



# “Scholarly Works on Holocaust and Genocide Narratives: The Potential for a New Educational Model in University Studies Post World War II”

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## Abstract

*Some holocaust scholars have argued that the Germans and those who were allied with German fascism, tortured and murdered Jews, Roma, Clergy and Intellectuals with zeal because they were subjected to economic depression, the repercussions of the Treaty of Versailles Treaty and virulent anti-Semitism for generations before Hitler became leader of Germany. These scholars do not claim that Germans, practiced genocide because of fanatic nationalism, or due to overwhelming psychological and social pressure. These scholars point to historical precedents for anti-Semitism or to covert operations amongst the axis powers. This theory asserts that Germans enthusiastically embraced Nazi philosophy because that actually believed genocide of the Jews was a necessity. Many scholars argue that it was not Hitler's specific intention to kill Jews, Roma, intellectuals and clergy but rather the almost natural consequences of prolific and widespread anti-Semitism whose rudimentary basis was faux racial theories that permeated all branches of government and all social and economic classes and religions throughout Europe that laid the foundation for extermination and the Shoah. This paper will examine the theories that have no basis in fact and in particular address scholars who are known as intentionalists.*

**Keywords:** Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, Nazi philosophy, Functionalist, Bureaucratic, Jews

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Some holocaust scholars have argued that the Germans and those who were allied with German fascism, tortured and murdered Jews, Roma, Clergy and Intellectuals with zeal because they were subjected to economic depression, the repercussions of the Treaty of Versailles Treaty and virulent anti-Semitism for generations before Hitler became leader of Germany. These scholars do not claim that Germans, practiced genocide because of fanatic nationalism, or due to overwhelming psychological and social pressure. These scholars point to historical precedents for anti-Semitism or to covert operations amongst the axis powers. This theory asserts that Germans enthusiastically embraced Nazi philosophy because that actually believed genocide of the Jews was a necessity. Many scholars argue that it was not Hitler's specific intention to kill Jews, Roma, intellectuals and clergy but rather the almost natural consequences of prolific and widespread anti-Semitism whose rudimentary basis was faux racial theories that permeated all branches of government and all social and economic classes and religions throughout Europe that laid the foundation for extermination and the Shoah. This paper will examine the theories that have no basis in fact and in particular address scholars who are known as intentionalists. These scholars believed that Hitler believed world Jewry was the cause in fact for most of the ills and sufferings of the Aryan world. The result of Hitler's views according to these scholars is that Hitler intended to kill and murder Jews. The Holocaust according to intentionalists believes that it was deliberate and methodical planning that led to the “final solution.” These scholars also believe that the Holocaust was such a unique event that it needs to be analyzed separately from past incidents of prolific anti-Semitism. These intentionalists also assert that Hitler's ideology and hatred of Jews and their “allies” gave momentum for the Holocaust because the Holocaust was the only real case of mass genocide to have ever taken place with its focus as the total annihilation of an entire people based on their alleged “racial” and “cultural” beliefs.

This paper will also examine Functionalist scholars who maintained the belief that one must look to the institutions that existed under the Third Reich in order to explain the causes for the Holocaust. These scholars argue that genocide of the Jews through Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian and others allied with Germany were not the result of a planned, deliberate and methodical ideology but rather came about piece meal because of the way in which Hitler governed Germany. These scholars emphasize the discretion and authority all Nazi officials had that was

encouraged because of haphazard and disorganized Nazi bureaucracy. These same functionalists believe that many Nazi leaders wished to show their loyalty for Hitler and did so in order to enhance their own personal standing in the Nazi hierarchy. Thus, the Holocaust was a natural outcome of the Third Reich.

It is the author's intention to provide insight into the political climate and dogma that perpetuates covert intelligence operations on a global scale today as a *raison d'être* for perpetuating anti-semitism in various national identities in current affairs of state.

Still other Holocaust scholars stress the nature of technocrats and bureaucrats as a cause in fact for the Holocaust. These scholars are called modernists. They attribute the genocide of Jews to capitalist theory. Genocide for these scholars was the result of the emphasis Nazis had on resettlement issues, and the need for more Aryan homeland, rather than making the Holocaust an event unique for Jews. To these theorists, the Holocaust the result of the logical capitalist exploitation of conquered territories by the Nazis. These scholars downplay anti-Semitism as a cause in fact of the Holocaust.

Finally, there are those scholars who are known as moderate functionalists. According to these academicians, Hitler never had a premeditated plan to murder all Jews. Only after Hitler became highly successful in numerous campaigns in Poland, the Low Countries and France did Hitler radicalize a policy towards the Jews. Therefore, these scholars are of the opinion that the Holocaust was not the result of bureaucratic haphazardness or a fanatical desire to kill Jews by some premeditated deliberate plan. These scholars also attribute much of the murderous killings to local Nazi officials, as well as impromptu and haphazard impulses rather than an inhuman and deliberate plan aimed at mass genocide.

