

Glover, Jonathan. *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press: 2000.

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Preface. What lessons in ethics ought one to derive from the violence of the twentieth century?

Chapter 1: *Never Such Innocence Again.* At the end of the twentieth century, one cannot be certain of the existence of a moral law or of moral progress. Intellectual repudiation of moral law and last century's history argue against them. News tends to anesthetize viewers to events. Everything gets forgotten in the endless news cycle. Glover has not experienced the events of which he writes. He is attempting to get perspective on them. In philosophical ethics, there has been a move from theoretical ethics to applied ethics, putting human concerns squarely in philosophy's crosshairs. Ethics generally should be more empirical. Enlightenment confidence that rationality would banish war and cruelty proved shallow. Glover looks at human spiritual darkness, in the hope of restraining it in the service of a better future.

PART ONE: ETHICS WITHOUT THE MORAL LAW

Chapter 2: *Nietzsche's Challenge.* Friedrich Nietzsche foresaw the collapse of religious morality in the twentieth century. Nietzsche valued self-creation, and castigated all authorities that might claim to govern or restrain that project. God is dead. Religion is poison and must be swept away. Governments rely on confusions of the masses. A self-created man is noble in the sense that his superior completeness frees him to do whatever he may need in order to self-create. Life lacks intrinsic meaning. The human beast makes of it what he will, if he has the strength. The self-created man grasps life with a clenched fist, choking any weakness he finds in himself and strangling the masses, who are uniformly weak. Women are, by definition, flaccid. Altruism disguises pallid souls. The brilliant souls of self-created aristocrats may exterminate lesser men at will. The weak are born to perish, lambs in the talons of eagles. Glover accepts Nietzsche's view of religion, gods, and human self-creation. Glover rejects Nietzsche's particular recipe for self-creation. Values other than cruel domination exist, and may become one's self-program. But what does one say to the Nietzschean amoral superman running amok?

Chapter 3: *Self-Interest as a Restraint.* Amoralists reject ought-ness. Still, even they have strong motivations to behave well. Some are naturally generous. And self-interest often dictates fitting in and behaving well. Reciprocal altruism inclines others to assist you. To the extent life resembles the simple dual prisoner's dilemma, the best strategy is tit-for-tat: I defect after you defect, I cooperate after you cooperate. In more complex versions of the prisoner's dilemma, other strategies prevail. Social approval depends not upon moral conviction, but upon the appearance of moral conviction. Gyges's ring (Plato, *Republic*) rendered him invisible and unleashed his inner pestilence. Perhaps being good is the best way to appear good. But a mixed strategy may prevail, in which one is good in many aspects, but hides a sanctum of dissent from others. Social pressure fails as a moralizing force when a culture goes awry, pressuring others to immorality (Nazis, Chinese cultural revolution). Social pressure has no effect as between nations.

Chapter 4: *The Moral Resources: Humanity.* Moral restraint has roots in human respect and sympathy. People who aver Nietzschean amorality nevertheless frequently have self-creation projects quite different from Nietzsche's *Uberschensch* ideal. Respect acknowledges the essential dignity of another. Sympathy grows from human drives to belong, and extends to strangers. Personal suffering may expand one's capacity for sympathy. "Humanity" means to respond to others with respect and sympathy. Not all humans exhibit humanity.

Chapter 5: *The Moral Resources: Moral Identity.* Part of self-restraint derives from the task of becoming the person you imagine yourself to be. Socrates argued that happiness springs from internal integration. Other theorists chose other ethical bases: self-interest for contractarianism, sympathy for utilitarianism, respect for Kantian ethics. No single basis suffices, especially when ethics moves outside a single community. The moral gap between what we will do for insiders and for outsiders explains much cruelty. Glover recounts the Athenian conquest of their small neighbor, Melos, in Thucydides's history. Athens argued that might makes right, Melos offered neutrality and warned about Athens's own future need for fair play were they to be defeated. Athens destroyed Melos. Human internal resources are insufficient to restrain us in dealing with outsiders.

