorrent it may seem and he notes that the debate needs to progress beyond hitherto preoccupations of 'pious gestures' and the establishment of 'moral credentials'. (Moses, 2004, p.548)

<u>GENOCIDE STAGES AND SOME ORGANIZATIONAL ANALOGUES</u>

One scholar who has dedicated his life to understanding genocide and fighting against it is law professor and founder of <u>Genocide Watch</u> Gregory H. Stanton. On the basis of comparisons between several genocides, Stanton (1998) has proposed an eight-stage model incorporating <u>Classification</u> (categorisation of the population(s)); <u>Symbolization</u> (assigning symbols evoking hate, for example, The Third Reich assignation of yellow stars for Jews); <u>Dehumanization</u> (rendering the targeted group as non-human in contrast to the humanness of the perpetrators); <u>Organization</u> (the actual planning and enacting of administrative and control structures – often state sponsored); <u>Polarization</u> (separation of the target group from the rest of the population); <u>Preparation</u> (identification and making ready of those to be killed) <u>Extermination</u> (the managed (mass-)killing of the now classified, symbolized and dehumanised, isolated victims); <u>Denial</u> (the management of information and cover-up to avoid recriminations and justice).

Stanton's schema highlights the management processes enabling each stage of genocide but also allows us to view genocide as at once a normal and an exceptional event. The early stages of genocide do not require a disclosure of its ultimate aim.

They can be rationalized as measures to protect sections of the population, yet they enable the building of a genocidal logic which, if left unchecked, may lead to the later stages. It would be unthinkable, in the early stages, to claim that killing people constitutes a reasonable or legitimate action. Nevertheless, telling a 'white lie' or 'turning a blind eye' may become ever more acceptable, leading to some personal advantage or avoiding trouble. The coalescence and convergence of such apparently multifarious, marginal processes of complicity or collaboration can lead to ever greater wrongs and cruelties (Stokes 2006). The initial three stages of Stanton's processual typology allow us to see this very clearly. By permitting or tacitly condoning the 'classification', 'symbolization' and subsequent 'dehumanization' of their fellow humans, people are complicit, consciously or unconsciously, of setting in motion a spiral memorably captured in Pastor Niemoller's (1892-1984) famous poem:

"They came first for the communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant

Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up."

Niemoller's poem vividly captures how 'small' indiscretions escalate to bigger ones, ultimately leading to events that can be viewed as apocalyptic. This type of escalation is now a widely recognized feature of genocide (see, e.g. Kershaw, 1983) but can also be observed in everyday management and organizational practices and sense-making, especially as part of a downsizing logic which marginalizes, pathologizes and isolates different individuals, groups or departments leading to their elimination. They are the inefficient, the 'dead wood', the ones who fail to accept change, adapt with the times or add value to the organization. In contemporary corporate settings this is not only a metaphorical or symbolic 'death', but it is often accompanied by rage, self-

victimization and despair, as well as a wide range of ailments including mental breakdown, heart attack and occasionally leading to physical death. In noting similarities between Stanton's insights into genocidal logic and 'ordinary' organizational phenomena, we are not seeking to make 'tasteless comparisons' between mass killings and mass layoffs of employees. Physical extermination can under no circumstances be equated with symbolic killing nor can summary executions be equated to summary dismissals. What we are arguing (and this is a point to which we shall return) is that some of the processes noted earlier, notably othering, pathologization, dehumanization, symbolization, escalation, as well as some of the political and psychological dynamics underpinning them display extensive similarities.

In dehumanizing, containing and eventually eliminating the Other, genocide scholars have identified some key processes which hold vital lessons for students of organization. These include the erection of powerful boundaries which separate the Other, the identification of potential sources of resistance and their elimination, the emergence of a profound silence fed by shame, fear and disgust, and the spreading of divisions among the Other by offering selective privileges or promises of salvation through exceptional treatment. In what Stanton termed the 'organization' and 'polarization' stages of genocide, people targeted for genocide are identified, marked and corralled. Distinctions of ascribed status and the isolation of the future victims in camps are important in these stages. Within their isolated zones, victims may further be divided up by age, gender or ability to work as happened in Nazi concentration camps and during the Bosnian conflict.

