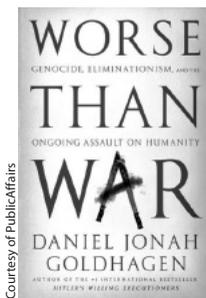


The author treads rather lightly both on the capabilities of the Kenyan security establishment and on emerging African security architecture. The reader is informed that the combat record of the Kenyan Armed Forces (KAF) is limited to the nation's struggle against the "shiftas"—bandits (or dissidents) in the north. However, Kenya has participated in peace support operations around the world, has engaged in numerous multilateral military exercises, maintains a very sophisticated professional military education system, and sends its officers and other ranks in relatively large numbers to military education courses abroad—so it should not be too difficult to get a sense of the professionalism and capabilities of the KAF. Likewise, Kenya is a key actor in a new African security architecture sponsored by the Africa Union. If that structure coalesces as envisioned, it will play an important role in Kenya's strategic future—a theme that begs for additional attention.

As a final comment, the publisher shortchanged its editing role in this work. A thorough peer review process would have helped capture some of the missing detail noted above. The author himself is generally articulate, but the text, while certainly readable, is sprinkled with typographical errors and occasionally awkward syntax.

Despite its limitations, the book contains much useful information and very good insight. It seems oriented primarily toward an American audience that starts with a limited background in African studies. It emphasizes breadth of coverage rather than depth. With those characteristics in view, it is nonetheless a valuable addition to the literature.



New York:
PublicAffairs, 2009

672 pages

\$29.95

Worse Than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity

by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen

Reviewed by Michael H. Hoffman, Assistant Professor,
US Army Command and General Staff College

This book examines a stark challenge, one that's been the focal point for the murder of millions but has escaped systematic study by those responsible for its prevention. Daniel Goldhagen offers his paradigm for genocide and its mechanisms in *Worse Than War*. This combative, clearly written, sometimes repetitive book offers an interdisciplinary perspective on genocide, incorporating more elements than readers have likely encountered or considered elsewhere.

The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide aims to prevent and punish "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group . . ." This framework does not fully capture the universe of mass crimes that military and interagency planners will likely consider genocide. Goldhagen argues that the acts he identifies as eliminationism provide the most useful frame of reference.

“Identifying these five eliminationist means of transformation, repression, expulsion, prevention of reproduction, and extermination suggests something fundamental that has escaped notice: from the perpetrators’ viewpoint these eliminationist means are (rough) functional equivalents.”

Readers looking for analysis of genocide will find it in this book, but should proceed with the understanding that Goldhagen examines genocide as a grim subset of the range of crimes and atrocities he calls eliminationism. The book explores a wide range of subjects that should be of concern to anyone with academic, operational, diplomatic, or legal concerns regarding genocide. The author outlines why genocidal crimes are committed, how, their methods, and the psychology. He concludes with recommendations for remedial action. The author’s ambitious reach and passionate conviction carries pluses and minuses.

Commanders, staff, and their interagency colleagues seeking operational design insight for counter-genocide missions will find a great deal in this book. Given its length and the complexity of ideas presented, they need to start reading now. *Worse Than War* does not lend itself to prompt translation into practical action or instant eureka moments. Though clearly written, the sheer range of this study requires time to think it through well before any application.

For example, chapter four, “How They Are Implemented,” includes a section on methods of genocide, and more broadly, the author’s construct “eliminationism,” institutions involved, and resistance. Operational design also requires an understanding of the more tangible considerations such as motivational factors, and these, for instance, are addressed later in chapter five. On the plus side, this wide range of coverage lends itself to long term intellectual skill building for counter-genocide understanding and visualization. On the negative side, the author’s wide interdisciplinary approach leads to specialized fields beyond his own (political science) where he has no apparent academic or professional expertise. His justifiable passion for the subject also lends itself to a number of strongly held beliefs that invite equally passionate opposing points of view from scholars and practitioners who fully share his dedication to the fight against genocide. This broad reach sometimes derails Goldhagen’s main points.

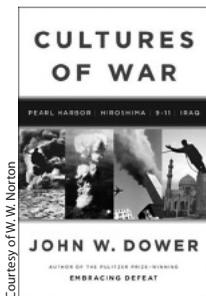
Readers need go no further than page six for the author’s opening argument that President Truman’s decision to use atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki ranks with the crimes of Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot. Goldhagen returns to this theme later in the book with little evidence or analysis to support his position. Other assertions may appear more nuanced to the casual reader but serve as red flags for specialists.

This reviewer, who has practiced and written in the field of international law for decades, was puzzled rather than antagonized by Goldhagen’s confident and matter of fact assertion that the law of war conventions historically focused on combatants and interstate warfare rather than civilians, “because the states’ own prerogatives to act as they wished would thereby be compromised. Political leaders wanted impunity to slaughter or to violently repress their own people as necessary, and to slaughter, expel, coerce, even enslave other peoples

abroad.” The modern law of war possesses a fairly extensive historical trail, and an overwhelming argument can be made countering Goldhagen on this point. This, however, goes beyond the scope of this review, but the point should be taken that readers from varied occupations and specialties may find other interpretations of fact, theory, and history in this book open to challenge.

Goldhagen’s willingness to take provocative and debatable positions opens potentially crucial lines of inquiry avoided by many other writers. His section on “New Threats” is particularly worth reading primarily due to his views on trends in the Islamic world. He writes that “Political Islam is currently the one expressly, publicly, and unabashedly genocidal major political movement.”

Despite its problems, the book is worth the substantial investment of time required of readers who want an interdisciplinary perspective on genocide or those who may find themselves tasked with the responsibility of countering such horrors. Recent history points toward more of these threats and this book is a pioneering interdisciplinary effort to analyze and explain them.



New York: W. W. Norton, 2010

596 pages

\$29.95

Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor/ Hiroshima/9-11/Iraq

by John W. Dower

Reviewed by Jeffrey Record, Professor of Strategy, Air War College, and author of *A War It Was Always Going to Lose: Why Japan Attacked America in 1941*

John W. Dower, a Professor Emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is America’s leading historian of modern US-Japanese relations and the prize-winning author of *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* and *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks

on lower Manhattan and the Pentagon prompted him to begin writing a book comparing them to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 60 years earlier. Dower believed both Pearl Harbor and 9/11 exposed a disastrous failure of American imagination—i.e., a failure to recognize, much less understand, the motivations and capabilities of Imperial Japan and al Qaeda, respectively. American analysts and decisionmakers were “simply unable to project the daring and ingenuity of the enemy.” Japan’s decision for war with the United States also had much in common with the American decision to invade Iraq: “Like Japan’s attack in 1941, America’s war of choice against Iraq was tactically brilliant but strategically idiotic In neither case did [planners] give due diligence to evaluating risk, anticipating worse-case scenarios, formulating a coherent and realistic endgame, or planning for protracted conflict.” Indeed, in both pre-Pearl Harbor Tokyo and post-9/11 Washington, “[i]deology, emotion, and wishful thinking overrode rationality at the highest level, and criticism was tarred with an onus of defeatism, moral weakness, even intimations of treason once the machinery of war was actually set in motion.”