



Adam Jones

*Henotsyd: Vstup do
hlobalnoi istorii*

[Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction,
Ukrainian translation by Kateryna Dysa].

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Reviewed by Tetiana Borodina

“All genocides are simultaneously unique and analogous,”¹ notes scholar of collective and interpersonal violence, Alex Alvarez. His point reflects the fact that genocides have certain common features, which allow their identification and systematic research based on interdisciplinary and comparative approaches. In this context, it is worth being mindful of the central issues of genocide studies as emphasized by Uğur Ümit Üngör in his talk “Theories of Genocide” (given at the University of Toronto’s Genocide and Human Rights Program in August 2019): How can we explain that genocide has occurred in culturally, technologically, and politically very different societies? And how does the genocidal process function? These questions are difficult to address in any case study of genocide. Answering them requires a thorough knowledge of the history of other genocides and the theoretical models used by genocide scholars.

Getting acquainted with the field of study should begin with manuals; this review, therefore, focuses on the most wide-ranging textbook on genocide available. Adam Jones, Canadian genocide scholar, photojournalist, and professor of Political Science at the University of British Columbia Okanagan in Kelowna, found the courage to gather answers to the above and many other difficult questions in one volume.

A Ukrainian translation of the third, revised and supplemented edition of *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, by Professor Jones, has recently been published by *Dukh i Litera* (Spirit and Letter).

Genocide consists of sixteen chapters and a separate “Photo Essay” bloc. Having chosen the format of a textbook, the author has thought out its structure well. While keeping in mind that his narrative will likely be the first integrated book-length

1 Alex Alvarez, *Governments, Citizens, and Genocide: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Approach* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 14.

publication on genocide for many readers, Adam Jones has carefully organized the process of acquainting his readers with the subject. The book begins by introducing to us the conceptual and historical “coordinate system” of genocide studies. The chapters making up the first part of the book discuss the phenomenon of genocide, its roots and varieties, as well as “the four horsemen of the genocidal apocalypse,” as the author calls them (p. 96): the state, the empire, war, and revolution. The second part of the book deals with specific cases of genocide. The author has conceptually rethought and presented a number of them in contextually, and hence geographically and chronologically, expanded versions. The third and fourth parts of the book are devoted to the interdisciplinary study of genocide, as well as to some general issues related to responding to, remembering, and preventing this kind of atrocity.

20th-century Ukrainian history scholars Ihor Vynokurov and Olena Styazhkina were the academic editors of the book’s Ukrainian publication. They have accompanied the text with additional remarks, given in footnote form, separate from the author’s notes at the end of each chapter. The editors have also supplemented the author’s bibliographical notes with references to existing Ukrainian translations of the research literature used. Their efforts, as well as the professional work of translator Kateryna Dysa, have made the text, with its monumental historiographical base, more accessible for the Ukrainian reader.

Adam Jones has also taken care to make the text as clear as possible. He provides necessary information about genocide scholars, defines terms, and explains how sources recommended for further study at the end of chapters contribute to the understanding of a particular subject. This is convenient and helps optimize the process of selecting literature on the topic.

In each chapter, Adam Jones gives reasons to support his views (for instance, concerning the two terms, “Holocaust” and “holocaust,” the latter is used in a broader sense to refer to particularly destructive genocides; when it comes to the recognition of certain developments as genocide, or regarding the role of those international organizations, which, in the author’s opinion, insufficiently counteracted genocide in the past, etc.). The author critically analyzes the relevant research of his predecessors in the field, including Hannah Arendt, Zygmunt Bauman, Steven Katz, and other theorists. It is important for him to clarify his research position in historiographical discussions. Citing different points of view, he motivates readers toward their own reflections.

Each chapter of the book *Genocide* is an essay with solid historiography, seasoned with illustrative examples from sources, and permeated with the discussion of genocide studies theories, all framed by comparative optics. The author’s interdisciplinary approach and precise research questions create a multidimensional narrative. And in most cases, all this is illustrated with the author’s photographs, which either complement a certain element of the text or serve to subtly express a particular idea or research question themselves.

Adam Jones has succeeded in presenting the most complete picture of events attainable in a single book. This can be seen in his historiographical base, which includes both classical research and the latest discussions. The fact that the author supports

his arguments with various types of primary sources (official reports, ego-documents, interviews, etc.) adds to the academic weight of his work. It is important that his sources reflect the vision/position/reflection/experience of different participants in the genocidal process: perpetrators, victims, bystanders, and rescuers. Thus, the author manages to keep the individual in focus, even when dealing with theoretical models. It is important to note that he uses much ego evidence not only as an illustration, but also to develop a more complex panorama of sociopolitical change and the behavior of multiple actors. He pays balanced attention to the processes occurring at the macro- (international), meso- (intra-state), and micro- (city/village, family, and individual) levels (according to the classification of Uğur Ümit Üngör). The most illustrative cases are presented in separate text boxes apart from the main narrative.

What is particularly impressive about the book is that with each new section devoted to a particular genocide, the reader comes closer to embracing the author's comparative approach. For example, the chapter on the Holocaust refers to examples of other mass atrocities, illuminates their common features and differences, and points to the relevance of the latter for understanding each specific case. It should be added that in presenting those cases, Adam Jones tries to shed light on their historical, political, and social contexts. In this vein, the chapter on genocide in Africa's Great Lakes Region initially concentrates on the history of the Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda in a regional context. It then proceeds with the causes and course of the genocide in Rwanda, including its international political dimension and the response of various governments and organizations to the genocidal rampage in the country (as reflected in UN reports, public responses by officials of different states, etc.), complemented by excerpts from testimonies and memoirs. Similar emphasis is made in the author's portrayal of the genocidal events in the Congo and Burundi.

Not only has Adam Jones managed to integrate specific cases of genocide in a comparative perspective but he has also shown the contribution of various social sciences and disciplines (sociology, anthropology, gender studies, etc.) to the field of genocide studies. His narrative demonstrates how these areas intersect with the exploration of genocide and how useful such interdisciplinary research is for our understanding of this phenomenon.

The photographs included in the book should receive special attention. Images are an important source for the study of genocide. Being an academic, Adam Jones is also a photojournalist, and maintains a large photo archive. Many of the illustrations used in this edition are his own photos taken at the sites of genocidal killings and memorials, which reinforces the distinguishing features of the textbook. The author provides his original interpretation of each of the photos. It is worth noting that a number of his photo works are so illustrative that they have appeared on the covers of other scholars' books. His "Photo Essay," like other sections of *Genocide*, includes a "Further Study" sub-item, where he presents essential literature and discussions on photographic representations of genocide. The author deserves credit for contributing to this topic

with both his impressive photos from numerous places, and for the research questions he poses and explores in relation to visuality and its role in the reflection on genocide.

Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction represents an important contribution to the development of genocide studies. Many lecturers have already bettered their courses thanks to this book and even more students around the world have successfully completed them. Hopefully, the book's Ukrainian translation will resonate well with Ukrainian readers.