Introduction

Norman J.W. Goda and Edward Kissi

How did the rest of the world, outside of Europe and North America, view the Holocaust, and how have they used or *universalized* Holocaust history and memory? Must the Holocaust be viewed solely as a Nazi millenarian project to rid the world of Jews and their influence, by the scope and approach to the killing, and by its centuries' old basis in European conspiratorial antisemitism? Or was the Holocaust something else, namely a subaltern component of a larger Nazi colonial project aimed at settlement and exploitation in Eastern Europe, but based on older genocidal Imperial German and European models in Africa? Is the contextualization or location of the Holocaust in colonial and other ethnic crimes in Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, and elsewhere a historically sound redress of previous Eurocentric scholarly approaches to Holocaust history and memory? Or has Holocaust history become a political weapon—a "hegemonic narrative" that aims to minimize the experiences of non-western peoples?[1] Are comparisons between colonial crimes and the Holocaust a form of relativization or even "holocaust envy" that seeks to "tame" the Holocaust and erode its distinctiveness?[2]

These questions and the debates they generated in the early 2000s, are especially salient at this moment, owing to Hamas's deadly attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023, and the widespread global reaction to

Israel's attempts to destroy Hamas, which have killed many thousands of civilians in the Gaza Strip. Hamas's attack, many have said, was predicated on that organization's obsessive Jew-hatred, which is based on radical Islamism but which also borrows from numerous European tropes of Jewish global control imported by the Nazis in the 1930s and afterwards.[3] But the anti-Israel backlash has been based on post-colonial arguments from the 1960s that Zionism itself is a racist and colonialist doctrine that has inflicted seventy-five years of colonial oppression on Palestinian Arabs.

Auschwitz sits at the crossroads. Many in Israel, the US, and Europe see in 7 October a series of pogroms by a vicious, implacable enemy bent on Jewish annihilation. By sheer casualties, the Hamas attack represents the largest mass murder of Jews since the Holocaust, to say nothing of the 250,000 Israelis displaced after 7 October within Israel itself. Others in the Arab/Muslim world, and in the West, view matters quite differently. It is Israel, they say, that has used the Holocaust as a moral shield to hide its own crimes. These crimes, they add, long predate October 2023 and include settler colonialism from the Balfour Declaration of 1917 to ethnic cleansing and even genocide in 1948 and afterward.[4] The Holocaust, they say, bears no relationship to the conflict, unless one wants to see the Israelis themselves as a reincarnation of Nazi racism.

It is therefore a challenging time to publish a volume of essays on the universalization of the Holocaust. But we need to be clear. By "universalization," we do not mean scholarly (or unscholarly) comparisons between anti-Jewish and anti-colonial violence or the subsuming of the Holocaust into the broader context of genocide in general. We do not believe that these debates can find much resolution in the current global climate. On the contrary, a fair amount of ahistorical polemic has crept into the debate, which will itself be historicized one day.[5] By "universalization" we mean something different, namely the ways in which the Holocaust has served as a lens through which different societies and state actors comprehend, with or without historical precision, other instances of mass violence, yet with an implicit understanding that the Holocaust represents a singular crime.

Our theoretical basis is Jeffrey C. Alexander's 2002 essay, revised in 2009, "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals."[6] Alexander argues that the Holocaust was indeed "fundamentally different from the other traumatic and bloody events in a modern history already dripping in blood." But over time, he says, it also became a free-floating (rather than a situated) "universalized symbol" of human degradation and of what Immanuel Kant called "radical evil."[7]

Looking at the US, with implications for other liberal western societies, Alexander argues that universalization was socially and culturally constructed over time. The coding began with the Allied liberation of Nazi concentration camps in April 1945, the Nuremberg Trials, and the casting of the Nazi regime as an absolute evil, the destruction of which redeemed the blood and treasure that victory demanded. It continued with landmark cultural events such as the adaption of Anne Frank's diaries to stage and screen (1955–59),[8] the trial of Adolf Eichmann (1961),[9] the blockbuster television mini-series *Holocaust* (1978),[10] the construction of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the centering of recorded survivor testimonies.[11]

