Backward Time of Genocide

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Abstract

In the article the notion of time in the context of the phenomenon of a genocide will be analyzed. Genocide is almost never perceived by public consciousness as it progresses The present time of genocide, as it is experienced by its participants and witnesses, displays features similar to taboos. Much too hard to accept for consciousness, it is forced out of the conscious memory of its surviving actors. Consequently, it seems to be a taboo for social memory too. As a result, the very recognition of the fact of genocide usually takes place many decades or even generations after the genocide itself. Przemysław Czapliński coined a term "backward catastrophe" (Katastrofa wsteczna), as to describe Holocaust of Jews in Poland during World War II. The point of this term is intended to describe an event that occurred mostly unnoticed and unrecognized in its importance. This was the case of Jews' pogroms in Poland, happening during World War II, and shortly after. The public discussion on this topic started in 2000, after Jan Tomasz Gross' publication. National Museum of the Holodomor Genocide in Kiev was founded in 2010, even though it is devoted to memorialize the events from 1932–33. The analysis of the specificity of the time of genocide will be based on a few chosen examples.

Keywords: time, genocide, Holocaust, Holodomor, Congo

Introduction

At its origins in Africa and after its spreading over Asia and Europe Homo sapiens belonged to the whole family of homo erectus species. They coexisted for thousands of years. The last of Homo sapiens companion was Homo neanderthalensis. Homo neanderthalensis and Homo sapiens had been living next to each other for sixty thousand years, both having their own cultures, languages, customs, and sometimes even interbreeding. Quite suddenly, Neanderthals disappeared about forty thousand years ago (Leakey, 1994).

It is possible that the time of genocide starts already in prehistory and has been inscribed into our cultural collective consciousness in the form of the mythical figures of Cain and Abel. The first couple of siblings became the actors of the first murder. Until now police statistics note that majority of murders occur between family members.

Although mankind has been possibly tormented by the plague of genocide from its beginnings, and continues to be until now, it is surprisingly difficult to determine what exactly genocide is, and what we mean by this term. On the one hand, a scientific approach to the issue of genocide brings many problems due to the drastic nature of the research material that a researcher has to deal with. She/he gets acquainted with countless testimonies of various types of genocide on many scales. On the other hand, the literature on the subject is full of attempts to define the phenomenon, therefore it is not an easy task to deepen the literature on the topic.

Genocide

The history of the concept is broadly known. The creator of the term is considered to be Rafael Lemkin, a Polish Jew born in 1900 in Bezwodne, currently Belarus, and educated in Kraków and Lviv, where he earned a PhD in law. In his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (1944) Lemkin proposed a designation that quickly earned universal recognition. "Genocide" was coined by him to refer to "the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group" (1944, p. 79). The term, as he explains in the famous chapter IX of his book was "made from the ancient Greek word genos (race, tribe) and the Latin cide (killing), thus corresponding in its formation to such words as tyrannicide, homicide, infanticide, etc." (Lemkin, 1944, p. 79). He remarks that genocide in 20th century is "an old practice in its modern development" (1944, p. 79). However, his understanding of genocide is fairly broad, and includes also "cultural genocide":

> genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group. (Lemkin, 1944, p. 79)

Lemkin's description would include cases of annihilation of the group in its integrity, even though it does not necessarily entail extermination of all the members of the group, or even any of them. The main point of the definition is rather coordination and systematic character of the action of disintegration of national institutions, what would lead to the loss of national identity as a group. Lemkin's approach seems to be inspired by some events from Polish history, namely Prussian politics of germanisation, and Russian—of russification. They both were intended not to physical extinction, but to undermine the national identity of the group, a "cultural genocide" as researchers sometimes call it.

Lemkin's findings gained big notoriety and were broadly accepted, even though in recent times one can notice arising discussions over his definitions. The main doubt arises around the national criteria of genocide, even if in the footnote Lemkin allows using the word "ethnocide" with the same function. Only annihilation of groups based on national or ethnic criteria would be classified as genocide, whereas mass murders committed in reference to religious or political criteria would be perceived as less severe and damaging. Lemkin distinguishes two phases of genocide:

> one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone, after removal of the population and the colonization by the oppressor's own nationals. (1944, p. 79)

Here again, the author refers to imposition of "the national pattern," which not necessarily means murdering. Also, what is interesting to note here is that Lemkin explicitly evokes a term of colonisation. It seems a bit paradoxical, since, as we see later, the definitions proposed by Lemkin were not going to be easily applicable for cases of European colonisation and mass murders to follow. As researchers indicate, one of the historical events inspiring him to create the concept of genocide was the pogrom of Armenians by Turks (Bieńczyk-Missala, 2020, p. 5).