It should also be noted that Hitler's exposure to Jews from Eastern Europe during his tenure in Austria may have supplied ammunition for whatever concrete ideologies he expressed about Jews in books such as "Mein Kampf." This exposure combined with growing nationalism, anger towards the West after the signing of The Treaty of Versailles and economic collapse and depression in Germany may also have provided impetus for the Genocide, as Jews were a convenient scapegoat for Hitler. I do not believe based on what I have read to date, that any one particular Jew caused Hitler to conclude that all Jews were parasites and needed to be exterminated. In fact some evidence points to relationships Hitler had in Vienna that were cordial with Jews.

The question remains whether Genocide is a unique event relating to the Jewish experience. If genocide is defined as a program aimed at the annihilation of a certain race or ethnicity or culture, history would include the victims of Pol Pot (the Khmer Rouge) and the tribal cleansing that took place in Rwanda, to name a few instances. Certainly there is no singular event or theory which could explain the origins of Genocide or the Holocaust in particular. What are significant are the schools of thought that are used to explain the events. These theories lead to discussion and further analysis.

Elie Wiesel's "Night," is a profound, uncorrupted factual record of one survivor's journey into darkness during the Holocaust. Wiesel is an eye witness to anguish, malevolence, greed, fear, hunger, abandonment and genocide. Words alone are incapable of conveying the breadth of emotions personally experienced by him. In his preface to the new translation of "Night," Wiesel states, "... Knowing all the while that any one of the fields of ashes in Birkenau carries more weight than all the testimonies about Birkenau. For, despite all my attempts to articulate the unspeakable, "it" is still not right. (Wiesel, preface x) The "it" Wiesel refers to is his narrative. "Night," is Wiesel's story untainted by subjectivity and bound by truth. His testimony in "Night," is unique as every survivor will attest to a myriad of experiences which are not shared by others. "Night" is inimitable and distinctive.

The book is not void of dialogue yet it appears to ask more questions than it answers. It is Wiesel's intention to overcome the obstacle of language in accurately conveying and reflecting facts. This is necessary to counter the effects of international memory loss as it pertains to the Holocaust and perhaps is an effective tool in combating revisionism. Perhaps one reason why he attempts to edit the original translation of Night (first translated into English from Yiddish) is because Wiesel believes it is necessary to "...correct and revise a number of details." Wiesel asserts that when the first manuscript was published "...My English was far from good." (Wiesel xiii)

That being said, it can be argued that the very fact that Wiesel had his wife edit his manuscript, would appear to give credibility to those who argue that "Night," is in fact a hybrid memoir and a testimonial account. They can base this argument on the rendering of a new translation. Perhaps Wiesel's memory was not accurate when "Night," was first published. If that were the case it could be argued that "Night" is more in line with a memoir where recollection of certain "events" is faulty in retrospect. Indeed, Wiesel offers his recollection of events in order to validate and endorse events that are not universally confirmed in documents or historical archives. Testimony differs greatly from the literary memoir in that the latter often convey a fictional quality in spite of the story's overall truth. Literary memoirs tug at a reader's emotional heartstrings by using poetic license, imagery, conflict, irony, and symbolism. Wiesel is concerned with details, facts and an unbiased recollection of the truth or existence of something rather than a supposition, interpretation or belief about an event.

The narrator of "Night," is Eliezer, (Elie Wiesel) He is a young observant adolescent Jew interested in the Talmud and the Kabbalah. Upon exile from Sighet, Elie insists upon being at his father's side. Subsequently, his father becomes weaker as days pass into months in the hellish environments known as Auschwitz, Birkenau, Buna,

Gleiwitz and Buchenwald. Although Eliezer relates that he has abandoned his father in order to survive, it is because Elie has been reduced to an automaton obsessed with primal needs such as food and water. There is no expression by Elie of morality for action or non-action with few exceptions in which Elie feels as if he has abandoned his father.

Eliezer describes in great detail the love his father consistently expresses. As if the father felt responsible for his son's dilemma, Elie's father asserts on arrival at Auschwitz, "What a shame, a shame that you did not go with your mother...I saw many children your age go with their mothers..." (Wiesel 33) Obviously under the mistaken belief that his son would be spared the reality of the camp by going with his mother, the affirmation by the boy's father is evidence of his unwavering affection and compassion as guardian and protector of his son.

The narrator subsequently depicts the numbing affect of Auschwitz on the boy. The relationship has changed. The young man (Elie) becomes the older man's caregiver. Eliezer resents his father and also loses faith in humanity and in God. Eliezer reports an event in which his father was slapped. Elie comments, "...I stood petrified. What happened to me? My father had just been struck, in front of me, and I had not even blinked. I had watched and kept silent." (Wiesel 39) On another occasion, Idek, a particularly sadistic Kapo beat Elie's father. Eliezer then states, "I had watched it all happening without moving. I kept silent." (Wiesel 54) In spite of all the traumatic events both Elie and his father experienced, his father's love for Elie remained steadfast. Knowing full well that his time on earth was nearing its end, Elie's father imparted his remaining assets to his son, a knife and spoon. Obviously, these were valuable commodities at a hell such as Birkenau. The father gave these items to his son in order that his son might survive. "Here, take this knife," he said. "I won't need it anymore. You may find it useful. Also take this spoon." (Wiesel 75)