In these representations and in others, the Holocaust became a universal drama of trauma. The success of universalization owed partly to the fact that the main characters, whether victims or perpetrators, were relatable. These included a de-Judaized Anne Frank, who stood for innocence on the one hand and an indomitable spirit on the other. It included the Weiss family in *Holocaust*, a thoroughly bourgeois German-Jewish family that had little in common with the poor, Yiddish-speaking Jews of Eastern Europe, who comprised most Jewish victims. It also included Eichmann, as he was represented by Hannah Arendt, as a banal, unthinking paper pusher. In this iteration, he was frighteningly relatable, even if Arendt misunderstood Eichmann's true nature. But it was also a drama to which an audience, according to Alexander, "returned time and time again," challenging its own "ethical self-identification." The Holocaust became "the most widely understood and emotionally compelling trauma of the twentieth century." For Alexander, it was "emblematic . . . of human suffering as such."[12]

Like those who view the Holocaust as a hegemonic narrative, Alexander sees the Holocaust's universality as something constructed through cultural markers. But he does not see intellectual dishonesty in this construction, nor does he argue that the Holocaust somehow silences other atrocities and traumas. On the contrary the Holocaust's status "as a unique event . . . eventually compelled it to become generalized and departicularized," as a bridging metaphor through which other instances of twentieth- and twenty-first-century mass violence are understood. The Holocaust can be "unique and not unique at the same time," as it offers legal and moral signposts.[13] Critical for Alexander in this bridging is the US war in Vietnam. The heavy bombing of non-white civilians, particularly in neighboring Cambodia, triggered a "symbolic inversion" of the Holocaust. This was not to say that the US became Nazi Germany, but Vietnam surely undercut the

ability of the US to carry forward a progressive, anti-Nazi narrative, as it had done since the liberation of Nazi camps.[14]

At the same time, Vietnam and other transformations served to universalize further, and not to undercut, the questions initially raised by Nazi Germany's radical evil. Alexander thus describes universalization *as a political and cultural process* very much within history. He examines *how* the Holocaust came to be understood as such a gauge to atrocity over time by looking at critical nodal points, not only in the representation of the Holocaust itself, but also in the consideration of later non-Holocaust moral traumas, the understanding of which have been colored by our understanding of the Holocaust. The Holocaust is the backdrop that frames consideration then, of international legal questions but also of all such moral questions.[15] Even societies far from the killing, commentators say, have the Holocaust in mind as they watch contemporary atrocities unfold while wondering how to react.[16]

There is a difference between Alexander's argument and the arguments of scholars who have tried to merge or subsume the Holocaust within colonial and/or racist mass violence. That argument has many origins. Some, aimed at Israel and the United States, were made in extremely bad faith during the Cold War by everyone from the Soviet Union to French left-wing Holocaust deniers to the UN General Assembly when it resolved in 1975 that "Zionism is a form of racism," thus denuding the latter term of meaning according to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the US ambassador to the UN.[17] The more intellectually honest contextualization of Nazism came from the Antillean poet Aimé Césaire's *Discours sur le colonialisme* (1955). Césaire argued that European shock over Nazi crimes was intellectually flawed as Nazi crimes represented long-pursued European colonial crimes turned inward on Europe itself.[18]

In 2002, historian A. Dirk Moses concurred, arguing that scholarly emphasis on the Holocaust had created "conceptual blockages" that prohibited proper understanding of European racist colonial violence, which was genocidal.[19] Jürgen Zimmerer, another historian, argued that the key to understanding the Holocaust actually came from Germany's mass killings between 1904 and 1908 of Herero and Nama peoples in German Southwest Africa (now Namibia). Colonial violence thus underlay the nature of the Nazi Final Solution.[20] There are many critics of these approaches, because they posit a fundamental sameness between colonial crimes and the Holocaust and because they propose colonialist origins for the Holocaust.[21]

A somewhat similar approach has been taken by the literary scholar Michael Rothberg. His seminal work *Multidirectional Memory:*

Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization (2009) responds to the author's concern that many memories of mass atrocity, such as the Holocaust and the French war to hold Algeria (1954–1962), are either in a zero-sum game competition with one another or in a relationship wherein, as Alexander would have it, the Holocaust is the unique and universal normative. The latter is especially problematic for Rothberg given his view that Alexander's universalization of the Holocaust includes a heavy dollop of US-centrism. For Rothberg, emphasis on the Holocaust, even if framed as a universal, means ignoring how other crimes, particularly against non-westerners, have been remembered in places other than the US. In such cases, Rothberg maintains, "juxtaposed histories mutually illuminate one another," and in such a way that the Holocaust is not always one of the elements. The aim of finding "heterogeneity of exchanges" is to understand memory of mass violence as such, particularly across racial lines.[22]