Chapter 6: *The Festival of Cruelty.* Humans are artistically cruel. Humans 1) can love cruelty, 2) are driven to cruelty by emotional deficiencies, and 3) restraints on cruelty can be overcome. Some deep motivation in mankind seeks cruelty under certain circumstances. Some individuals yield more readily to the impulse to cruelty than others. Moral identity itself can erode, growing weaker in the presence of emphasis on the differentness of the non-member. The dehumanization includes "cold jokes," which bring black humor to cruelty. Still, our best sentiments can break through the intention to be cruel, when the object is restored unexpectedly to common humanity (Glover tells the tale of a South African Afrikaner policeman, intent upon beating a woman; she loses her shoe, he picks it up and returns it to her. The officer can no longer chase his intended victim.) Glover speculates that it may be possible to overcome the impulse to cruelty in humans.

Chapter 7: *Answering Nietzsche.* To answer Nietzsche, Glover seeks a post-theological morality, an ethic recognized as a human artifact, and designed to address human needs and weakness. Most morality is local. Part of our task is to widen our moral scope to all of humanity. We need institutions opposing cruelty (like UN Peacekeepers and mediation of disputes). We also need cultural change aimed to more deeply restrain cruelty. The task is to refashion ethics with a collective bent. The new ethics must be empirical, investigating human moral fragility and answering it systematically.

PART TWO: THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF WAGING WAR

Chapter 8: *Close Combat.* Glover estimates that in ninety years of the twentieth century, on average 100 people were killed every hour in war. Killing directly with guns or blades puts soldiers to the task of behaving differently than they would in normal life. This possibility emerges from depersonalization of the soldier, from dehumanization of the enemy, from inuring the soldier to wartime cruelty, and from giving young men a defined path to recognition as adult soldiers (through killing). Despite these forces, moral revulsion occasionally breaks through. Humiliation may lead to bursts of violence. So too, an intense sense of camaraderie can lead to violent outbreaks often citing revenge or release of frustration. Some soldiers report experiencing the killing as fun "in strange and troubling ways."

Chapter 9: *The Case of My Lai.* Glover recounts the American massacre of villagers at My Lai in Vietnam. The commanders encouraged the carnage. The soldiers followed orders, then lost control. Some few resisted, but did so bravely. My Lai is noteworthy because so well documented, but its psychological features are common to "normal" combat responses.

Chapter 10: *The Shift to Killing at a Distance.* The twentieth century innovation in war lies in the cold violence of killing at a distance by technical means. The first instance lies in Britain's blockade of Germany during World War I, from which around 500,000 Germans died of starvation and associated diseases. War at a distance needs fewer erosions of individual morality than does the hot violence of hand to hand combat. Still, moral identity must be suppressed. More identity proves less inhibiting when the killings seem justified; when, at least at first, no civilian deaths are caused intentionally; when the transition to civilian deaths comes incrementally; when the deaths are caused by inaction, rather than action; and when the policy is

implemented by many people in many places. Eventually the instrument of civilian killing becomes a bureaucracy, with its own institutional inertia.

Chapter 11: *Bombing*. The intentional mass starvation of German civilians broke through the taboo on killing noncombatants, and serves to justify bombing of civilian centers in all subsequent war. British carpet bombing of German targets had three phases: 1) bombing of military targets, 2) the recognition that targeting was too inaccurate to assure only military targets were being destroyed, and so inadvertent destruction of civilian targets, and 3) intentional destruction of civilian targets to demoralize the population and inhibit industrial workforce participation in the German war effort. Bomber crew mortality was very high (only 16% survived two tours of duty). On the ground below the bombers, more than a half million civilians died. Glover reports from Dresden. Physical distance makes civilian retaliatory death more acceptable. Glover recounts the moral insensitivity of the commanders of the British bomber attacks. There were few breakthroughs of sympathy for the German victims. Retaliation breeds legitimacy. Glover reports that the officers in charge of ordering the bombing of cities did not believe themselves to be making those decisions, but merely responding to orders from above. With options open, bombing civilians is war atrocity. Just War Theory contemplates civilian deaths as unintentional results of permitted killing. No innocents can be intentionally targeted. The emphasis on intention slides easily to dissembling. Strict pacifism offers an alternative, but few are willing to accept the control of evil actors in consequence. How does one adjudicate the killing of civilians, say by carpet bombing, if one rejects a divine mandate and rational quibbling about outcomes? Glover recounts the opposition to bombing of civilians by Bishop Bell, who emphasized the moral degradation wrought on the bombers and their civilization by the acts. Each act of civilian killing justifies the next yet-greater insult. The British blockade leads to area bombing lead to Tokyo firebombing leads to Hiroshima.