Before proposing the term of genocide in 1944, Lemkin had already tried to introduce to the law of nations two new crimes: the crime of barbarity (massacres, pogroms, exterminations) and the crime of vandalism—destruction of material objects of artistic or cultural value (Jones, 2006, p. 9). The concept of genocide was successfully employed in the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* declared in 1948 in Paris. It was, although, understood there in a slightly modified manner:

> 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:
>
> • Killing members of the group;
>
> • Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
>
> • Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
>
> • Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
>
> • Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948)

The Convention's definition is narrower, since it does not include "cultural genocide," i.e. the destruction of national culture without physical extermination of its representatives. On the other hand, it is broader, because it also includes racial and religious groups. Still, political groups are not taken into consideration. As Anthony Dirk Moses remarks, the depoliticisation of genocide is convenient for actors of world politics as it helps them to distinguish "genocide from civil war and insurgency, as from warfare proper" (Moses, 2021, p. 25). Genocide becomes "the crime of crime," which means that any other crimes, no matter what, are of less weight. Granting special legal protection to certain groups means at the same time excluding from it any other groups that do not meet the definition contained in the Convention. Mass killings based on other than nation, ethnic, racial, or religious criteria would be trivialized, perceived as less drastic, and interpreted as a normal element of warfare, even though they often bring more victims than actual genocides, qualified as such. In the 1950–1953 period, in numerous heavy city bombings US air force killed over 20% of North Korean population (a few hundred thousands, the correct number is not determined yet; Moses, 2021, p. 19). Neither this, nor the aerial bombings of Dresden, nor Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombings have never been recognized as genocide. As Moses puts it "depoliticizing effect of the genocide concept enables states to legally kill civilians in the name of raison d'état" (Moses, 2021, p. 26).

Moses is not the only scholar to complain on lack of clarity of the concept of genocide. It is hardly possible to find an example of genocide that would be not questioned by someone. Mutual accusations of genocide became one of crucial arguments in international relations in discussion between competing actors. The problem arises from the difficulty of discerning between genocide and war (Moses, 2021, p. 7).

In war both actors play symmetrical, active roles, whereas a genocide is asymmetric, since it is directed towards "passive ethnic group"—blameless and lacking agency (Moses, 2021, p. 19). This clear distinction, however, lost its clarity when applied to particular cases, especially when synoptically perceived from both opposite points of view. Turks have never granted that the extermination of Armenians was a genocide. They utter it was a defence, necessary to ensure safe conditions of living for Turks. During the genocide of Tutsi in Rwanda the Hutus were convinced they were fighting for their lives and their children's lives. Also, American aerial bombings of German (300,000 civilian victims) and Japan (900,000 civilian victims) cities are not usually qualified as genocide, but as a defence, necessary to protect lives of Allied soldiers (Jones, 2006, pp. 24–25). In such cases an argument is sometimes raised that in contemporary war it is hardly possible to tell apart between soldiers and civilians, because some civilians produce arms, uniforms, cars, and food for army, therefore they constitute a part of the army and can be a justifiable aim of direct, armed attack.

From his part Moses proposes some terminological innovation. He introduces the term "permanent security" to replace "genocide":

> Genocide, like war crimes and crimes against humanity, obscures a deeper source of transgression better covered by the notion of permanent security. Despite its possibly anodyne connotations, permanent security is a deeply utopian and sinister imperative that has not been satisfactorily examined by the extensive security studies literature. (Moses, 2021, p. 34)

As a source of this term Moses indicates SS-Führer Otto Ohlendorf, who commanded troops undertaking a mass murder of Jews in Ukraine, Moldova, and Caucasus. Asked by a judge why he and his troops killed Jewish children, he gave the answer that the children could have grown up and resisted the occupation in the future, especially if they had learned that Germans had murdered their parents. He was seeking permanent security for Germans, he continued. In the very same vein many genocides were justified and interpreted as elements of necessary defence. Not only the Holocaust by Germans, Polish, and many other nations, but also Tutsi genocide by Hutu in Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnian Muslim genocide by Serbs in Srebrenica, Bosnia in 1995, concentrated on men in "fighting age" (Jones, 2006, p. 216). In all of these cases perpetrators often motivated their atrocities by seeking a permanent security from possible aggression from the part of victims or their offspring.