Rothberg's book focuses on major post-Holocaust literary figures including Hannah Arendt, W.E.B. Du Bois, Aimé Césaire, and Charlotte Delbo, all of whom found ways in their own milieu to weave together the discourse of antisemitism and the Holocaust with the discourse of Western racism and colonial violence. Thus, Du Bois's visit to the site of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1949 enhanced his understanding of the Jewish catastrophe. But it also spoke to his understanding of the more universal effects of racism. Césaire's famous comment that "Hitler is not dead," still refers metaphorically to the racism inherent in post-World War II colonial violence and the continued lynching of Blacks in the US. Delbo, a French resister who survived Auschwitz, spoke with special authority on the French army's use of torture while fighting Algerian rebels.[23] Even as the Algerian War began, journalist Claude Bourdet referred French readers to "Your Gestapo from Algeria."[24]

The problem is that the post-colonial arguments, whether they concern Moses or whether they concern Rothberg, have become highly politicized in recent years. The overheated motor driving politicization has been the relationship of the Holocaust to Israel, which for many scholars is self-evident, and which for other scholars reflects a cynical Israeli state policy deployed since the Eichmann trial. The latter group of scholars now point to Israel's long-standing conflict with Hamas, which since 2008 has produced five wars in the Gaza Strip; stepped-up Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank; and the contentious ascent of the Israeli political and religious right. Are certain critiques of Israel antisemitic in the current circumstances insofar as they engage in a Holocaust inversion whereby Israel, even when defending itself against Hamas, is compared to Nazi Germany? Or are the critiques

valid appraisals owing to the long-standing Israeli occupation, which is violently displacing an increasing number of Arabs in the West Bank, and to the heavy destruction in Gaza? And how are we to categorize the bad faith in these debates, which sees all of Israel as a colonial project based on genocide from its origins?

The spark in 2020 concerned Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe, who was invited to give a keynote address at a major arts festival in Germany, then disinvited owing to his earlier comparisons between the Holocaust, South African apartheid, and Israel. These comparisons, the German organizers said, were antisemitic insofar as they relativized the Holocaust and insofar as the inversion involved suggestions of Israeli "apartheid."[25] An article by A. Dirk Moses in May 2021 made the accusation that Germany had turned the Holocaust into a "catechism," meaning a sacralized event, the uniqueness of which could not be questioned, and the memory of which in Germany had provided a redemptive narrative. Questioning the Holocaust's uniqueness, Moses argued, has become akin to a religious heresy.[26] Historian Saul Friedländer, who wrote standard volumes on Nazi Germany and the Jews, responded that Moses's deductions are "false and misleading." The Holocaust remains for Friedländer "a fundamentally signature crime."[27] Michael Rothberg, meanwhile, became nonplussed. Germany, he says, practices an unjust censorship against those who challenge what Rothberg now called "the absolute character of the Holocaust's uniqueness." The "disciplinary policing of relational approaches," Rothberg says, aims to preserve a "dominant memory regime," within Germany's "warped memory culture," thus denying memory space for, among others, Germany's Muslim population.[28]

Israel's 2023 Gaza campaign following Hamas's 7 October massacres have now opened chasms, perhaps irreparable, between Holocaust and genocide historians. Some, including Raz Segal and Omer Bartov, have accused Israel of genocide.[29] Others who have previously seen benefit in Holocaust comparisons, Rothberg among them, have proclaimed that comparisons between the Nazis and Hamas ought not be made, as such comparisons rhetorically justify civilian deaths in Gaza.[30] Other scholars of antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Israel, argue that charges of Israeli genocide in Gaza and new prohibitions against comparison are unscholarly. They point to Hamas's genocidal nature as revealed in its own foundational documents, the degree to which Nazi antisemitism has helped to shape this fundamental Islamist movement, and the degree to which the International Court of Justice has reversed its own caution concerning genocide charges on the basis of politicized evidence.[31] Others still point to the irony that scholars who advocate

for comparison between the Holocaust and colonial crimes declare comparisons taboo when they are between two regimes whose ideologies center on the killing of Jews.[32] This is especially so given the free comparisons by many between Israelis and Nazis by scholars who are more polemical.[33]

