

Jacob Frank, Kim Sebastian Todzi (ed.), *Genocidal Violence. Concepts, Forms, Impact*, Berlin, Boston (De Gruyter Oldenbourg) 2023, 326 p., 1 tab., 2 fig. (Genocide and Mass Violence in the Age of Extremes, 6), ISBN 978-3-11-078132-8, DOI [10.1515/9783110781328](https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110781328), EUR 99,95.

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Genocidal Violence: Concepts, Forms, Impact, edited by Frank Jacob and Kim Sebastian Todzi, represents the cutting-edge theoretical and empirical work in the field of genocide studies. The collection approaches genocidal violence as a socially constructed process, tracing it through its theoretical origins, assorted actions, and distinct outcomes. Hence, genocidal violence is not treated as a historical anomaly or solely as a legal term, but rather as a persistent structurally embedded process within society at large, one that encompasses a wide range of violence including cultural destruction, gendered violence, and adverse environmental impacts. This reframing, Jacob and Todzi cogently argue, will better protect the past, present, and future victims of these crimes (21).

The three Parts of the book use the same structure of genocidal violence as a socially constructed process, starting with origins, actions, and outcomes. While Part One focuses on the historical origins of the concept, Part Two moves onto practice through a number of case studies, and Part Three ends with analyses of the long-term impact of genocide. In Part One, the concept of genocide is critically examined; while Dirk Moses criticizes its narrowed conceptualization at the UN Genocide Convention due to politically motivated compromises, Frank Jacob calls for the expansion of the boundaries of genocidal violence beyond the legal and the physical. Khushboo Chauhan discusses cultural genocide as a form of genocidal violence while Anja Titze ably introduces gendercide as yet another form, demonstrating altogether patterns in the future directions of genocide studies.

Part Two focuses on acts of genocidal violence, drawing on case studies that mostly occur in Western and Eastern Europe. Mohamed Adhikari analyses the genocide of the Beothuk people who are indigenous to Newfoundland, demonstrating how the language of »extinction« employed by the perpetrators and their descendants shifted the blame away from them, thereby avoiding accountability for their violence. Christopher Thomas Goodwin further focuses on the role violence played during the Nazi era when it collectively integrated Germans into the National community and also after the war, when acts of violence continued as accountability failed. While Théophile Leroy and Verena Meier examine the genocide of the Sinti and Roma, victims that remain understudied and underrecognized, Kristin Platt studies the



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extreme violence of desecration during the Armenian Genocide to argue that depersonalization is not a consequence but rather a cause of violence, one that exalts the perpetrators' sense of unity and gets ritualized in their lives. Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe focuses instead on WWII-era fascism, expanding the spatial and temporal scope of genocidal violence perpetrated by Ukrainian Nationalists during the 1920s to the 1940s, thereby drawing attention to Eastern Europe.

Part Three turns to what we consider the most significant contribution of the volume, namely the enduring adverse consequences of genocidal violence across time and space, and across generations in ways that impair healing. Kaitlin Reed moves the discussion from Europe to a former British colony, namely the United States, as she studies the current impact of genocidal violence on Indigenous American communities in California, highlighting the significance of healing not only for indigenous peoples, but also for Native lands. Erika Silvestri focuses on the private remembrance and public commemoration of the Nazi euthanasia program, hoping that as younger generations of Germans privately break decades of silence surrounding this traumatic memory, they will be ready for more direct public acknowledgement. Lastly, Alexander Williams analyzes Eddie Weinstein's Treblinka testimony *Quenched Steel* (2002) to illustrate how survivors' memories of genocidal violence are shaped and expressed in spaces of extreme violence where reality fractures within such annihilatory environments (565). In all, then, the volume offers an excellent analysis of the origins, enactment and outcome of genocidal violence.

Even though the volume ably advocates the expansion of the concept of genocidal violence across time and across societies, a significant portion of the book still focuses on the West, specifically the Holocaust, the Nazi regime, and early twentieth century European fascism. While the volume does offer new and important perspectives to genocidal violence in this region and time-period, examples from Africa, Asia, Australia, or additional analyses of indigenous communities across the Americas, would significantly broaden the lens of genocidal violence going forward. That lens could further expand by bringing in intersectionality as an analytical tool to deeply layer meanings and ensuing knowledge across time and space. This could prove to be particularly useful not only with the direct and immediate impacts of genocidal violence, but with the process of remembrance and healing as well.

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