Moses indicates two models of permanent security: an illiberal one and a liberal. Illiberal permanent security applies to possible threat against such actors as an ethnos, a nation, or a religion situated on a certain territory (Moses, 2021, p. 37). Moses evokes an example of prosecutions of communists in Latin America and Indonesia and of national minorities. The emblematic example is the Holocaust, undertaken in the name of the protection of the state of the 3ʳᵈ Reich. In a natural way every empire tends to permanent security. Adolf Hitler revealed his being inspired by the British Empire. According to him "no nation has more carefully prepared its economic conquest with the sword with greater brutality and defended it later on more ruthlessly than the British" (*Mein Kampf*, after Moses, 2021, p. 295). This observation has been confirmed by historians. Sven Lindqvist sees the source of the Holocaust in the racism of European colonialism. He complains that some genocides occurred before the Holocaust have not found their way to social consciousness and social debate:

> But in this debate no one mentions the German extermination of the Herero people in Southwest Africa during Hitler's childhood. No one mentions the corresponding genocide by the French, the British, or the Americans. No one points out that during Hitler's childhood, a major element in the European view of mankind was the conviction that 'inferior races' were by nature condemned to extinction: the true compassion of the superior races consisted in helping them on the way. (Lindqvist, 1996, p. 13)

While illiberal permanent security relates to a state, an empire, liberal permanent security has as its subject the whole "humanity" that is in danger. The enemy in this case is usually "barbarian," "savage," or "enemy of humanity" (Moses, 2021, p. 40). As it was mentioned before, Lemkin proposed once the terms "barbarity" and "vandalism" as legal qualification. Here we can see some relations between his proposal and the concept of liberal permanent security.

Examples of this kind of motivation are innumerable both in human history, as in our present. It is common to dehumanize an opponent, to declare myself as a defender of humanity. While illiberal permanent security was based on territoriality, its liberal version perceives the whole world as its domain. In the name of liberal permanent security America and Africa was conquered and occupied by Europeans during the last four centuries. The colonisation was conducted in the name of "civilizing missions." As it was expressed by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in his theological discussion with Bartolomé de Las Casas on justifiability of colonisation, Spanish colonisers wanted to "prevent the Amerindians' scandalous violations of natural law: idolatry, sodomy, human sacrifice, cannibalism, and internecine warfare" (Moses, 2020, p. 54).

The result was the genocide of native people of America, described by Bartolomé de Las Casas in his *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1552). The Arab Caliphate, the Ottoman Empire, the Chinese Empire, the Russian Empire, USA—all were and are expanding with their deep conviction in their own "civilizing missions."

Moses describes his approach as an analysis of the language of transgression of different epochs and times. The term of genocide is one of the words of this language, emblematical especially for 20th century. Even though these terminological proposals are worth deepening and applying, Moses' conclusions are nothing new. Jean-Paul Sartre in 1968 had already written about a new form of total war making 'everybody mobilised' and justifiable aim of a military attack. He remarks that French military forces massacred forty five thousand civilians in Sétif, Algeria, just after Nuremberg trials, yet the French government had not been judged. Also, Sartre reminds that Americans fight in Vietnam 'to avoid a Third World War' (Sartre, 1968).