Chapter 12: *Hiroshima*. Willingness to use an atomic bomb against Axis powers in WWII grew from callousness deriving from massive conventional civilian bombings, fear of Axis nuclear programs, and the mere fact of the existence of the American bomb. The American bomb program began as a deterrent to a possible German weapon. Among the Germans, the nuclear scientists were ambivalent, both wanting Germany to win the war, but not wanting a Nazi nuclear hegemony. The Japanese theater of WWII took a tremendous toll on civilians and soldiers alike. The case for a rapid end to the war was compelling. Eisenhower argued against using the atomic weapon on cities. Truman overruled him. Other considerations intervened, like the enthusiasm of the military for demonstrating the weapon militarily, and the need to intimidate the Soviets in Europe. The Japanese feared that, if they surrendered unconditionally, the Emperor would be forced to step down. The Hiroshima bomb killed 200,000 persons within five years. The Nagasaki bomb killed 140,000 within five years. American moral identity, which might have restrained the Japanese atomic bombs was eroded by physical distance from the killings, evasions about the effects of the bombings, and by the relatively small contribution made to the events by any one individual (fragmentation of responsibility). Among Truman, Churchill, Oppenheimer, and the Stimson committee (which considered the likely outcomes of various uses of the atomic weapons), no one took final responsibility. A moral vacuum ensued. Glover suggests that Truman could have suggested another test of the weapons on American soil in which Japanese observers participated, and a negotiated peace without the demand to depose the Emperor.

Glover recounts Elizabeth Anscombe's impassioned argument at Oxford University against giving Harry Truman an honorary degree. She was a minority of one, when the vote was taken. Anscombe's argument was based on just war theory. In its double effect doctrine, innocent deaths, when limited, are permitted to achieve military results of protecting oneself or others. Glover examines the double effect doctrine, noting two different rules: 1) were innocent deaths wanted? and 2) were innocent deaths so integral to the act that we cannot call them accidental? Both rules are premised on an absolute prohibition on taking innocent life, part of Catholic orthodoxy. As an appeal to authority, many will find her argument unappealing.

Glover argues for an open world in which an international authority controls all weapons of mass destruction.

Chapter 13: *War and the Moral Resources.* In close combat, soldiers' moral identity may be eroded by dehumanizing the enemy, emotional defensiveness, training, the alien unfamiliarity of the battlefield, contempt for moral dialogue, emotional outbursts in vengeance or humiliation, or battle ecstasy. In long distance war, moral identity suffers from distance and passivity, fragmentation of responsibility, and the effect of ill-precedents in mass killings.

PART THREE: TRIBALISM

Chapter 14: *Rwanda.* "Tribal" conflicts flare between neighbors so frequently that they form part of the human condition. In the Rwandan genocide, around one million people died. The tribal hostility was aggravated by a political campaign inciting the populace and international non-action, particularly on the part of the United States.

Chapter 15: *The Tribal Trap.* Tribal conflict usually requires political propaganda to emerge into killing. One group's nationalism spurs that of another, then both descend in a spiral of growing distrust and antipathy. Glover recounts the brutal disintegration of Yugoslavia into its component nationalities and religious identities, along with the medal propaganda that engendered public fears. Glover reports rape camps and intentional killing of young children. Fear of attack operates as well as actual attack as a motivator for war. The "Hobbesian trap" consists in motivation to strike first to prevent a devastating first strike from an opponent. Pluralist states make diverse persons citizens. Tribal states conceive themselves as consisting of one race, nationality, or religion; those who differ are outsiders.

Chapter 16: *The Political Containment of Tribalism.* Tribal wars flag when diverse societies are created and fear is doused. One may concede national status on tribal states, but usually within tribal states are minorities wanting their own independence (the Russian doll problem). Blurring the concept of sovereignty may help, or sharing territory or allowing dual citizenship of disputed regions might ease tensions. Disturbed areas need a Hobbesian Leviathan, an international force with sufficient power to quell intertribal violence. Glover recounts the disdain with which the Serbian forces treated the UN peacekeeping force in Bosnia, which had no authority to use force. The "international community" was no more effective. The Serbs dismembered a recognized state, committed genocide, and profited from the acts. To control tribal conflicts, from the first world to the third world, a credible and permanent international police force is needed, one with clear rules of engagement and an international court to authorize its engagement. If the international community will not enforce its sense of appropriate boundaries, then the violent will prevail.