We argue that the better theoretical option for understanding how the Holocaust informs other perspectives remains the universalization as Alexander describes it. It eschews heated scholarly comparisons, which at this point will reach no consensus. Instead, universalization offers the chance to study how different societies used the Holocaust as a starting point to understand their own traumatic history. Alexander's focus is indeed on American culture and the success of Holocaust universalization in the United States. Our questions are broader. This volume will look at Europe but also other parts of the world, from sub-Saharan Africa to South Asia, to South America. For Alexander, reference to the Holocaust outside the West, when made at all, comes from "literary and intellectual elites."[34] We want to investigate this further. We want to look at the political, historical, and cultural processes by which other societies, including those in the non-Western world, understood *on their own terms* the Holocaust as a universal, and how they used it to comprehend developments in their own societies. We also want to investigate the limits of universalization, for it has not been accepted everywhere.

Have other scholars used this approach? To a degree, but we are trying to break new ground. In *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (2006), sociologists Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider examine the Holocaust's effect on global memory culture. Catastrophes besides the Holocaust, they argue, "have not had the same impact" elsewhere owing to the fundamental ruptures that the Holocaust represent to our understandings of civilization.[35] With post-Cold War globalization, Levy and Sznaider argue that the Holocaust became de-territorialized global property, cosmopolitanized, interpreted differently depending on place and time, but still a moral touchstone in an age of political uncertainty, localized ethnic violence, and human rights advocacy. The Holocaust remained a particular event in Israel, and the authors do not question its efficacy there. But elsewhere it became decontextualized, as contemporary victims were equated with Jews as the paradigmatic and diasporic "other." Levy and Sznaider are surely correct that space and time form the backdrop to any society's collective memory, and that the spate of Holocaust museums, monuments, films, and other programs in the 1990s suggests that decade as a turning point. But universalization was also significant before the 1990s. And

like Alexander, Levy and Szaider mostly emphasize the Western world, especially Israel, Germany, and the US. We go beyond the Western world in our approach.

Others, at any rate, are more skeptical of any globalization of Holocaust history and memory. In the essay collection *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in a Global Age* (2015), editors Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan ask, "how global, actually, is [Holocaust] memory?" Peter Novick, to whom they dedicate the volume, argues that "[t]he Holocaust is not—and is not likely to become—a global memory." The volume's contributors, whether examining Médecins Sans Frontières or second-generation Cambodian genocide survivors, doubt the Holocaust's global legacy. *Holocaust Memory in a Globalizing World* (2017), edited by Jacob Eder, Philipp Gassert, and Alan E. Steinweis, takes its subject more literally, but contains mostly essays on Holocaust memory in contemporary Europe. The volume has a few essays on Holocaust memory elsewhere, namely Argentina, India, post-Apartheid South Africa, and China, but again, the essays concern commemoration and/or Holocaust education; they do not necessarily concern the longer *historical process* of universalization in those places.[36]

Shirli Gilbert's and Avril Alba's volume, *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar World* (2019) partly undertakes the latter task.[37] The essays emphasize Holocaust memory in the more immediate post-war years in western societies, namely the US, Britain, Australia, and South Africa. They find the application of Holocaust memory somewhat wanting, as the societies mentioned maintained their racial barriers in the decades after World War II. But certain essays in the Gilbert/Alba collection, such as that by Daniel J. Puckett on Black commentators in Jim Crow Alabama, and that by Sarah Phillips Casteel on Caribbean literature and global Holocaust memory, discuss how victim societies saw and deployed the Holocaust for more universalist ends.[38] Our volume builds on the Gilbert/Alba approach. But universalization, as the Gilbert/Alba collection shows, also had its limits. There are instances in which it has been deliberately circumscribed to include only certain groups, even to the point that some contemporary theorists regard it as a vehicle of continued white supremacy. For others, universalization has made representation of the Holocaust almost gratuitous.

We recognize that the ways in which other parts of the world viewed the Holocaust from the outside and attempted to universalize it remains a subject for more examination. Edward Kissi's *Africans and the Holocaust: Perceptions and Responses of Colonized and Sovereign Peoples* (2020) offers a model. It discusses contemporaneous assessments of the Holocaust and its broader meaning in East and

West Africa.[39] We have integrated this model into our approach to Holocaust universalism.