Genocide and Time

The Holocaust is a backward catastrophe in Polish culture, Przemysław Czapliński states (2015, p. 37). By "backward catastrophe" he means "a catastrophe which occurs unseen until it becomes recognized and which broadens its destructive activity until it has been recognized" (Czapliński, 2015, p. 66). Czapliński points to the oxymoronic character of the term. How is a backward catastrophe possible? How is possible a fire that started long ago, but only now begins to destroy buildings?—Czapliński asks. "The witnesses did not see when it lasted, they didn't recognize its essence, they didn't invent remedy for the future" (Czapliński, 2015, p. 37). The Holocaust was accompanied by series of Polish pogroms on Jews. The last pogrom occurred after the end of the World War II, in Kielce in 1946 (Tokarska-Bakir, 2018). Yet, since then, the Holocaust became a taboo topic in Poland and remained almost unspoken and unexpressed until the middle of the 1980s. The turning point is Claude Lanzmann's documentary film *Shoah*, broadcasted on Polish TV in 1985. It gained negative reception in the Polish press (Czapliński, 2015, p. 37). Nevertheless, it also started a long list of literary works, essays, novels, and movies that elaborated on the topic of the Holocaust. This great narrative had a triangle model: the Jews were victims, the Germans—perpetrators, and Polish—bystanders and witnesses. Not necessarily innocent bystanders, though. Czesław Miłosz in his poem "Campo di Fiori" (1943) describes young people riding carousel in a sunny, spring day in Warsaw, next to the wall of Jewish ghetto, where the Jewish people were being killed and the ghetto set on fire fire after the fall of the Ghetto Uprising in May 1943.

A similar perspective was presented by Jan Błoński in his essay "Poor Poles Look at the Ghetto" (1987). Polish people are represented as "innocent by-standers." Their guilt, if it exists, would consist mostly in the lack of empathy and compassion with the Jews, what actually covers strong and almost universal anti-Semitism in Poland. This is what Błoński means when he writes that the Holocaust "marked" Poland and that to remind about this genocide is an obligation for our poetry and literature. But the worst that the Poles can be accountable for is anti-Semitism. This was the common perspective of the 1980s and the 1990s in Poland. Therefore many of the Polish people were quite unpleasantly surprised in 2001 that in Art Spiegelman's comic book *Maus* the Poles were represented by pigs; Jews by mice, Germans by cats (Spiegelman, 1980–1991/1996, 2001).

One year earlier, though, in 2000, Jan Tomasz Gross' *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne* was published in Poland. The book described a pogrom with 1600 Jewish victims (in a subsequent investigation this figure has been reduced to 360) undertaken by local Polish community, under German supervision. Since 25 June 1941, the day Germans entered Jedwabne, acts of rapes, plunder, torturing and killing Jews by Poles were numerous. On 10 July 1941 Gestapo soldiers along with local Polish authorities decided to finally murder all the Jews. They were taken out of their home to the cemetery, forced to dig graves and killed. Escape was impossible, since the village was surrounded by inhabitants of three neighbour villages. The rest of the Jews were locked in a barn and set on fire.

The book of Jan T. Gross caused numerous repercussions. On the one hand, it gave a stimulus to research on Polish participation in the Holocaust, leading to further similar discoveries. Also, many artistic works have been created on this topic, as novels (Józef Hen, *Pingpongista, 2008*), before-mentioned comics (2001 Polish edition of 1980 *Maus* by Art Spiegelman), theatre pieces (Tadeusz Słobodzianek, *Our class, 2009*), and movies (Agnieszka Holland, *In Darkness*, 2011, launched in 2012; Władysław Pasikowski, *Aftermath*, 2012; Paweł Pawlikowski, *Ida*, 2013). Furthermore, it aroused a violent critical reaction from the conservative side of the political scene. It led to a governmental project of legal prohibition of research on the Polish participation in the Holocaust. The project has not been finally accepted, but the topic still lasts half taboo. After its opening in 2013 in Warsaw, the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews has gained a great notoriety at once and played a role of a public education institution on the topic of Jewish culture and the Polish chapter of the Holocaust.

The Present Time of Genocide

How was the Holocaust even possible? At first we are inclined to think that people who did it were not sane humans, but monsters, psychopaths, deprived of moral sense. Hannah Arendt, in *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963), denied this thesis, though. In her analysis, Adolf Eichmann, one of the main managers of the Holocaust, was a conscientious clerk who strictly followed the orders of his supervisors and tried to perform his tasks as effectively as possible. He was not a psychopathic murderer, but a hardworking person, devoted to his work, appreciating the sense of belonging (Arendt, 1963).

Stanley Milgram originated from a Jewish family in Romania and Hungary. His family was severely hit by the Holocaust. Part of it, survivors of concentration camps, fled to the USA. Milgram imagined that there must be something special with the German nation, this famous "Ordnung," which contributed to the effective execution of the Holocaust. Inspired by Eichmann trial, he proposed an experiment on obedience. He intended to start with a trial series in US and then to go to Germany to carry out the proper experiment. However, the results of the first trial series shocked him to such an extent that it seemed obvious to him that there was no need to carry out a special series of experiments in Germany.