Chapter 17: *The Roots of Tribal Conflict.* Tribal conflict emerges from the human propensities for simmering historical hatreds, political propagandizing, being captured by beliefs, fear of unrestrained others, and a weakness for group conflicts. A genetic basis for the human disposition to group conflict may lie in the evolutionary pressure of inclusive fitness (individual fitness combined with survival of similar genes in kindred others). Psychologically, nations are the us-of-imagination, which is tribal consciousness. Having a sovereign territory is not essential. Tribal identity comprises charged elements, such as common appearance, customs, religion. Possibly, tribal identity is deeply linked to our individual sense of meaning. The narrative we tell ourselves gets fundamentally bonded to the places where it takes place. With its further links to common language, religion, and customs, slights to these places or habits injure individual self-concept. Slightings may kindle wars. Tribal-national entities create narratives that justify violent acts; these tales unbend the bent twig. Violent acts justify further narratives supporting vengeance. The tribal vendetta results.

Chapter 18: *The Capacity to Unchain Ourselves.* To bridle tribal war in the short term, we need a global police. In the longer term, we may be able to erode tribalism itself, as a psychological proposition. Tribal mentality is a fact of human psychology. But can a global humanism replace it for most people? Tribal enmities are inhibited when other tribes respect equality among tribes.

Individual acts of empathy and sympathy contradict the narrative of violence, and weaken it. An expanded sense of moral identity also weakens tribal hatreds: we are not merely Serbs and Croats, but also parents, humans, religionists, music lovers, walkers, and readers.

PART FOUR: WAR AS A TRAP

Chapter 19: *The Trap of the Trenches.* War entraps its participants. Aggression explains little of war. Glover recounts events of World War I: the mutual slaughter at Somme, the general sense of futility among the troops, fraternization between enemy lines, informal troop-led cease fires, and cooperation among the troops to reduce casualties. Superiors fought back. Soldiers who declined to fight were executed. The war trap extended to propagandized civilians, who seemed pathologically incapable of receiving information that contradicted the war narrative.

Chapter 20: *The Home Front.* Civilian populations think what they learn from their media. Civilian war moods are divided; people feel fear and interest in peace, but also exhilaration. The media of both warring nations tell stories supporting war. Governments censor news to maintain morale at home and avoid encouraging enemies. Soldiers self-censor to avoid distressing homefront non-combatants. Public feedback (not wanting to hear stories contradicting their war narrative) discourages media from telling the truth. Mutual racism in the Pacific theater of World War II was rampant. Ten percent of Americans supported extermination of the Japanese.

Chapter 21: *The Stone Has Started to Roll: 1914.* In deliberating war, most people participate passively. Even leaders taking the decision to fight feel trapped into war. Such was World War I. The war started with the assassination of Franz Ferdinand by a group of young Serbian men redressing a battle lost in AD1389. Austria warred on Serbia, then Russia on Austria and Germany, then France on Germany, then Britain on Germany. Glover recounts the events of the growing conflagration. What accounts for this slide into a war it seems none of the nations involved wanted? 1) *Confusion and Ambiguity.* Ambivalence and confusion in the policies of one country impair the ability of others to respond rationally, when considering the question of war. Misunderstanding and mis-assessment are inevitable. 2) *Military Preparations.* The parties' military preparations for defense of their homelands forced all to become more war-ready. Mobilizing one army caused all to mobilize, leading to arms races. Defensive alliances among countries primed the conflict, rapidly leading all the European powers into a war none wanted over a non-governmental provocation (assassination of Archduke Ferdinand). 3) *Public Mind-Set.* Willingness to war was considered the essence of national identity. Social Darwinism predicted a global fight for survival, with the nation-state as the selection units. Nations were conceived as individuals, suffering dishonor or enjoying glory. To break the trust of an ally was thought to be worse than war. In the end, the public mind was distracted from the effects of war on people to its effects on abstractions.