The manner and extent of 'polarization' merits closer examination. Those among the targeted victims likely to be the most resistant are likely to be polarized earlier rather than later. Stanton reminds us that in these circumstances it is not only the vociferously proactive who are marginalized. He is keen to point up, during the polarization stage, the liberally minded and moderately inclined who voice concerns are also likely to be marginalized and polarized. Gradually, the identity of the target group is constructed as troublesome, problematic and a matter of concern for the rest. In essence they are pathologised. Any sign of resistance is treated as further evidence of their treacherousness. Sympathizers and 'neutrals' are also gradually forced either

to collude or to face polarization and exclusion. The polarized group is steadily perceived as an unwanted part of society calling for some radical action to neutralize or discard. Stanton notes that many of those directing this genocidal process genuinely believe that they are doing it for the general social good, a feature they share with champions of downsizing, restructuring and re-engineering who see individuals, groups and departments that fail to add value to an organization as having to be sacrificed for the general good (Knights and Willmott, 2000). The destruction of Britain's mining communities and much of the manufacturing infra-structure in the 1980s by Margaret Thatcher and her government were also undertaken in the conviction that they were serving the nation's wider good (Marr, 2007).

Beyond the broad polarization created by genocide, a wide range of other gradations come into effect. In his discussion of his incarceration at Auschwitz, Primo Levi argues that the fundamental polarization of victim and perpetrator does not create an empty space between the two, nor does it lead to total homogenization within each group. Levi explored the fluidity and porosity of these boundaries through the notion of a 'Grey Zone' of ambivalent behaviours and roles in his seminal text <u>The Drowned and the Saved.</u>

> From many signs, it would seem the time has come to explore the space which separates (and not only in the Nazi Lagers [camps]) the victims from the persecutors, and to do so with a lighter hand, and with a less turbid spirit than has been done, for instance in a number of films. Only a schematic rhetoric can claim that the space is empty: it never is; it is studded with obscene and pathetic figures (sometimes they possess both qualities simultaneously), whom it is indispensable to know if we want to know the human species, if we want to know how to defend our souls when a similar test should once more loom before us, or even if we only want to understand what takes place in a large industrial factory. (Levi, 1986/1988: 25-26).

As genocide unfolds, a range of choices continues to be available both to victims and to perpetrators, creating further distinctions. For the victims, as Levi has shown, these include total capitulation and resignation, passive and active resistance as well as a

wide range of techniques of collusion, inner resistance and invisibility aimed at physical and psychological survival.

> The ascent of the privileged, not only in the Lager [concentration / extermination camp] but in all human coexistence, is an anguishing but unfailing phenomenon: only in utopias are they absent. It is the duty of righteous men to make war on all undeserved privilege, but one must not forget that this is a war without end. Where there exists power exercised by the few or by only one against the many, privilege is born and proliferates, even against the will of the power itself; but on the other hand it is normal for power to tolerate and encourage it. Let us confine ourselves to the Lager which (even in its Soviet version) can be considered an excellent 'laboratory': the hybrid class of the prisoner-functionary constitutes its armature and at the same time its most disquieting feature. <u>It is a grey zone, with ill-defined outlines which both separate and join the two camps of masters and servants.</u> It possesses an incredibly complicated internal structure, and contains within itself enough to confuse our need to judge." (Levi, 1986/1988: 27). [Emphasis added]

Using Levi's account as his point of departure, Allen (2002; 2005; 2008) has argued that institutions like Auschwitz could never have functioned without countless victims forced to serve in its bureaucracies. It was they who offered most of the professional, technical and managerial skills necessary for the camps to function. Victims, argues Allen, "toiled in what Primo Levi called the grey zone, where the boundaries between the persecuted and perpetrators shifted endlessly. Thus if Eichmann was a 'white-collar' worker, victims were 'grey collar.' This was a labor of hate."(Allen, 2005, p. 27) For the perpetrators too, there were choices between active collusion and participation in the genocide, active and passive resistance. The extent to which segments of the German population knew or participated in the Holocaust is the subject of intense debate among genocide scholars, especially since the publication of Goldhagen's (1996) controversial book.

The choices faced by members of 'ordinary organizations' may not be as stark. Their physical survival may not depend on it, but their jobs, their livelihoods and their

psychological survival may depend on how they react when victimized or when they witness other groups being victimized. Do they slide into passivity and silence, at the risk of finding themselves as the next target? Do they resist actively or passively and risk being marginalized and pathologized? Do they collude and risk becoming part of a regime of brutalization, from which neither their integrity nor their psychological well-being can be protected?