In the introductory part of his book *Obedience to Authority*, he evokes the concept of the banality of evil and affirms its empiric reality. The experiment on obedience shows that an ordinary person is able to kill out of the sense of obligation (Milgram, 1974, p. 6). Under the pretext of testing a new memory leaning method he ordered a participant of the experiment (a "teacher") to shock a "learner" with electricity, applying higher voltage each time. He and his team predicted that only little percentage of "teachers" would apply the highest shock of 450 V. In the actual experiment 2/3 of participants have done it. Nobody forced them to follow the rules, they were able to get up and leave any time. The salary for the experiment was $4. "The Nazi extermination of European Jews is the most extreme instance of abhorrent immoral acts carried out by thousands of people in the name of obedience" (Milgram, 1974, p. 9). Obedience, the value we teach our children as one of the most important, happens to be a perfect help in genocide.

There is, however, an important difference between the situation of the Jews in the Holocaust and the actual experiment. Milgram indicates it in the introduction of his book:

> At least one essential feature of the situation in Germany was not studied here—namely, the intense devaluation of the victim prior to action against him. For a decade and more, vehement anti-Jewish propaganda systematically prepared the German population

to accept the destruction of the Jews. Step by step the Jews were excluded from the category of citizen and national, and finally were denied the status of human beings. Systematic devaluation of the victim provides a measure of psychological justification for brutal treatment of the victim and has been the constant accompaniment of massacres, pogroms, and wars. In all likelihood, our subjects would have experienced greater ease in shocking the victim had he been convincingly portrayed as a brutal criminal or a pervert. (Milgram, 1973, p. 9)

Prior devaluation, dehumanisation, or even reification of victims is a typical part of most genocides and it was the case in the Holocaust. Indeed, in spite of the lack of prior preparation in the Milgram experiment, the whole genocidal mechanism was functioning surprisingly smoothly, even though afterwards most of the "teachers" recalled the whole experiment as one of most horrible events of their lives. Some of them needed the help of specialists. This kind of experiment would not be possible to conduct today, given our contemporary ethical standards in sciences and research.

Philip Zimbardo's Prison Stanford Experiment led to similar conclusions. In his later research on studies on "how good people turn evil" this author created the concept of the Lucifer Effect. One of the inspirations for this book were tortures at the Abu Ghraib prison by Americans in 2003 (Zimbardo, 2008). Zimbardo bases his research also on a detailed analysis of this case.

One could presume that helping a victim of genocide is our obligation, even if our own life is in danger. However, in the situation of crisis and terror most of us would rather save our own lives than risk it for another. To the higher extent we should appreciate and honour genocide rescuers. Moral philosophers talk in this case about supererogation (Heyd, 2019). This feature characterises deeds that are morally good, but that are not obligatory. An example of a good, non-obligatory deed would be a jump to the river during winter to rescue a drowning person. It is morally glorious, but one cannot expect anyone to do it. The biblical prototype of a supererogatory deed would be the New Testament parable of the Good Samaritan, who took care of an injured man. He took him to an inn, and paid to the owner to take care of the victim of oppression. James Opie Urmson illustrates this idea with the help of the figures of the saint and of the hero. The saint follows his duty in the context where most of the people would give up, because of inclination, desire, or self-interest. The hero does his duty in the situation in which most of the people would not do it, because of their instinct of self-preservation (Urmson, 1958, p. 200).

The Backward Time of Genocide

Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, in her monumental work based on official documents, but also on testimonies of witnesses, is trying to describe at length, minute after minute, the 4th of July 1946 in Kielce. During that day Polish military, militia, industry workers, and a big part of the population of Kielce committed the pogrom against a temporarily located small group of Jews, killing 37 of them. In the pogrom three Poles were also killed, mistaken for Jews (Tokarska-Bakir, 2018).

The Holocaust was a backward catastrophe for Polish culture, Czapliński says. During the Holocaust and directly after it there were no protests against it. Witnesses had not been asked for their reports. Nobody was interested or capable in recalling back traumatic memories, both victims, oppressors, and witnesses. There were few artistic elaborations of the topic of the Holocaust, but they were stopped by censorship (a movie of *Przy torze kolejowym*, Andrzej Brzozowski, 1963), or passed unnoticed (Bogdan Wojdowski, *Chleb rzucony umarłym*, 1973). As Czapliński puts it, a backward catastrophe "broadens its destructive activity until it has been recognized" (Czapliński, 2015, p. 66). Such was and is the case of the Holocaust.

