ABSTRACTS

The Dutch Paradox. History and Memory of the Holocaust in the Netherlands

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In this paper I present an outline for a book on the Dutch paradox in the history of the Holocaust. On the one hand, the Netherlands developed a reputation of tolerance and liberality, in particular towards the Jews. In comparison to other European countries, anti-Semitism in the Netherlands was relatively mild. Yet on the other hand, more Jews have been deported from the Netherlands than from any other part of Western Europe, both in absolute and relative numbers. In 1940, around 140,000 Jews were living in the Netherlands. Some 107,000 were deported, of whom only about 5,200 survived. Less than 30 % of Dutch Jewry survived the Holocaust, and this stands in sharp contrast to the 75 percent of the French Jews who survived, and the 60 percent of Belgian Jewish survivors. The concept of the ‘Dutch paradox’ was coined as the mirror image of the Belgian and French paradox. In these countries, there was much more hostility against Jews. Yet the number of victims of the Holocaust in these countries was much lower than it was in the Netherlands. The crucial question therefore is how Jews in the Netherlands seemed to be much safer yet turned out to be much more vulnerable, while Jews in Belgium and France were more threatened yet managed to survive in much larger numbers. This is first of all a historical puzzle, which will be discussed by focusing on the position of the Jews in the Netherlands before and during the German occupation, the routines and traditions of Dutch politics, and the German policies of persecution. But it is also a puzzle of memory, in the sense that responses to the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands initially served to demonstrate Dutch heroism, and only later came to signify a widespread suspicion about a collective guilt, while in France and Belgium the much more favorable track record never served to bolster national pride. Again, these differences can be explained by reference to the position of the Jews in the Netherlands, the routines and traditions of Dutch politics, but also to the organization of cultural memory in the Netherlands.

Holocaust, Transgressive Sexuality, and Boundaries of the Narratable

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Why were certain stories connected to sexuality of the Holocaust victims, such as people who engaged in same sex conduct, never told? Recent scholarship has critiqued the assumption that sexual violence during the Holocaust were deeply traumatizing for the victims and hence are too painful to recount. In addition, sexuality plays a central role in our imagining of genocidal horrors and sexual
violence is often used as a pornographic framing mechanism to imagine Holocaust horrors.

My work explores the intersection of sexuality and violence in the Holocaust, and the erasure of what I term "transgressive sexualities" from the Holocaust canon. I examine the narrative omission of lesbians and gays deported as Jews, homophobia of the victim society, and sexual barter. In examining transgressive sexuality, I contribute to our understanding of gender and sexual violence, agency and normative behavior during the Holocaust, and the politics of Holocaust archives.

**What’s Political about Political Violence? Exploring ex-militant testimonies from the Italian left and the Cypriot anti-colonial struggle (1955–60)**

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This paper begins by exploring the fraught state of contemporary terrorism and radicalisation studies – where, despite the application of multiple models, robust predictions cannot be made about who will join a terrorist group. Some of the most dedicated researchers have concluded that while probability modelling can be applied to crimes such as burglary, it cannot be successfully applied to terrorism. This is because there are not enough cases of terrorism to generate a statistical base rate – terrorism is too rare. If we cannot predict instances of terrorism through data analysis, then why not ask ex-militants what caused them to become militants? Indeed, social science modelling fails to capture the sense of an existential struggle for justice that ex-militants report as driving their transition to militancy. Through ex-militant testimonies from the Cypriot EOKA & Italian leftist struggles, this paper explores the politicality of armed struggle while also situating these campaigns in their international and historical contexts. Such testimony suggests that international politics is partly responsible for driving terrorist campaigns. However relying on such testimony comes with its own methodological hazards, and this paper also explores the impact of more recent events upon the constitution of militant memories. Memory helps us to access the politicality of violence, but is also itself always political.

**Terrorist Constituencies and the Dynamics of Political Violence: The Case of Baader Meinhof**

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With their declarations and acts of violence terrorists not only aim to spread anxiety among their declared enemies. They also strive to inspire sympathy among certain sections of society for whom they claim to be fighting. These can be considered the terrorist constituency, a wider audience that is potentially receptive to their ideology and the messages implicit in their acts. Recently, researchers of contestant terrorism have started to appreciate that this
constituency has often played a crucial role in terrorism crises. Working on Germany’s Red Army Faction aka Baader Meinhof illuminates both the possibilities and the problems of this new perspective on rebel terrorism. How does one actually study the communication processes between a terrorist group and its constituency? Do these constituencies have a similar impact on terrorism crises ranging from Nineteenth Century Russian anarchism and Twentieth Century liberation movements or social-revolutionary groups to today’s Islamist Jihadists?

The Politics of Violence and Rebel Resistance in Kenya’s Detention Camps, 1956-1959

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By the end of 1956, the British counter-insurgency had defeated the Mau Mau armies in Kenya’s highland forests. But in the process of breaking support for the Mau Mau movement amongst the Kikuyu population, the British had detained without trial more than 80,000 rebel supporters. The detention camps in which these prisoners were incarcerated became the site for Mau Mau’s continued resistance after the defeat of the forest armies. Organised by the so-called “hard-core” Mau Mau detainees, resistance in the camps hardened as the British imposed an increasingly aggressive system of institutionalised torture in an effort to persuade detainees to “confess” to their crimes. The “war behind the wire” that this provoked reached its culmination from the early months of 1957 through to the Hola massacre of early March 1959. This paper details how that Mau Mau resistance emerged and consolidated, illustrating the connections between political resistance across the full network of detention camps and the development of common strategies designed to expose the atrocities in the British system of incarceration. Where the Mau Mau forest armies could not defeat the British, it was the political resistance in the detention camps that ultimately broke British resolve and lead directly to the decolonisation of Kenya.

Mass Violence in Syria and Iraq: A Comparative Historical Perspective

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This paper offers a comparative examination of mass political violence in postcolonial Iraq and Syria. Since independence, Syria (1946) and Iraq (1932) have experienced various forms of violence, including inter-state wars, intra-state rebellions, forms of terrorism, civil wars, and state terror. In this paper, I will focus exclusively on the latter, by discussing the ideologies, dynamics, forms, and consequences of state violence under the regimes of Saddam Hussein and Hafez al-Assad. Whereas the discrete episodes of mass violence in the postcolonial periods of both countries are relatively clear, their legacies are not yet sufficiently understood. What kind of influences did this prehistory of state violence exert on the current crises in Iraq since 2003 and Syria since 2011? What were the effects of earlier stages on later episodes of violence in
terms of political culture, inter-state power structures, or widespread mentalities?

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