The issue of resistance is one that has long pre-occupied scholars of organizations, especially those representing critical management studies and labour process traditions. It seems to us that much can be understood by cross-fertilizing their insights with the insights into resistance and collusion akin to those delineated above generated by genocide scholars.

GENOCIDE AND THE CORPORATION

The state is undoubtedly the primary organization involved in genocide, but there is a longstanding body of evidence of commercial organizations implicated and complicit in genocide. Such organizations, more often than not multinational and transnational corporations (MNCs and TNCs), frequently work in concert with government and quasi-governmental agencies to resource, support and perpetrate genocide (Allen, 2002). The evidence of corporate involvement in genocide is extensive, but a few examples must suffice here. In *IBM and the Holocaust* (2001), Edwin Black documented IBM's supply of administrative and accounting devices and machinery to the Third Reich. This machinery was subsequently employed to organize and account for the organization and management of rounding up, deportation, enforced labour and extermination of millions of Nazi victims. More recently in *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy* (1992), Ken Saro Wiva has sought to bring to light evidence of the complicity Shell in degradation of the lands and water resources of the Ogoni people of Nigeria and its subsequent collusion with the Nigerian military in genocideal actions against them. Saro Wiva was subsequently arrested and executed in 1995 by the authorities along with eight other leaders of the Ogoni Tribe. In early June 2009, on the eve of trial, Shell agreed to pay (without accepting liability) $15.5 million (£9.6 miilion) to settle a legal action, brought by relatives of Ken Saro Wiva

and the Ogoni Tribe leaders, which accused Shell of having collaborated with the authorities in their arrest and execution:

> The company was alleged to have provided the Nigerian Army with vehicles, patrol boats and ammunition and to have helped plan raids and terror campaigns against villages. (Pilkington, 2009)

A more indirect illustration of corporate engagement in genocide has seen a number of powerful US corporations, including Northop Grumman, BAe Systems and Chevron, lobbying the United States Government to prevent the use of the term genocide in relation to the forced deportation and slaughter of large numbers of Armenians by the Ottoman empire. All of the companies have substantial commercial interests in Turkey. (Singer, 2009)

Banerjee (2008), while not expressly focusing on genocide, builds on the work of Agamben (1998) and, in particular, on Mbembe's (2003) theory of necropolitics, to develop the concept of <u>necrocapitalism</u> describing "contemporary forms of organizational accumulation that involve dispossession and the subjugation of life to the power of death" (2008, p. 1541). Banerjee argues that different forms of power, institutional, material and discursive, generate a political economy of dispossession and death, leading to material and spiritual annihilation of entire people, their traditions and livelihoods. Banerjee's argument is informed by current arguments on colonialism and postcolonialism and illustrated with examples from Indonesia, Malyasia, China, Nigeria and India demonstrating how corporations working in tandem with governments, military and paramilitary organizations, marginalize, oppress and, at times eliminate, people who stand in the path of potential commercial spaces, opportunities and corporate profits. It should be noted that these corporations are not necessarily engaged in an explicit and pre-designed genocidal process but the outcomes and consequences of their cumulative and repeated actions naturally lead to this outcome.

<u>Symbolic genocides? Destroying lives, destroying meanings</u>

Corporations can be directly or indirectly involved in the business of genocide. The business of organizations, however, also makes them terrains of symbolic genocides. We now wish to examine more closely the fragile parallel between mass killings and mass dismissals as a point of connection between genocide literature and scholarship of organization and management. We must once again state that in pursuing this parallel, we propose no moral or political equivalences, not withstanding the fact that an imagery and a vocabulary of genocide frequently pervades the experiences of those who find themselves laid off. This imagery and vocabulary has been examined in great detail by psychoanalytic anthropologist Howard F. Stein who carried out research in numerous organizations undergoing downsizing and has drawn extensive parallels between the dynamics of genocide and the extensive damage caused by corporate downsizing and restructuring. In Euphemism, Spin, and the Crisis in Organizational Life, Stein (1998) argued that the terms used to denote the phenomena are euphemisms that represent not a 'social construction of reality' but a systematic assault on meaning. Terms such as 'downsizing', 'managed health', 're-engineering', 'Total Quality Management' and so forth are not merely attempts to conceal the brutal realities of many American workplaces, but defile the human spirit, by forcing on it a seemingly unanswerable logic of markets, economic necessity and bottom lines. In this regard, downsizing corrupts the value of words in a manner not dissimilar to that noted by Victor Klemperer (2006) in his insightful analysis of the language of the Third Reich when he observed an extensive use of recurrent words and expressions ("spontaneous", "eternal"), prefixes ("world," "grand," "people"), neologisms ("sub-humanity," "to aryanize,") and a continuous abuse of superlatives.