A similar case would be from this perspective the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932–1933. Its first memorial was founded by Ukrainian emigrants in Edmonton, Canada, in 1983 (Temertey). In Ukraine, the Holodomor Memorial Day was established in 1998 and the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide in 2008. The Ukrainian great famine in 1932–33 was the result of dekulakization and collectivisation of farm lands by Soviets, the dramatic decline of productivity of grain, because of the drought. It started in the winter of 1932 and reached its peak in the spring of 1933. "Starving peasants consumed domestic animals, including dogs and cats, together with various food surrogates like tree buds, weeds, and herbs. Some resorted to cannibalism, and dug up human corpses and the carcasses of dead animals" (Serbyn, 2005, p. 1059).

Finally, Holodomor had been officially recognized as genocide, but the debate did not finish. The question is to which extent was the famine planned by Soviet authorities and to which extent can it be interpreted as a by-product of economic and social transformation (Moses, 2020, p. 270). The question remains not fully answered, until the Soviet archives are disclosed for research. The author of the entry in *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity* enumerates four approaches in current historical research on the topic:

> Some scholars flatly rejected the notion that the famine was genocide, others avoided the problem of classification by using descriptive terms such as "great famine," "artificial famine," or "man-made famine." Still others accepted the idea of genocide, but saw its victims primarily as the kulaks, or peasants; and, finally, some scholars recognized the famine as a genocide that was specifically directed against the Ukrainian nation. (Serbyn, 2005, p. 1059)

Was the great famine 1932–33 the result of actions of Soviet authorities? According to the poll conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service in October 2013 (Interfax-Ukraine, 2013) 64% of Ukrainians agree. 23% of the respondents believe fully or partially in natural reasons of famine.

A backward catastrophe broadens its activity until it is recognized. The prototype of genocide, the extermination of Armenians by Turks, a historical example that was one of the inspirations for Raphael Lemkin to reflect on the question of genocide, has not been recognized in Turkey neither. These dramatic events seen from the point of view of historians sympathising with Ottoman Empire during World War I look quite different. Michael Gwynne Dyer, a Canadian historian, who conducted research in Turkish archives in Ankara, sees the leaders of Armenian genocide not as cruel monsters, but

> as desperate, frightened, unsophisticated men struggling to keep their nation afloat in a crisis far graver than they had anticipated when they first entered the war (the Armenian decisions were taken at the height of the crisis of the Dardanelles) reacting to events rather than creating them, and not fully realizing the extent of the horrors they had set in motion in 'Turkish Armenia' until they were too deeply committed to withdraw. (Lewy, 2007, p. 211)

Still not fully recognized is the genocide in Congo by Leopold II, the king of Belgium. Congo, one of the latest non-occupied by Europeans parts of Africa, was acquired to him by Henry Morton Stanley. Stanley floated down the Congo River with steamboats transporting soldiers, persuading illiterate leaders of local communities to "sign" a contract of their submission to the king Leopold II. The king introduced forced labour aimed at collecting ivory, and, subsequently, after J. B. Dunlop invented inflatable bicycle tyre in 1887, rubber. Refusal to work resulted in cutting hands, killing, burning the whole villages by a 19,000 military force of black soldiers under supervision of white officers. Many of these atrocities were documented by photos of Alice Seeley Harris. During the twenty years of Leopold's reign the population of Congo declined as much as between 5 million to even 16 million people, as victims of murder, starvation, disease and a plummeting birth rate (Hochschild, 1998, p. 226).

Yet, even this case is not, precisely speaking, a genocide, since Leopold didn't have, as much as we know, the intention to exterminate the population of Congo. Neither did he want to gain the status quo of permanent security. As one sees, the conceptual tool that we are dealing with are still far from getting to the point. There is no doubt that the genocide of people of Congo should be officially recognized by Europe. An increasing number of vandalisms of numerous statues of Leopold II in Belgium suggests that maybe the time is coming. Also now, in the present day, there are numerous genocides, which are currently not being talked about, and which will be the subject of research by historians of the future.

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