Part I of our collection examines the global development of Holocaust universalization. Edward Kissi's "Universalizing the Holocaust in West and East Africa" looks at the actual war years. Newspapers in these regions republished European reports about the Holocaust with details of concentration camps and the dehumanizing violence inflicted on Jews. Kissi examines the particular and universal concerns that drove reception of this news in Africa and the meanings that newspaper editors and correspondents ascribed to the news as well. He connects interpretations of the Holocaust in Africa to the idea of universalization and to the historiography on Holocaust universalism.

Charlotte Kiechel's "Biafra: State-Building, the Holocaust, and International Diplomacy" examines the Holocaust as a global memory for state-building in the 1960s. The Republic of Biafra, a part of eastern Nigeria comprised mostly of Igbo peoples, declared independence from Nigeria in 1967 following years of ethnic violence. War with Nigeria followed in which some two million Igbo, mostly children, died of starvation during Nigeria's blockade. Biafra was reintegrated in 1970. In the meantime, Igbo officials and other nationalists in the short-lived Biafran state used Holocaust references in their state-building efforts. So did European leftists who were in solidarity with Biafra's independence efforts. Kiechel shows something very new, but also suggests that historians of the twentieth century have overlooked the ways in which Holocaust references operated within postcolonial nationalist discourses.

Political scientist Sidi N'Diaye looks at the "Events of 1989" in Mauritania, another African state with ethnic tensions. The Arab military regime of Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, which came to power in a 1984 coup and lasted until 2005, cracked down in 1989 on the Halpulaareen Afro-Mauritanian population, including intellectuals and state officials, killing hundreds and expelling thousands to Senegal. After 1991, some Afro-Mauritanian intellectuals referred to "the Mauritanian final solution." Victims interviewed by N'Diaye after 2007 also made numerous references to the Holocaust. Why would Afro-Mauritanians make reference to a European mass murder even after the Rwandan genocide of 1994? N'Diaye is interested in the motivations behind testimony as such, but he also discusses why the testimonies are loaded with Holocaust references.

Emmanuel Kahan addresses narratives of Holocaust memory in Argentina through the visits made by a singular figure: Jaika Grossman, a member of the left-wing Zionist organization HaShomer HaTzair,

which resisted the Nazis during World War II. Grossman's visits to Argentina allow us to gauge how Jewish resistance memory worked in particular and universal contexts specific to Argentina. Kahan looks at three contexts: after the capture of Adolf Eichmann and the increase in antisemitism in the early 1960s; during the political radicalization and the accusatory turn against Israel as an imperialist country after the 1967 Six-Day War; and after the post-1983 democratic recovery and the consecration of human rights. This approach takes into account the changing implications and meanings of Holocaust memory in the local political milieu and how the past could legitimize or bring into dialog other transnational agendas.

Art and visual culture scholar Tamara Kohn examines the response by Jewish artists and art exhibitions in Argentina to the Holocaust, genocide, and terrorism following the return to democracy in 1983. Artists developed a language and iconography of the Holocaust that has become a universal tool for addressing other genocides and massacres in the recent and remote past. Kohn examines the processes in which the Holocaust has become a symbol of persecution, hate, and terror, and how the particular and the universal meet in Jewish Argentine art.

The second half of the volume examines the limits of Holocaust universalization, as well as its critics. Literature and film scholar Anjali Gera Roy's chapter concerns the cataclysmic violence accompanying the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, which cost two million lives and displaced fifteen million people. The Partition has invited comparisons with the Holocaust, which has indeed provided a methodological, analytical, and conceptual lens. But though the lens of the Holocaust has broken the Indian state's silence on the Partition, the imagined duty of survivors and their descendants to "un-forget" through the prodding of individual memories actually constitutes another form of violence, since survivors in India have scrupulously attempted to forget the killing and displacement of those days.

Historian Jonathan Elukin shows how after World War II, a small group of Catholic and Protestant theologians imagined Jewish suffering as suggestive of Christ's sacrifice. Jews were transformed into the instruments of humanity's salvation, and the Holocaust acquired universal meaning for Christians. Elukin explains how this conception of redemptive Jewish suffering developed, and he sets it into the broader context of previous Christian appropriations of Judaism. He also poses several questions. Does the universalization of the Jewish experience erase its uniqueness? How does the modern state of Israel impact contemporary Christian theology's approach to Jewish suffering in the Holocaust? How has this approach to the Holocaust influenced

other perceptions of Jews in contemporary literature, historiography, and politics?