In a follow-up study, Stein (2001) argues that many American workplaces have become a place of darkness, where emotional brutality is commonplace and different forms of psychological violence, dehumanization, including degradation, humiliation and intimidation, have become the norm. Behind calls for flexibility among the employees, Stein sees the rise of a fundamentalist religion of the bottom line, one which is oblivious of all human values and blind to all suffering. The core if unacknowledged euphemism which inspires the title of Stein's book is that of 'collateral damage', the view that no suffering, no lie and no savagery is too great, so long as it is justified by the bottom line. People become dispensable pawns, resources to be used, exploited and discarded. Today's exploiter becomes tomorrow's discarded

pawn, since the religion of the bottom line acknowledges no permanent authority, no human is too important to be dispensed with when his/her usefulness is over. This creates an ethos of survivalism – a constant anxiety over each individual's and each organization's ability to survive in what is construed as an environment of endless terrors and turbulence.

Images from the holocaust saturate Stein's observations of corporate America, which he documents in a sequence of case studies. The core equation for Stein is an experiential and emotional one:

> Organizational darkness is not the fact of the 'symbolic' equation of the American workplace and the Holocaust, but the emotional experience of the workplace that makes the metaphor – and certain recurrent others – plausible and, for many, emotionally apt and 'right.' (Stein 2001: 15 Emphasis in the original).

Stein offers much evidence of a symbolic equation between 'corporate cleansing' and 'ethnic cleansing', both of which view the survival of the whole (the organization, the society) as depending on 'the expulsion of unwanted parts' (p. 69). Stein views the grotesque lament of Hans Frank, the odious Governor General of Poland under the Nazis, as emblematic of modern management: "My only wish of the Jews is that they should disappear." What today's manager wants is that the weak, the ineffectual, the recalcitrant, the ones who fail the excellence test and do not add value, should simply disappear. And, seeing as nobody is good enough, this ineluctable logic, will eventually target each and every person, turning them into the victim of organizational cleansing. Thus, this 'expulsion of the unwanted parts' noted by Stein becomes part of a phantasy of permanent renewal and eternal life (if only we could get rid of the dead wood, all our problems would be solved).

Drawing on Stein's work, Gabriel (2008a,b) has proposed the concept of miasma as a contagious state of pollution – material, psychological and spiritual – that afflicts all who work in organizations during periods of rapid change, when staff or whole departments 'disappear', often without acknowledgement or explanation. Miasma

involves a generalized depression, a gradual paralysis of resistance, an experience of pollution and uncleanliness, and feelings of worthlessness and corruption. Miasma is a feature of all tragedy ("Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" – Hamlet) brought about by individuals who commit grave transgressions and the subsequent failure of the community to take appropriate restorative and purification rituals.

In the 19th century, miasma became the linchpin of a theory of medical contagion taking place through vapours, a theory that was largely discredited by the discovery that most infectious diseases are transmitted through water. Yet, like a highly contagious disease (as portrayed, for example, in Camus' The Plague), miasma undermines people's faith in their institutions and leaders. Attempts to cleanse a city of miasma usually have the exact opposite effect, of reinforcing it. The concept of 'cleansing' is what brings miasma at the core of both genocide and many instances of organizational downsizing. The Other is viewed in each case as the bringer of the miasma, the agent that must be eliminated and from whose presence everyone else purged. In wider society, the bringer of miasma may be a racial, religious or ethnic group, a group of recent arrivals (like immigrants or refugees) or some other socially marginalized group. In organizations, miasma may be attributed to a particular department, an age group (e.g. old guard who have become 'dead-wood') or, more generally, with those seen as unproductive an inefficient.