The paradox presented by the narrator is that roles between father and son soon reversed at the camp. Soon the boy became the father's caretaker. The boy saved his father's life on more than one occasion. He woke him up from a deep sleep before two "gravediggers" were about to throw his father outside. (Wiesel 99). The narrator states, "He had become childlike: weak, frightened, vulnerable." (Wiesel 105) The instinct to survive was primal in the boy. The will to survive when coupled with fear is visceral. Yet the narrator does not treat the boy as a demon. The narrator merely relates the events and recalls the boy's reactions. For example, shortly before the father's death, after witnessing more beatings and blows to the father, the boy states, "I didn't move. I was afraid, my body was afraid of another blow, this time to my head." (Wiesel 111) The narrator reports that after the boy had given his father some soup, the boy said, "But my heart was heavy, I was aware that I was doing it grudgingly." (Wiesel 107) These comments are not judgmental. They simply reflect the human condition and the power of the will to survive. At the end of the narrative, Eliezer says, "From the depth of the mirror, a corpse was contemplating me." (Wiesel 115) The narrator may be seeing death looking at him. The narrator has made the decision to keep on living and therefore rejects death. The corpse may symbolize the Nazis or the death camps. The image in the mirror may represent what Elie believes he has become a corpse. However, Elie recognizes he is alive and has survived the ordeal. The narrator says, "The look in his eyes as he gazed at me has never left me." (Wiesel 115) This may symbolize that although Eliezer is alive, a part of him has also died. He is a corpse and a survivor. As the narrator reflects on the occasion of three men being sent to the gallows, he relates one man asking a profound question, "For God's sake, where is God?" Eliezer then relates, "And from within me, I heard a voice answer: "Where He is? This is where-hanging here from this gallows..." (Wiesel 65). He is referring to death. Perhaps after witnessing the executions Eliezer succumbed to the belief God has died, or that Eliezer has lost faith in humanity. Eliezer says, "That night, the soup tasted of corpses." (Wiesel 65) Eliezer may be suggesting that after this particular event, he was more dead than alive. Francois Mauriac, a Christian writer, recalls meeting Elie Wiesel and comments on Wiesel's extraordinary record of personal experiences during the Holocaust as noted in "Night." Mauriac says, "The child who tells us his story here was one of God's chosen." (Wiesel xix) Wiesel's story strikes hard at Mauriac's conscience. He cannot understand how an observant and faithful Jew, one of God's chosen people, could have been abandoned by God. For a Christian who believes that Christ was the son of God (and a Jew who died for man's sake), this is more than perplexing. Mauriac recalls knowledge of French children being deported from France. He was a bystander yet he acknowledges his outrage and complicity with the perpetrators when he says, "And yet I was still thousands of miles away from imagining these children were destined to feed the gas chambers and crematoria." (Wiesel xviii) The notion that Mauriac was a witness to the deportations makes him believe even more in the idea of Messianic redemption. Jesus was killed on the cross for the sins of man. He was resurrected in order that man might live.

As a Christian, Mauriac lacks answers that might offer Wiesel any solace or comfort. Mauriac, however, unlike Wiesel, has not lost faith in God. Mauriac finds comfort in Christ's existence when he says, "If the Almighty is the Almighty, the last word for each of us belongs to Him. That is what I should have said to the Jewish child. But all I could do was embrace him and weep." (Wiesel xxi) Mauriac refers to the crucifixion when he remarks, "Did I speak to him of that other Jew, this crucified brother who perhaps resembled him and whose cross conquered the world?" (Wiesel xxi) Here Mauriac is referring to the death, and the resurrection of Christ. Mauriac still believes in Messianic delivery through Christ. From Wiesel's perspective, Messianic delivery in the form of Christ offers no solace. For him, God died hanging from the gallows.

On a personal level, Eliezer confesses, "Since my father's death, nothing mattered to me at all." "I spent my days in total idleness. With only one desire: to eat, I no longer thought of my father, or mother." (Wiesel 113) After the SS had fled Buchenwald, Eliezer remarks, "Our first act as free men was to throw ourselves unto the provisions. That's all we thought about...And even when we were no longer hungry, not one of us thought about revenge." (Wiesel 113) In Wiesel's subsequent speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, Wiesel laments about humanity. He says, "Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere." (Wiesel 119) To that end, we are inclined to believe that Wiesel feels man must not forget the oppressed. Silence is not an option. He says, "As long as one dissident is in prison, our freedom will not be true. As long as one child is hungry, our life will be filled with anguish and shame." (Wiesel 120) Thus, it is clear that the author still believes man must continue to fight and suppress bias, belligerence and promote peace. Wiesel is a survivor, a witness to malevolence and evil. However, he remains a man of faith. When he says, "...But I have faith. Faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and even in his creation," Wiesel is asserting that he maintains a belief and devotion (in spite of the trauma of the Holocaust) in God's creation, Man. (Wiesel 120)

