CONTENTS

Foreword by Stanley Hoffmann page xii
Acknowledgements xiv

INTRODUCTION: Understand? 1

Chapters

I. THE IMAGINARY CONSTRUCTS OF SOCIAL DESTRUCTIVENESS

Unpromising avenues 10
The power of imaginary constructs
  Destructive fantasies 17
  Between imaginary and real: the role of ideology 21
From the identity narrative to the figure of Traitor 22
  The stigmatisation of ‘minor’ differences 27
  Figures of the enemy within 30
From the quest for purity to the figure of the Other in excess 33
  Identitarian purity and political purity 38
From the security dilemma to the destruction of the enemy 41
  Conspiracy and paranoia 43
  Delusional rationality 45
  Destroy ‘Them’ to save ‘Us’ 48

II. FROM INFLAMMATORY DISCOURSE TO SACRIFICIAL VIOLENCE

The intellectual springboard 54
  The creation of scientific myths 58
Warmongering intellectuals? 60
Reaching political legitimacy 62
  Hitler’s rise to power 63
  Milosevic and the dream of a ‘Greater Serbia’ 65
Kayibanda and the formation of a Rwandan state 66
Prophets of chaos 68
Feeding fear and resentment: the role of the media 72
The pernicious tree of propaganda 77

From the religious to the sacrificial 81
Germany: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's solitary crusade 82
The Orthodox Church and the 'Serbian martyr' 85
The Rwandan Catholic Church: between support for the regime and internal contradictions 87
The sacrificial regeneration of 'We' 89

Societies torn between adhesion, consent and resistance 93
'The spiral of silence' 95
The breakdown of social relations 99
The role of the third party 102

III. INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT, WAR AND THE MEDIA

A structure of political opportunities 108
Modern states and massacres 110
A legacy of ethnic violence 113
Massacres and population flows 115
State collapse and outbursts of extreme violence 118
Rwanda-Burundi: false ethnic twins 120
Serbia/Croatia: a fratricidal duo 123
Nazi Germany / the Soviet Union: two totalitarianisms clash 124
The passivity of the 'international community' 125

Spilling into war 131
The politicisation of war 134
Conquering 'living space' 136
War against civilians 138
Towards the destruction of the Inyenzi 139
Refusing the spiral of mass murder 142
The new universe of war 145

Telling the world: a last resort? 147
The extermination of the Jews: discovering the horror... and then doing nothing about it 147
CONTENTS

Bosnia: knowing... and pretending 152
Rwanda: knowing... and leaving 156
The so-called ‘CNN effect’ and state indifference 161

IV. THE DYNAMICS OF MASS MURDER

The decision-making process and the decision-makers 167
Nazi Germany: the pre-eminence of Hitler 168
Rwanda, a public call to genocide 171
Yugoslavia: the dismemberment of the federal system 174
Pinpointing THE decision? 177

The organisation of mass murder and the actors involved 182
Nazi Germany: ideological warriors 185
Rwanda: ‘Going to work’ 186
Serbia: alternative armed forces 190
Organised practices and local initiatives 193
The symbol of Srebrenica 195

From collective indifference to popular participation in massacres 198
The fate of the Jews: between hostility and indifference 199
Rwanda: towards mass involvement in mass murder 205
The autism of the Serbian population 213
Territorial defence 215
Ordinary rescuers 220
Resistance: the energy of despair 221

Morphologies of extreme violence 224
When the threatened state becomes the threatening state 225
From partial to total destruction 229
Mass murder technologies 233

V. THE VERTIGO OF IMPUNITY

Crossing the threshold into violence 240
Massacre, pillage, business 242
Socialising into violence 245
Becoming a killer on the battlefield 246
What do killers think about during the massacre? 248
Cognitive dissonance and rationalisations 252
Divine legitimation 255
The tipping mechanism 257
    The crime of obedience 258
    Group conformity 262
The dual learning process of massacre 266
    The murdering self 267
    Task specialisation and the professionalisation of slaughter 274
The killers’ profiles: revisiting ‘the banality of evil’ 278
    Ordinary executioners 279
    The involvement of women and children 281
    The ambiguity of evil 282
    The banality of evil revisited 285
Sexual violence and other atrocities 289
    A variety of indefinite interpretations 291
    Rational choice? 293
    Towards orgiastic violence 295
    Delighting in cruelty 299
    The abyss of the ‘grey zone’ 304

VI. THE POLITICAL USES OF MASSACRE
    AND GENOCIDE

Instrumentalisations of a word that is impossible to define? 310
    ‘Genocide’: a legacy of international law 313
    Pioneer studies in the social sciences 316
Distancing genocide studies from the frame of law 320
    ‘Massacre’ as unit of reference 322
    Analysing destruction processes 324
Destroying to subjugate 327
    From warfare to ruling over the population 328
    Communist regimes: Reshaping the social body 330
    The paradigm of ‘Democratic Kampuchea’ 333
Destroying to eradicate 334
    Surgical practices in politics 338
    The Holocaust paradigm 340
    Politicidal regimes? 343
    From ‘ethnic cleansing’ to ‘genocide’ 345
Destroying to revolt 347
    The rhetoric of terrorism 348
CONTENTS

The 11 September 2001 paradigm  352
‘Ordinary’ candidates for sacrifice?  358

CONCLUSION: The ‘Never Again’ refrain  362
Crisis prevention: arguments and illusions  363
An ethics of responsibility  369
‘The revenge of passions’  373

APPENDIXES  376
A. Investigating a massacre  376
B. Comparing massacres  379

Bibliography  384
Notes  392
Name Index  434
Subject Index  441