

Editors' Introduction

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This issue introduces a new section that will alternate with those GSP has added in the last year, namely *state of the field* and *case notes*. These are different from regular articles insofar as they do not necessarily present original empirical or theoretical research. In the case of *state of the field* papers the goal is to either give an overview of a whole research field or focus on a very specific set of questions. *Case notes* are reports on legal proceedings pertinent for the field of Genocide studies. The new section – translations – addresses an altogether different issue. The language of genocide studies is without a doubt English. Its leading journals publish only in English. That makes sense insofar as this language is the lingua franca of science and humanities in the 21st Century. However, this focus on just one language comes at a price – and a high one at that. Genocide studies is not a discipline but a field. In order to answer its many questions that in one way or another deal with the human condition, we as researchers of destruction and its prevention need input from other disciplines that explicitly address many of our crucial questions. Those disciplines are Psychology (including Social Psychology), Sociology, Social Anthropology, Criminology, and Socio-Biology, among others. Our impression at GSP is, however, that many publications in the field only refer to a rather limited number of scholarly materials on questions that concern us. Those rich academic cultures in the German, French, and Spanish speaking world – just to name a few – are unfortunately underrepresented in our discourses. This is likely because many of us do not know of them. We may add that this loss is not only one of content, but also of style of thought. The modes of explanation many genocide scholars use to conceptualize their subjects are clearly dominated by mainstreamed academic English. We, as a journal can only do so much about the latter, therefore we like to enrich the discourse on occasion with translations of works that have so far been unavailable in English. Thanks to the former IAGS Board, led by Andrew Woolford, we were able to solicit a translation of a text by the late German Sociologist Heinrich Popitz that deals with the appearance, stabilisation, change or fading of social norms. Our publication of that piece coincides – not without coincidence – with the release of Popitz's major work, *Phenomena of Power*, with University of Columbia Press. Please see the link included for a brief introduction and additional information: <http://doi.org/10.5038/1911-9933.11.2.1552>.

This issue contains five full articles. Sarah Federman addresses the question of perpetratorship via the very current concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. By researching the action of the French National Railways in the context of the Holocaust the author makes a case for “a greater inclusion of market actors in genocide studies both to understand and respond to the complex roles these actors play in both participating in and interrupting mass atrocity.”

Benjamin Meiches deals with the tension that comes with the understanding of genocide as a contestable concept on one side and the need to have a functioning definition on the other. He does so by exploring not so much what genocide is but by demonstrating how the concept functions in scholarly, political, and legal discourses. Meiches understands genocide as a “discursive object that exploded into contemporary politics barely seventy years ago and continues to transform our sense of international law, global ethics, and academic scholarship.”

The ever-actual and quite often rather ideologically discussed question of the preventive power of memory is the topic of Kerry Whigham's contribution. By examining a number of memory practices he comes to nuanced verdict: “When memory isolates or atomizes bodies, it has little chance at being preventive. (...) when it draws people together in the public sphere – even when it leads to nonviolent disputes and contentious debates – memory has a much greater chance of preventing genocidal violence. Of course, memory alone is not enough.”

Timothy Williams and Dominik Pfeiffer explicitly introduce a sociological perspective on genocidal violence focusing on its key characteristic, “intentionality” and therefore the motivation of those involved. They argue that so-called genocidal frames are the precondition for genocidal violence and individual participation in it. “Generally speaking, elites and leaders act purposefully when framing genocidal action at the macro level, while low-level perpetrators act mostly out of different motivations knowing what their superiors might have in mind at the micro level.”

Video Interviews of Shoah survivors are in use as an educational resource worldwide. Katalin Eszter Morgan has studied their use in a German setting. She is interested in how the work with these interviews may add to the users own “scientific knowledge” to their ability to “learn empathy” and finally how the learners are positioned as collectives in the process.

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