The narrator's attitude towards God has evolved. It has made a full circle. As a young observant teenager studying the Talmud, Eliezer embraced his Judaism and his belief in the Almighty. His faith in God and ultimately in humanity eroded as did his body during the time he spent in the camps. Elie witnessed the worst humanity has to offer. Eliezer experienced murder, deceit, sadism, anguish, and evil firsthand. To treat these emotional responses that led to the death of his family as inappropriate would be to deny Eliezer's very own humanity. Subsequently, as years pass, Wiesel affirms his faith in God and even in his creation, Man. His purpose and responsibility to others, both alive and dead was to "testify." Wiesel says, "For the survivor who chooses to testify, it is clear: his duty is to bear witness for the dead and for the living." (Wiesel xv) Thus, he feels it obligatory to remind mankind not to forget. Wiesel states, "To forget would be not only dangerous but offensive: to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time." (Wiesel xv) The significance of Wiesel's statements is if he did not feel mankind could learn from his past, there would be no need to remember. It would be an exercise in futility. It appears as if Wiesel still believes there is hope for humanity as long as man does not forget.

Kosinski's graphic and often gruesome and shocking book entitled, "The Painted Bird," introduces us to a young boy whose name is never revealed by the author. His name is as uncertain as is his background. "He was considered a Gypsy or Jewish stray (Kosinski 4) and his future is similarly uncertain, which makes his identity as well as his outlook problematic. The young boy in "The Painted Bird," has dark hair and black eyes. Kosinski 1) Unlike "Wartime Lies," in which Maciek (a fair-haired boy) assumes the identity of a Pole under false identity papers, the young boy in "The Painted Bird," is actually mistaken for a Gypsy or Jew by rural peasants who treat him with savagery because they believe he is either a Gypsy or Jew. It is a story of brutality and violence of the Aryan population which Kosinski would have you believe is based on the boys' physical attributes (dark hair and eyes). Identity in both novels is a significant theme. In "The Painted Bird," the main character has despaired but retains his memory only to be traumatized by violence and brutality. For example, the boy recalls "...lying between the rails with a train running above. ...During the short time when the carriage roared over one's body, nothing mattered except the simple fact of being alive." (Kosinski 218) More importantly, the boy witnesses various abominations. For example, he recalls how a miller "...plunged the spoon into one of the boy's eyes and twisted it. (Kosinski 40) He further affirms, "...I made a promise to myself to remember everything I saw; if someone should pluck out my eyes then I would retain the memory of all that I had seen for as long as I lived." (Kosinski 41) Thus, Kosinski is reinforcing the theme that the past will not be forgotten. In "Wartime Lies," memory of the past for Maciek is lost and a new "Aryan" identity assumed.

The fact that Maciek has assumed an identity other than his own is one of the many "lies" that are portrayed in "Wartime Lies," a poignant book by Louis Begley. Trying to pass as an "Aryan" in wartime Poland was not an unknown phenomenon. As Jews were systematically being compelled to move into ghettos, flee or assume false identities, the will to survive became for many, became an overwhelming response to reality. This will to survive at all costs made some male Jews consider surgical procedures in order to hide ritual circumcision, cosmetically bleaching hair blond or "passing" as uneducated peasants in order to avoid being singled out as Jews.

At the beginning of Begley's novel, we learn that Maciek has "...a truly blond Sarmatian look." (Begley 11) This no doubt assists him in assuming a new identity as a native Pole rather than a Jew. Since many Poles believed they were rather adept at finding Jews, physical characteristics such as blond hair were understandably desirable. Poland, with a history of anti-Semitism, had many willing Nazi corroborators intent on killing Jews. "...Polish policemen who understood Jews and could not be fooled by their tricks..." (Begley 43) Aryan papers also helped the façade in Maciek's case which were procured through his Grandfather. (Begley 47) Special glue could be used on Jewish males where additional foreskin could be affixed to avoid the appearance of a circumcised penis. (Begley 48) As Maciek was still a youngster at the time of the German occupation, using this glue would prove fruitless. He was still growing. Similarities and metaphors to a variety of mythological stories abound in Begley's novel. For example, the epic of Konrad Wallenrod is told. Konrad however is a fraud. ("...his name is not Wallenrod; he is not German; he is Lithuanian." (Begley 63)

Maciek is also reminded that "...one couldn't take my penis where it might be seen." (Begley 83) Thus, attending school was out of the question. Maciek's gentile caregiver Zosia had taught him how to "...make the sign of the cross, and we now crossed ourselves each time we walked by the church." (Begley 89) Maciek attended catechism class (Begley 103); took first communion (Begley 108) All in all, Maciek's Aunt Tania and he have become other people. They do not protest pogroms (Begley 176) Maciek's father also has a new name. (Begley 177)

After the Germans leave Poland, it is clear from Begley that Maciek's original identity is no more. Maciek has no past. He is living a lie. He is a Catholic Pole. "Our man has no childhood he can bear to remember." (Begley 180)