Chapter 22: *Sliding out of the Trap: 1962.* Glover describes the Cuban missile crisis, which drove the United States and Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war. The motivating factors were, for the Soviets, fear of American intervention in Cuba, changing the balance of nuclear power, and answering American missiles sited in Turkey. For the Americans, concern about no-warning nuclear strikes, possible Castro control of the weapons, and loss of prestige predominated. Other factors influenced the standoff: slow communication by telegram, unclear intentions, growing military independence and influence, American public hostility toward Cuba, emotional pressure for quick action. The crisis was avoided when both civilian leaders checked their militaries, when both recognized that their situation was a trap, when both spoke with conciliation, left one another ways out of the trap. Hawks emphasized the irrationality of Soviet responses to American attack. Doves emphasized human fallibility under great emotional pressures. To resolve the crisis, Khrushchev backed down and Kennedy deceived the American public (about the tradeoff for Turkish missiles). But they avoided nuclear war.

Chapter 23: *Ways Out.* Comparing 1914 with 1962 leads to some conclusions about avoiding war: 1) make policy clear to opponents, 2) assert strong control of the military, 3) respond slowly and with caution, 4) stay aware of human fallibility, 5) speak without provocation to avoid generating fear or anger, 6) join the opponent in acknowledging the war trap and set a joint plan to work out of the trap. Politically, a Hobbesian Leviathan (control by superior coercion) may impose peace, but that peace will be only as enduring as the Leviathan. We should rig the international game for peace, learning lessons from game theories (dollar auction, tit-for-tat). The world needs a Kantian cooperative arrangement. Immanuel Kant, in his *Eternal Peace* essay, recognizes the Hobbesian state of nature, but offers a cooperative solution. Nations join a republic, relinquishing sovereignty to the republic as to the right to war. The federated nations are otherwise independent. Kant argues that the effects of war drive nations toward this solution, but so does morality. Democratic states are more likely to agree to federation, and less likely to war, because the government's policies have to be approved by those who bear the human costs of war. Psychologically, public opinion influences governments. To steel public opinion against war, one requires public skepticism about partisan political ranting, willingness to endure humiliation or disrespect in the name of avoiding war, sensitivity to the human moral resources of compassion and sympathy. National self-interest is a sometimes self-defeating rational enterprise, like the dollar auction. Skepticism about coercive approaches is critical to creating a different, less war-prone global culture.

PART FIVE: BELIEF AND TERROR: STALIN AND HIS HEIRS

Chapter 24: *In Those Years.* Stalinist purges murdered tens of millions of Russians. The methods were execution pits, slave labor camps, deliberate starvation, forced relocation, and political persecution. Stalin encouraged torture. Yet it was normal people who murdered and tortured. How shall one understand this fact?

Chapter 25: *The Trap of Terror.* Aristotle said that a tyrant retains power by keeping his people strangers to one another. Fear without companionship leads to submission. Lenin gave instructions: Have tough people hang opponents publicly, broadcast their names, and take all their property. Stalin universalized Lenin's approach. Leaders as well as normal people suffered. Of the original eight members of the Politburo of 1917, six died violently. Only Lenin and Stalin survived. They murdered the others. The orchestrated show trials of thousands, even their own closest colleagues. In the end, Stalin had a stroke, and his closest allies would not call a doctor. Stalin was desperately lonely, and died that way.

Chapter 26: *Belief: Ends and Means.* Ideological faith in Marxism loosed Stalin's cruelty to its exorbitant excesses. Faith in Stalin himself reached religious proportions. The great task of remaking capitalist humans into perfect communists justified any excess. Society is either a factory producing communists or defective products to be rejected. Indifference to suffering became the Soviet rule. Eggs were broken for the Russian omelette. Morality was the hogwash of ruling capitalist elites. The perfect state was justified in exterminating its enemies.

Chapter 27: *Stalinism and the Moral Resources.* In the face of Stalin's terror, kindness came to be ridiculed, and fear drove people to ignore the cruelty paraded before them. In those executing the policies, hardness and black humor replaced sympathy. Glover tells the story of Nikolai Bukharin, a Soviet Party leader whom Stalin executed.

Chapter 28: *The Working of A Belief System.* Beliefs form systems that function as mental maps. When experience contradicts one of our beliefs, we may revise the belief or doubt the evidence or criticize purveyor of that evidence or abandon the belief system or claim ignorance. Our options in the face of inadequacy of a belief are many. Any belief can be conserved if one is willing to employ dramatic strategies to retain it. If core beliefs remain static, the belief system flexes to accommodate that fixity. Not all beliefs are equal. Structural beliefs dictate how one adjudicates among various belief options. Glover cites the ideological gyrations of the British Communist Party in response to Stalin's political machinations to invade Poland and sidle up to

Hitler, during the run up to World War II. The British Party believed in Soviet infallibility. All doubts were doubted. Where beliefs grow from authority, rationales subside. The Soviet International was Communist authority. No individual opinions stood against it unpunished. The Party affirmed patent falsehoods to make Stalin's positions more palatable. It is a picture of the effect of ideological belief without fear.