Norman J.W. Goda examines the conception of crimes against humanity in France. In 1983 the charge was levied against Klaus Barbie, the Gestapo chief in occupied Lyon. But what did this "universalist" charge, formulated at Nuremberg in 1945 to cover civilians, mean? The initial indictment concerned only Jewish victims. Former resisters argued that they were also victims of crimes against humanity, and in 1985 the French supreme court reformulated the concept to accommodate them. Yet the ruling did not cover civilians during more recent wars of decolonization, triggering the charge that Nuremberg's "universal" principles applied to Europeans only. Goda examines the genealogy of the supreme court decision, beginning with French prosecution at Nuremberg, which saw the resistance as representing the universal human dignity that the Nazis aimed to destroy.

Historian Tom Eshed examines how Israelis viewed the universalization of Holocaust memory during the 1980s. Israeli leaders worried that with the development of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Holocaust commemoration would move emphasis from Jewish victims to other cases of mass violence. Eshed discusses two conferences organized by the Israeli government, the 1983 "World Assembly to Commemorate Jewish Resistance and Combat during World War II," and the 1985 "World Assembly to Commemorate 40 Years since the Defeat of Nazi Germany and Its Satellites." Both aimed to create a universalized memory of the Holocaust while also solidifying Israel's place as the global center of Holocaust commemoration, all while improving Israeli cultural relations with the US and Europe.

Film scholars Nathan Abrams and Michael Lipiner argue that since 1990, the universalization of the Holocaust imagery has expanded and moved beyond icons for atrocity in films that are not about World War II. The Holocaust, Abrams and Lipiner argue, has become casualized, particularly in American film, neither essential nor intrinsic to the narrative arc except as a clue to be deciphered by those who understand the cultural codes as universal icons for atrocity. Furthermore, the Holocaust is no longer taboo as a subject for humor, abuse, and misrepresentation. This "casualized universalization," the authors say, is explained by generational and cultural shifts in American society.

Historian Doris Bergen provides the concluding essay. She argues that in fact, the Holocaust has been viewed in global and universal terms from the time of the events themselves. The perpetrators saw their mission as a global cleansing. Unwanted refugees moved all over the world. Jewish victims compared themselves to other victims of

mass killing, including Armenians and European colonial subjects. The universality continued into the postwar era with Aimé Césaire's claim in 1945 that Hitler was not dead as a metaphor for racism. Jewish refugees arriving in Israel, meanwhile, faced the expulsions of Arabs with equanimity. And yet Martin Luther King, when speaking of "the Hitlers loose in America today," saw a kinship between Blacks and Jews. More recently, Holocaust survivors and those from Canadian residential schools have found mutual empathy. As Hermann Kruk wrote in the Vilna Ghetto, "Over the graves of murdered children, poisoned flowers grow." He did not refer only to certain children. Indeed, universalization of the Holocaust has never been at issue. The challenge lies in understanding the meaning of this universalism.

By presenting these essays, which come from different disciplinary perspectives, we hope to show the potential for further research and thinking. Holocaust universalization has been undertaken as a tool to understand subsequent atrocities in parts of the globe that have not been examined by scholars. We also hope to provide clues as to the limitations of Holocaust universalization, for there are instances where, in the wrong hands, the Holocaust is the wrong tool for understanding other instances of atrocity and mass killing. There are also instances where state actors have sought to contain universalization, or at least bend it, in order to maintain the Holocaust's specificity as the attempt to rid the world of Jews. Mostly, however, we hope to turn down the heat on current debates regarding the comparison between the Holocaust and other atrocities. Doris Bergen's point that "it has been universal all along," is worth considering in this context.

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Edward Kissi is a historian and professor at the School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies, University of South Florida. His publications include *Revolution and Genocide in Ethiopia and Cambodia* (Lexington Books, 2006), *Africans and the Holocaust: Perceptions and Responses of Colonized and Sovereign Peoples* (Routledge, 2020), and

"Integrating sub-Saharan Africa into a historical and cultural study of the Holocaust."