In "The Painted Bird," the young boy turns 12 at the end of the war. Like Maciek in "Wartime Lies," he has lost his innocence, his childhood. However, unlike "Wartime Lies," he is incapable of making any sense of the world around him. He has tried everything from attending church regularly (Kosinski 119) to making multiple prayers to God (Kosinski 132) and ultimately pacts with the devil. (Kosinski 152) To some, the boy is a "vampire," (Kosinski 21) To others, like the carpenter and his wife, the boy's "...black hair would attract lightening to their farm." (Kosinski 57)

The boy does not survive without a memory of the past. It haunts him day and he suffers nightmares all night (Kosinski 153) Unlike Maciek who has reinvented himself, the young boy in "The Painted Bird," has no faith whatsoever in humanity and so he resorts to embrace violence as the rural peasantry had done in order to survive.

The young boy evolves. He becomes apathetic and amoral. He witnesses untold horrors including vicious rapes (Kosinski 177) and becomes "...overwhelmed by dread and disgust (Kosinski 178) He witnesses unabashed brutality as when "...a soldier threw a knife at one of the girls who was trying to crawl away (Kosinski 179). He is beaten and tortured. (Kosinski 131-5) After the war, he is reluctant to meet his parents. He states, "...I could not readily accept the idea of suddenly becoming someone's real son, of being caressed and cared for, of having to obey people..." (Kosinski 228) and after he does recognize his parents, the boy breaks the arm of his four year old adopted brother (Kosinski 229) without feeling the least bit of sympathy or remorse for his action. "The small boy was a nuisance. He insisted on playing whenever I was reading the newspaper reporting the Red Army successes." (Kosinski 229) The trauma of the war and the boy's wandering in isolation combined with the brutality he witnessed has rendered him unfeeling and immoral. To hate and practice brutality becomes the norm. Violence and depravity have had their effect on the main character.

Maciek has learned that in order to survive in a gentile world filled with anti-Semitism, he must abandon his past. He must live the lie and become Aryan. The rules of survival demand that Maciek becomes so assimilated with the Catholic Polish population by adapting their culture, language, mannerisms and religious practices, that he in fact becomes one with them. In "The Painted Bird," the young boy has adopted emotions which contrast with love and caring. Violence, brutality, perversions, bestiality and hatred all become the norm. To survive means to become one with these attributes. To the boy in "The Painted Bird," the old adage "survival of the fittest," and "It's a dog eat dog world," applies. After witnessing the most horrific of events, the boy looks upon forms of insane behavior as a friend. "I walked off the embankment feigning indifference and boredom," recalls the boy after lying between the rails of an oncoming train. (Kosinski 219). The boy explains the event as a form of entertainment for the peasants.

"Wartime Lies," appears to be more truthful than "The Painted Bird," because of the manner in which the story is told. It is a narrative however the story is being revealed in a tragic way. Maciek is detached from the young Jewish boy he once was. His lies become truth. He becomes a Catholic Pole who has gone through catechism and communion. He does not live like a Jew nor does he associate with Jews. The comparisons with Dante and The Inferno illicit the fact that Maciek will survive in spite of the German atrocities because Maciek becomes a bystander. Maciek bears no resemblance to the young boy portrayed at the beginning of Begley's novel. Assuming this new identity makes the book all the more believable. History and precedent have surfaced in which many persecuted "Jews," post-war assumed new lives and new identities.

"The Painted Bird," relies upon ghastly portrayals of rape and brutality in order to emphasize the psychological trauma experienced by the young boy. Therefore, it does not read as a narrative but rather a more fictional description of the war years as enlightened by perceptions of childhood experiences. For this reason it appears to be less truthful or autobiographical than "Wartime Lies."

"The Painted Bird," abounds in horrific and gory detail the experiences of a young boy trying to survive in Eastern Europe without any family to support him. The psychological and moral loving support of family members is absent for this boy unlike that of Maciek in "Wartime Lies," who had a loving aunt to protect and guide his every move. The void the young boy in "The Painted Bird," experiences is never filled by family or friends. Thus, he loses all hope in humanity at the end of his travails in the book. He simply survives. The cruelty people are capable of is a theme that is constantly reinforced in "The Painted Bird." The Holocaust was a natural outcome of what is natural in people according to Kosinski. They seek to exterminate what is different. Thus it is understandable that Kosinski named his book "The Painted Bird. A painted bird would have the same fate as anyone who does not fit in with the rest. It would be a fake, certainly not the real thing. It is a sad commentary on the human condition.

In 1994 the Tutsi minority in Rwanda were the subject of systematic extermination with the sanction and at the direction of the ruling Hutu government. They used every means available to them in conducting this “genocide”. Estimates of those killed range from 800,000 upward. This occurred some 55 years after the Holocaust in Europe and some 46 years after the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, was adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the UN General Assembly. One would think that with international law addressing such events as “ethnic and racial cleansing,” that Genocide would be an event which humanity would never again witness. Sadly, that is not the case.