Chapter 29: *Stalinism, Truth and Moral Identity.* Ideological belief with fear of reprisal characterized Stalin's Russia. Pressure to inform and terror of being denounced drove most to abandon their values. Survival was at stake. Most compromised. Stalinism supported skepticism about objective truth, as has been fashionable since the late-1800s. Stalin put truth in the service of political strategies. Communist political ideology commandeered law and even biology (forsaking Mendelian for Lamarckian genetic theory). Even the philosophical community cowered silently. Stalin recommended that philosophers focus on berating or assaulting his opponents. Abandoning moral objectivity (truth) begins with speaking without truth to oneself. That spills over into talking with others. Eventually, misrepresentations need to be defended, and one begins to lie to oneself. Our penchant for partial knowledge, inaccuracy, and bias can be exaggerated into justification for moral relativism. The liar rigs evidence to support his views, and the breach between the world and one's views widens. Self-deception self-perpetuates. Self-talk generates moral identity. When self-talk consists in lies, any act can be justified morally. Moral identity collapses into delusion.

Chapter 30: *Mao's Utopian Project.* Mao and Pol Pot followed Stalin's lead. Mao's agricultural policies, the Great Leap Forward, were based on baseless ideas. Millions starved. Yet Mao failed to heed warnings and reports of famine because these contradicted his opinions. In the end, no one told him of his errors. He had jailed or killed all those who might. The Cultural Revolution afforded Mao opportunity to kill his political opponents and regain control of China. He encouraged the young, uneducated to upend society, purging Confucian ideas and institutions. Millions died. Systematic humiliation drove thousands to suicide. Mao demanded, and got, conformity. Our beliefs rely heavily on the views of others. We conform provisionally, subject to further investigation and skepticism. Such conformity forms the background to all innovation. Where usual doubts are squelched, groups become vulnerable to sociopaths like Mao. The Cultural Revolution left no private space for personal moral identity. All was sacrificed to the Revolution. People came to mistrust and hate one another. Mao thought himself a philosopher. He lacked moral restraints. He took the Chinese people as a canvas on which he believed he could paint what he wished. All of human life was, to Mao, plastic. It could be remolded in the fire of class conflicts.

Chapter 31: *Overturing the Basket: Cambodia.* The Khmer Rouge, upon taking power, drove the population into the countryside, emptying the towns and villages. Many died. Only six years earlier, the Khmer Rouge was small. They grew large when the Nixon administration commenced Cambodian bombing, killing up to 600,000 people. Their nominal American target was North Vietnamese bases inside Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge were quite consciously following a Maoist program. The Khmer's calculation of future human bliss entailed current human death and misery. The Khmer were given to torture and the cold joke. The Khmer Rouge killed two of Cambodia's eight million people. The Khmer's total redesign of society without regard to morality, which it shared with Mao and Stalin, collapsed in the destruction of its people.

Chapter 32: *Utopia and Belief.* Some social redesign may be worthwhile. Communism, however, was disaster. Communist redesign, as practiced by Mao, Stalin, and Pol Pot, was self-enamored, inflexible, oppressive, immoral, and ultimately ill-fitted to its task. The communist program ignored people's need for self-respect and choice of their own goods. To achieve its utopian ends it employed terror and an oppressive mandatory belief system. Stalinism teaches mankind to disdain utopian social transformations. The ideology that accompanies such efforts is at least as dangerous as barbarism.