Notes

1. See most recently Kissi, "Roundtable Discussion," 217.
2. Shimony, "Holocaust Envy," 296. For critique, see Michman, "Jewish Dimension," 17.
3. Herf, "From the River to the Sea."
4. The colonial argument is discussed in Penslar, "Is Zionism a Colonial Movement?" 275.
5. See for example Segal, "A Textbook Case of Genocide."
6. Alexander, "On the Social Construct of Moral Universals," 5 (revised version).
7. Alexander, "On the Social Construct of Moral Universals," 6.
8. On the universalization of Anne Frank through performance see Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust*, 95.
9. The universal importance of the trial is discussed in Lipstadt, *The Eichmann Trial*.
10. On the series see for example Magilow and Silverman, *Holocaust Representations in History*, 103.
11. On the museum, see Linenthal, *Preserving Memory*. There is a broad literature on the centrality of testimony, but see for example Shenker, *Reframing Holocaust Testimony*.
12. Alexander, "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals," 37.
13. Ibid., 58.
14. Ibid., 45.
15. Ibid., 50.
16. Power, *A Problem from Hell*; Paris, "Kosovo and the Metaphor War," 423; Melvern, *A People Betrayed*.
17. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, 474.
18. Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*.
19. Moses, "Conceptual Blockages," 7.
20. Zimmerer, "Colonialism and the Holocaust," 49.
21. See in particular the Scholar's Forum, "The Holocaust," 40; Kühne, "Colonialism and the Holocaust," 339. See also Fitzpatrick, "Pre-History of the Holocaust," 477; Gerwarth and Malinowski, "Hannah Arendt's Ghosts," 279. The riposte is Moses, "Anxieties in Holocaust and Genocide Studies," 332.
22. See Rothberg's critique of Alexander in Rothberg, "Multidirectional Memory," 123.
23. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*. Rothberg's approach has followers across disciplines. In examining post-colonial and Holocaust writers from Frantz Fanon to Primo Levy to Jean Améry to Philip Roth, scholar Bryan Cheyette has called for "a new comparative approach across Jewish and postcolonial histories and literatures." Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, xii. Anthropologist Alexander Hinton's study of the Khmer Rouge torturer Kaing Guek Eav, aka Duch, wrestles with Arendt's notion of the banality of evil, concluding that Duch was both a man and monster. Hinton, *Man or Monster?* Political scientist Sidi N'Diaye has found commonality between Polish face-to-face killing of Jews as described by historian Jan Gross in his 2001 book *Neighbors* and the face-to-face killing by Hutus of Tutsis in 1994 Rwanda. N'Diaye, *Tutsis et Juifs de Pologne.* Literary scholar Kitty Millet has found that victimized societies, whether under slavery, colonization, or Nazi persecution, develop a shared sense of their persecution in ways that unite the victims, thus opening up

ways of understanding their consciousness regardless of place and time. Millet, *The Victims of Slavery, Colonization, and the Holocaust.*
24. Rothberg, "Multidirectional Memory," 130.
25. A good summary of the affair is Sznaider, "Summer of Discontent," 412.
26. Moses, "The German Catechism."
27. Friedländer, "A Fundamentally Singular Crime," 39.
28. Rothberg, "Lived Multidirectionality," 1316.
29. See Segal, "A Textbook Case of Genocide," and Bartov, "What I Believe as a Historian of Genocide." For critique of these positions, see Goda and Herf, "Holocaust Historians."
30. Bartov et al., "Misuse of Holocaust Memory." Israeli Prime Minster Benjamin Netanyahu's badly compromised political position, combined with his past misstatements about Palestinian leaders and the origins of the Holocaust, leave him open to such charges. See Schulze, "Netanyahu, the Grand Mufti and the Holocaust."
31. "An Exchange on Holocaust Memory." On the International Court of Justice, see Goda, "South African Lawfare at the Hague."
32. See also Elbe and Pfau, "Missbrauch der Holocausterrinerung?"
33. See, for example, the tendentious arguments in Ussama Makdisi, "The West's Love for Israel." For critique of inversion, see Webman, "Stealing the Holocaust," 279; Johnson, "Anti-Semitism in the Guise of Anti-Nazism," 175.
34. Alexander, "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals," 68.
35. On the ruptures they cite Hannah Arendt, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Zygmunt Bauman. See Levy and Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, 39.
36. Eder et al., *Holocaust Memory in a Globalizing World.*
37. Gilbert and Alba, *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar World.*
38. On the former issue, see Sundquist, *Strangers in the Land.*
39. Kissi, *Africans and the Holocaust.*

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