This paper shall also address the deficiencies in international law, and United States policy in 1994 towards the Rwanda conflict, the failure of transnational organizations such as the United Nations to address Genocide and the potential for future genocide to occur in view of the woefully inadequate policies that are presently in existence. In addition, this paper will address the problem with definitions which are often too broad, vague or ambiguous to respond to a global crime based on facts rather than holocaust narratives.

Many people have attempted to explain why the United States treated the horrific events in Rwanda with outright neglect in 1994. To say that the United States or other western nations did not know the extent of the problem until it was too late appears ludicrous after researching the issue. A three year investigation actually took place after the Rwanda Genocide ended. This investigation was exhaustive and extensive. National Security Council officials, the U.S. State Department Defense Department and many Rwandan and United Nations officials were interviewed. In addition, peacekeepers, clergy, reporters and non governmental personnel were also interviewed. The investigation reveals President Clinton’s policy on genocide and what he and other U.S. government officials actually knew in spite of the rhetoric subsequently espoused years after the genocide ended. Unfortunately, the facts reveal that President Clinton’s “apology” in March of 1998 is all the more potent because of what the U.S. government knew and what actions it could have taken to end the Rwandan genocide. The United States essentially did nothing. The United Nations did nothing. The global community of nations did nothing. History, when it comes to genocide, has only established the unwillingness for the international community to act. Debates in the United Nations become forums for lawyers to argue what “genocide” actually meant. Secretary of State Albright along with officials at the United Nations engaged in diatribes while thousands of Rwandans died every day.

The Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was established in 1985 under the leadership of a man named Paul Kagame. He wanted the Rwandan government to acknowledge Tutsis as Rwandan citizens. His forces entered Rwanda from Uganda in 1990. At the time the RPF entered Rwanda, over 500,000 Tutsis were already living in a diaspora. In response to this invasion, the Rwandan government looked at Kagame’s invasion as trying to bring the Tutsis back into power. Hutus supported President Habyarimana.

The President of Rwanda subsequently was murdered by Hutu fanatics. They were upset with the Arusha Accords. These agreements were signed by the government of Rwanda and an organization known as the RPF or Rwandan Patriotic Front. In Arusha Tanzania. This occurred in 1993, one year before the genocide occurred in Rwanda. France and the U.S. were instrumental in having these agreements signed. The President at the time of the agreements in Rwanda was Juvénal Habyarimana. President Habyarimana was a most powerful man in Rwanda at the time. Power was removed from him pursuant to the agreements and placed in the hands of a transitional Board and the RPF and other political parties as a coalition government. From 1990-1993 the political situation worsened in Rwanda. More and more Hutu fanatics initiated a plan of terrorism, intimidation and persecution of the Tutsis. Government leaders used the media to instill hate against the Tutsis.

Evidence of the plan to exterminate the Tutsis was received by Major General Baril who was also the military advisor to the Secretary General of the U.N. on January 11, 1994. The goal of the Hutu fanatics was to make it look as if the RPF were shooting demonstrators so that the Hutus could use this as a subterfuge to start killing the Tutsis. The Secretary General was made aware of this plan to exterminate the Tutsis. Therefore, since the January 11, 1994 telegram clearly indicates the extent of the threat of extermination, to say the U.N., or the U.S. was unaware of the plan is blatantly ridiculous.

Additional evidence later revealed at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda subsequent to the genocide that the plan to kill Tutsis was systematically organized, not very different from the plan to exterminate the Jews during the Holocaust. The Rwandan genocide was another “final solution,” intended to cure all of Rwandan society ills. Militia were organized throughout Rwanda. AK 47 assault rifles, grenades and machetes were widespread and available to these killers. At the same crimes tribunal, Prime Minister Jean Kambanda actually told the court that the genocide was openly discussed in cabinet meetings. Others besides Kambanda were complicit in the plan. They included Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, a retired army officer, and many top ranking government officials and members of the army, such as General Augustin Bizimungu. In addition, many local government officials, mayors and small town officials and police took and active role in the Genocide. On the local level, the Genocide’s planners included mayors, and members of the police.

As the terror in Rwanda actually escalated in 1994, President Clinton stood idle as thousands of Rwandans were killed every day. In April of 1994, President Clinton speaks to the press about Rwanda—He says, "... I mention it only because there are a sizable number of Americans there and it is a very tense situation. And I just

want to assure the families of those who are there that we are doing everything we possible can to be on top of the situation to take all the appropriate steps to try to assure the safety of our citizens there."

Four years after the genocide ended in Rwanda, President Clinton still refused to accept the fact that the U.S. did absolutely nothing to halt or lessen the killings in Rwanda. He said in Rwanda in 1998, "We come here today partly in recognition of the fact that we in the United States and the world community did not do as much as we could have and should have done to try to limit what occurred" in Rwanda." What the U.S. actually did is unobtainable because there is no evidence anything was actually done. The rhetoric of President Clinton is actually quite disturbing because it implies the U.S. did something but no troops were sent. The U.S. actually led efforts to have U.N. peacekeeping forces leave Rwanda when they were most needed.