PART SIX: THE WILL TO CREATE MANKIND ANEW: THE NAZI EXPERIMENT

Chapter 33: *The Core of Nazism.* Hitler exceeded Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot, not in the number killed, but in the darkness of his vision. Nazi belief employed social Darwinism in support of a Nietzschean exaltation of will and rejection of biblical morality. Nazi belief was tribal and racial, including Germanic types outside Germany, but excluding non-Germanic types (Jews and other groups) within Germany. Historically, Nazism was driven by the 1918 Armistice, which Hitler theatrically reversed by receiving France's surrender at the same spot and rail car as the Germans had surrendered in 1918. Hitler suffered a British gas attack in 1918. It hardened him. He advocated gas for gas, and thought the poison should be used on the corrupting Jews within Germany. Nazism supported racial hygiene. "Defective" citizens should be euthanized, sterilized, or otherwise prevented from breeding. Preferred citizens should be encouraged to have large families and protected. Desirable children of others should be stolen to protect their genetic legacy. The national genetic heritage is at risk from interbreeding with inferior tribes. Hitler adopted some of Nazi doctrine from Nietzsche, especially his rejection of Judeo-Christian values related to assisting the weak. Morality was a poison. Nazism substituted hardness and conflict for peace and support as the best of human values.

Chapter 34: *Obedience and Conformity.* Nazism sought uncritical obedience from Germans. Hitler cultivated a religious legend about himself. His subordinates were exalted by their association with Hitler. Glover speculates about the role of strict paternal authoritarianism in German families and the subsequent willingness to obey in the Nazi regime. Hitler's own father was distant and demanding and brutal. Hitler became rigid in his own personal habits. In the Milgram psychological studies, volunteers administered shocks to "learners," from slight to extremely painful. Unknown to the volunteers, the shocks were false, and the learners' responses acted. Twenty-six of forty volunteers administered the full spectrum of shock upon command, despite their belief they were inflicted significant pain. In subsequent variations, when the disobedience of some volunteers was disclosed, only four of forty participated. In addition to pressure to obey, Nazis created peer pressures to conform. The social ties of the obeying groups created genuine friendship among them. As social animals, our autonomy is necessarily limited. We rely on authorities as shortcuts to good decision-making. When that presumption goes awry, we must abandon obedience, despite the costs. Bertrand Russell's family bible's leaf contains a handwritten sentence: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." Nazi beliefs strained normal human moral resources. Added to the pressures of obedience and conformity, most Germans acquiesced or joined.

Chapter 35: *The Attack on Humanity.* Nazism stripped Jews and other unwanted peoples of their dignity, characterizing them as animals or diseases. They were intentionally humiliated. Cold jokes abounded with respect to the execution of victims. De-humanization of victims made their murder easier for the soldiers. Nazism urged people to replace sympathy with hardness, to participate in the cold machinery of the State. Sympathy sometimes broke through the discipline of hardness, usually in the presence of individual women and children victims. Such breakthroughs were not uncommon, but seldom worked to prevent executions. The Nazis had a strict rule against exceptions, so no individual considerations were valid excuses for leniency.

Chapter 36: *The Erosion of Moral Identity.* After accounting for obedience and a penchant for conformity, it is still difficult to comprehend how normal Germans participated in the Nazi mass murders. Other psychological features assisted: bureaucratic wrangling, technical problems, denial, euphemisms, and a sense of unreality. Still, normal human compassion erupted occasionally. Even Nazi leaders felt embarrassment, hid the genocide camps, and forbade speaking of the Final Solution. Nevertheless, the policy endured.

Chapter 37: *The Nazi Moral Identity.* Nazism promulgated a post-Christian morality. It did not reject God, but railed against Christianity. Conscience was, per Nietzsche, a Jewish conspiracy. Reevaluation of all values (again Nietzsche) was a Nazi goal and slogan. Nazi morality

emphasized duty, and opposing filth, and presenting a moral high ground to its victims. In Nazi parlance, the SS was a moral elite.

Chapter 38: *The Willingness to Believe.* Hitler understood that propaganda aimed at human emotion. Only critical thinking inoculates from propaganda. Himmler lacked such abilities; he cherished a potpourri of nonsensical ideas. Nazism offered the German people a vision of the glory of Germany, the Thousand-Year Reich. Nazism addressed the need people feel for transcendence. Glover recounts the case of neo-Nazi Jim Keegstra, Alberta high school teacher, who convinced numerous students and teachers outrageous falsehoods about the Nazi regime in the 1970s. After his removal from teaching, many students and teachers persevered in believing Keegstra's assertions, long after contrary evidence had been offered. Where critical thinking flags, propaganda predominates.