What makes miasma a potentially useful concept for theorists of organization is that it can help explain the absence of resistance in certain organizations, the collapse of people's sense of identity and worth, the silencing of stories and the generalized feeling of depression and gloom. Miasma is capable of afflicting everyone but also of sparing some people, or as Dodds' eloquently puts it, it operates "with the same ruthless indifference to motive as a typhoid germ" (1968: 36). Miasma usually occurs in organizations that undergo a sudden transformation involving the discarding and loss of many of their valued members through downsizing or retrenchment, without either separation rituals or psychological mourning. The 'old' organization is frequently presented as corrupt, indulgent and inefficient, contrasted to the 'new' organization that is entrepreneurial, dynamic and flexible. Yet, for many surviving members, the new organization is tainted by the presence of 'murderers', i.e. managers who have initiated a series of dismissals and 'corpses', i.e. employees who

have been dismissed or are about to be dismissed and 'disappear', once alive, now discarded.

CONCLUSIONS

The most important argument of this article is that genocide is not a phenomenon marginal to the world of management and organizations, but one from which these disciplines stand to learn a lot and one to which they must contribute their own insights. All genocides arouse abhorrence and horror – yet, genocide is a social phenomenon of wide variety and complexity, resisting monocausal explanations and neat classifications. Modern genocides, as studied by historians, reveal themselves to be organized and managed ventures rather than spontaneous spasms of hatred. In this respect, they invite at least some explanations from the disciplines of organization and management, a project which is still in its very early stages. The main arguments developed in this paper are the following:

1. Genocide may constitute an 'exceptional' event, exposing perpetrators, victims and neutral parties to unique and highly disturbing experiences. Yet, many of the psychological, social, political and organizational processes present in genocide are not fundamentally different from those that may be encountered in organizational life in general. All the same, the presence of 'hot violence' in nearly all genocide means that comparisons must remain cognisant of unique ontological qualities of genocide and the their potential of being experienced as disrespectful or insulting by genocide victims and survivors.

2. While there is a tendency to treat genocide as a coherent and uniform type of phenomenon, there is a need to differentiate between different types of organization present in different genocides, the different relations between perpetrators and victims (close neighbours versus faceless individuals), hot and cold violence.

3. There is an enduring tension on the role of morality in genocide and its relation to a wider range of social and organizational situations. It particular, there is a question on

whether genocide represents a failure of morality or an instance of exaggerated zeal in applying morality.

4. While genocide creates a brutal cleavage between perpetrators and victims, it also creates a wide range of subdivisions, different degrees of victimhood, resistance and collusion, different choices and dilemmas and different modes of identity construction.

Our paper has also indicated some important areas for further work. In addition to the actual organization and management of genocide, scholars can explore a wide nexus of possibilities: language, semiotics and discourse, psychological processes of othering, distancing and scapegoating, social and political processes of collusion and resistance. The technologies of genocide call for close scrutiny, whether involving small-scale operations or mass murder; Taylorist, Fordist and post-Fordist technologies of genocide and the bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic administration deserve a great deal further attention. The links between different organizations directly engaged in genocide and those parasitic to it, or more generally the issue of cross-organizational collaboration in genocide, also merit scholars' attention. Following Allen (2002; 2005), genocide must also be viewed in a macabre way as a very fecund ground for the study of organizational innovation and problem-solving, but also as the space for studying organizational cultures and sub-cultures and the conflicts between different organizational ideologies and values. Even institutional theory can learn much by comparing different institutions of genocide (for example, the ways different concentration camps were structured and how they functioned) and the tensions between central plans and local initiatives. In all of these ways, organizational theorists must shake off their squeamishness about engaging a terrifying and tragic phenomenon that stretches sensemaking capacities and tests emotional responses to breaking point. They must also undermine the relative comfort zones created by unquestioning acceptance of the theses put forward by Arendt and Bauman. Far from subsuming genocide into some form of rationality, bureaucratic, modernist or other, scholars should probe further into the irrational origins of genocide whether linked to systematic generation of nationalist hatred or the search for redemption in the elimination of the other.

Maybe, however, the main area of further exploration signalled by our paper concerns the wide and as yet only partly studied terrains of organizational and social violence, in their diverse and frequently invisible forms. These include practices that are not classified as genocide but lead to dispossession, human rights abuses, environmental plundering, forced movement of people and the destruction of ways of thinking, acting and believing (Banerjee, 2000, 2008; Dosal, 1993; Mbembe, 2003; Ramasastry, 2002). It seems to us that such an exploration must recognize the continuities between genocide and other variants of structural violence without obliterating the unique horror and revulsion generated by genocide.

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