The U.S. refused to use its technology to jam radio broadcasts that were a crucial instrument in the coordination and perpetuation of the genocide. Furthermore, lawyers and international legal advisors refused to acknowledge any genocide was occurring debating the meaning of the word genocide in several public forums. The actual explicit foreign policy of the U.S. was NOT to go into Rwanda.

In point of fact, U.S. policy was to do absolutely nothing as evidenced by many documents now released under the Freedom of Information Act, to be discussed in this paper. In a similar vein, U.S. President Clinton, it is widely believed, chose to define the genocide in Kosovo with the euphemistic term "ethnic cleansing," since the term "genocide" might have implied an obligation for the United States or NATO to intervene. Similarly, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, made headlines when he defined the conflict in Darfur as a genocide. Historical precedent for this stance took place in Rwanda in 1994.

"During the first three days of the killings U.S. diplomats in Rwanda reported back to Washington that well-armed extremists were intent on eliminating the Tutsi. And the American press spoke of the door-to-door hunting of unarmed civilians. By the end of the second week informed nongovernmental groups had already begun to call on the Administration to use the term "genocide," causing diplomats and lawyers at the State Department to begin debating the word's applicability soon thereafter. In order not to appreciate that genocide or something close to it was under way, U.S. officials had to ignore public reports and internal intelligence and debate."

The UN mission (UNAMIR), created in October 1993 to keep the peace and assist the governmental transition in Rwanda, sought to intervene between the killers and civilians. It also tried to mediate between the RPF and the Rwandan army after the RPF struck from Rwanda to protect Tutsi and rescue their battalion encamped in Kigali as part of the Accord. On April 21, 1994, the United Nations Security Council, at the behest of the United States—which had no troops in Rwanda—Belgium, and others, voted to withdraw all but a remnant of UNAMIR. The Security Council took this vote and others concerning Rwanda even as the representative of the genocidal regime sat amongst them as a non-permanent member. On April 30, 1994, the United Nations Security Council passes a resolution condemning the killing, but omits the word "genocide." Why? Perhaps it is because if the word "genocide" were used, the United Nations would be compelled to "prevent and punish" the perpetrators pursuant to international law and the Genocide Convention.

After human rights, media, and diplomatic reports of the carnage mounted, the UN met and debated and finally arrived at a compromise response on May 16. UNAMIR II, as it was to be known, would be a more robust force of 5,500 troops. Again, however, the world failed to deliver, as the full complement of troops and materiel would not arrive in Rwanda until months after the genocide ended. Faced with the UN's delay, but also concerned about its image as a former patron and arms supplier of the Habyarimana regime, France announced on June 15 that it would intervene to stop the killing. In a June 22 vote, the UN Security Council gave its blessing to this intervention; that same day, French troops entered Rwanda from Zaire. While intending a wider intervention, confronted with the RPF's rapid advance across Rwanda, the French set up a "humanitarian zone" in the southwest corner of Rwanda. Their intervention succeeded in saving tens of thousands of Tutsi lives; it also facilitated the safe exit of many of the genocide's plotters, who were allies of the French.

Despite overwhelming evidence of genocide and knowledge as to its perpetrators, United States officials decided against taking a leading role in confronting the slaughter in Rwanda. Rather, US officials confined themselves to public statements, diplomatic demarches, initiatives for a ceasefire, and attempts to contact both the interim government perpetrating the killing and the RPF. The US did use its influence, however, at the United Nations, but did so to discourage any UN response. In late July, however, with the evidence of genocide littering the ground in Rwanda, the US did launch substantial operations—again, in a supporting role—to assist humanitarian relief efforts for those displaced by the genocide.

**What is “Genocide?”** The definitional article included in the 1948 convention stipulates:

## Article II

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The critical element is the presence of an "intent to destroy", which can be either "in whole or in part", groups defined in terms of nationality, ethnicity, race or religion. Thus, the imposition of restrictions during the nineteen-sixties and seventies on reproduction in India, through forced sterilization in many instances, or the continuing restrictions in China, do not constitute genocidal policies as the intent is to restrict the size of groups, not to destroy existing groups in whole or in part. Policies implemented during the Third Reich respecting Jewish, Roma and Sinti groups, on the other hand, were quite clearly genocidal in terms of this article as there was a clearly stated policy indicating the presence of an intent to destroy them.. Members of all these groups were processed in extermination camps, were subjected to serious bodily and mental harm, and had conditions inflicted upon them intended to bring about their physical destruction, including starvation in ghettos, and had measures applied to them intended to prevent births within the group (sterilization).

Many experts, legal and academic, consider these criteria deficient in various respects. Some consider that the criteria are insufficiently broad. For instance, it excludes the physical destruction of certain sub-groups that have regularly been the victims of extensive killing programs. Usually mentioned in this context are members of political or social classes, such as the bourgeoisie, the middle classes, and the intelligentsia. Also, the definition focuses on the physical destruction of the group. There have been many instances in which the group has physically survived but its cultural distinctiveness has been eradicated.