Chapter 39: *Philosophers.* Intellectuals keep a culture's thought independent and critically examine beliefs. Hitler had little use for them, and contemplated a purge. Many important thinkers in Hitler's Germany were driven out or killed. The inferior minds left served Nazism, parroting its views and burning books of its opponents. Glover analyzes the life and philosophy of Martin Heidegger, who became a Nazi and thought himself a Nazi philosopher. Heidegger's philosophy is discredited because its obscurity discouraged critical thought, just at a time when clarity was needed. Glover also considers Gottlob Frege, who was a thorough nationalist and anti-Semite. Frege's philosophical work, on non-political topics, was seminal. Brilliance in one philosophical enterprise is no assurance that the same intelligence will be brought to bear on political questions.

Chapter 40: *Bystanders.* Many Germans knew of events in the death camps. They comforted themselves that their roles in the killing were insignificant. Others feared to speak or simply relied on denial. The Germans relied on splitting opponents, offering deals that saved one's own while sacrificing unknown others. Some opposed the German genocide. Studies have shown that those persons grew up in homes that emphasized rationality but were not too strict, a contrast to the families of Nazi members, who tended to authoritarianism and automatic obedience in children. The minority who opposed Nazi purges did so for many reasons: professional standards, commitment to truth, religious conviction, or raw compassion. But they were few. Most began with small collaborations and found themselves thereby committed to increasingly large accommodations of the Nazis. The French village of La Chambon resisted, citing their Christian duty to feed the hungry and shelter the innocent. They hid 5,000 Jews in their midst. The Danes rescued most Danish Jews from Nazi roundup by transporting them to Sweden. Many Italians also resisted German orders regarding Jews. Opportunities to help were also declined. Eichmann offered one million Jews condemned to death in exchange for 10,000 trucks. The British declined. Those who helped avoided erosion of their moral identities. It is a difficult question to answer, how much risk should people take on behalf of the plight of strangers. Still, one thinks there is some standing obligation to assist persecuted minorities.

Chapter 41: *Interpreting the Nazi Episode.* Nazism grew from a collapsed German economy and the humiliations and hardships imposed by the World War I victors. The intentions of Nazi leaders matter, but are not the whole story. Nazi atrocities fit within a pattern of 20th century genocides, but have a darker aspect than most, because of the clear intent to bring all the machinery of a state to bear on extermination of one group of citizens based solely upon hatred. Nazism teaches that one must nurture skepticism about government action and maintain a sense of moral identity resistant to public propaganda.

PART SEVEN: ON THE RECENT MORAL HISTORY OF HUMANITY

Chapter 42: *Some People and Not Others.* Within every person lies the capacity for cruelty. Yet not all become murderers. Choice matters. Culture matters. Upbringing matters. One may bolster, or erode, moral identity. Moral identity may be overwhelmed by fear or conformity.

Moral identity may be neglected incrementally or dulled by failure to appreciate one's role in a larger structure of evil. Upbringing that emphasizes respect and reasons over obedience and compliance nurtures human empathy. Through all the influences, there is individual choice. People can bootstrap their moral tenacity. Even robust moral identity can be hobbled. If redirected to narrow channels (tribalism, racism), moral identity may not speak to atrocities. Moral identity needs to be wedded to human responses like compassion, empathy, understanding.

Chapter 43: *Ethics Humanized.* The conviction that there exists moral law has faded as institutional religion has weakened. All should be concerned that without God, every man's morality is just the opinions of his neighbors. Non-theological morality is provisional, setting hypotheses and assessing outcomes. We are much given to averting our eyes from atrocities. Looking away bolsters our denial, making it possible for us to go on convincing ourselves that the world is acceptably constituted. Our moral identities falter when propaganda denigrates intended victims, robs them of dignity, or makes them the butt of cold jokes. Sympathy fails when fear grips, when ideology overwhelms, when the sense of normalcy is assaulted, when we fail to see our little part a component of the larger crushing machine. We bolster moral identity in everyday actions. If we know how moral identity fails, we will be stronger in resisting its descent into atrocities. Theological ethics is senescent. We must step forward with moral imagination sufficient to promulgate man-made ethics, more tentative, but also perhaps less pretentious.

EPILOGUE: THE PAST ALIVE IN THE PRESENT

The past shapes the present. Past acts are thought to justify present undertakings. Humans show inclination to think armed conflict unavoidable and cruelty necessary. Advanced technologies dovetail with these propensities in mankind in a manner that promotes barbarism, now often at a distance. The technical genie is out of the bottle. Our only recourse is to address the psychology of moral identity and restraint.