These and other deficiencies need to be understood in the context of the background to the passage of the Genocide convention. The term genocide is of recent derivation. The jurist Raphael Lemkin submitted to the *International Conference for Unification of Criminal Law* a proposal to declare the destruction of racial, religious or social collectivities a crime in international law. In 1944 he published a monograph, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, in which he detailed the exterminatory and other practices and policies pursued by the Third Reich and its allies. He went on to argue the case for the international regulation of the "practice of extermination of nations and ethnic groups," a practice which he referred to now as *genocide*. Lemkin was also instrumental in lobbying United Nations officials and representatives to secure the passage of a resolution by the General Assembly affirming that "genocide is a crime under international law which the civilized world condemns, and for the commission of which principals and accomplices are punishable." The matter was referred for consideration to the UN Economic and Social Council, their deliberations culminating with the signing of the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide (UNCG).

There are considerable disagreements among experts concerning whether a specific complex of behaviors merits the designation *genocide*, even leaving aside clear-cut instances of attempts at moral appropriation of the concept. There are various reasons for this. First, like any other legal instrument, it was the outcome of negotiations between parties that held conflicting views as to the proper scope of its constituent parts. On this, see the analysis by Leo Kuper in his *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981, Chapter 2. Although Article IX allows for disputes between parties to be adjudicated by the International Court of Justice, because accusations of genocide are invariably made by one state against another, this has never occurred. Consequently, there is no body of international law to clarify the parameters of the convention.

A second reason for uncertainty as to how the concept can be fitted to particular complexes of behaviour derives from the fact that the "ideal-typical" genocidal complex that Lemkin had in mind was the destruction of European Jewry. This instance of genocide was quite clearly also uppermost in the minds of those who drafted and negotiated the UNCG. Precisely because this particular instance was so central to the genesis of the UNCG, its application to other situations has been problematic. It is quite clear that the programs devised by the Nazi regime for the Final Solution of the Jewish Question lie at the extreme of any continuum of types of mass violence aimed at inflicting significant loss on members of particular groups, whether these be religious, national, ethnical or racial. Although the massacre of Armenians by the Turks during World War I, the destruction of the intelligentsia and others by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia during 1975-1978, and the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s share some

elements with the Nazi genocidal program, there are also important differences that call into question whether they meet the criteria specified by Article II of the UNCG. Any Hutu plan aimed at extermination of the Tutsis was partially due to U.S. policy. This paper will also address the failure of transnational organizations to act on known occurrences of genocide and its failure to adhere to international law.

“The actions of the UN Member States had led its other member states to be skeptical when an action is presented by a state which is assumed to be having a variety of interests. Genocide is a crime against humanity and war crime, but many of the UN Member States are still reluctance in responding to what is going on in Darfur. I do believe that recognition of genocide as a crime against humanity and war crime is a collective responsibility and not just one state responsibility to call an action taken by other state against its people a genocide.”

This silence by other permanent member of the UN Security Council and regular members indicated that the definition of genocide under international law is unless because no binding mechanism. International law and definitions of crimes against humanity can also be vague, overbroad or ambiguous, thus giving countries the opportunity to pick and choose which “crimes” they wish to prosecute and those that are not politically correct at the time. The U.S. is just as guilty as many other nations when it comes to this practice.

### **What U.S. Policy Meant in Rwanda and Lessons Learned**

U.S. representative to the U.N, Madeline Albright said it best on May 3, 1994. She said, “But let me just tell you that on the Rwanda thing, it is my sense that to a great extent the Security Council and the U.N. missed the boat. We are now dealing with a situation way beyond anything that anybody expected. And as I mentioned earlier, what happened was that we were on one process where a smaller United Nations force, we felt, could deal with some of the issues in the area, and then all of a sudden with the shutdown of this airplane with the two presidents, it created an avalanche. And so it is hard to judge whether that particular operations started out properly.” A few weeks later, after she was instrumental in delaying further action by the U.N., she posits, “... “The United States has been a driving force in the provision of humanitarian assistance, in condemning the violence and in trying to organize a U.N. mission designed not simply to promise, but to deliver what it promises. Sending a U.N. force into the maelstrom in Rwanda without a sound plan of operations would be folly ... The resolution adopted last night requires the Secretary-General to report back before the next phase of deployment begins ... these choices are not easy ones. Emotions can produce wonderful speeches and stirring op-ed pieces. But emotions alone cannot produce policies that will achieve what they promise. If we do not keep commitments in line with capabilities, we will only further undermine U.N. credibility and support. The actions authorized last night will help. They may save lives. But ultimately, the future of Rwanda is in Rwandan hands.” The U.S. policy was therefore of political or rhetorical import only.

Thus, the failure to deploy military troops capable of quashing

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When teaching students’ at institutions of higher learning, it is all important that a hybrid of narratives and factual data be presented. Objectivity is often difficult for students’ to comprehend and are frequently based on ethnocentric belief systems. Particularly poignant is substantive matter relating to a variety of historical precedents of Genocide. A new model for incorporating by macro-analysis all sources, with the understanding that some narratives may be distorted, is the key to education and not induction.

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