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Genocide as Social Practice

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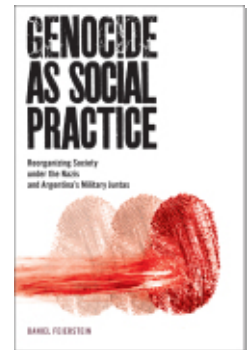
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I have the deep conviction that a theoretical book is a collective product. That is why, when one finishes such a book, somehow a feeling arises that one has appropriated the ideas, dreams, intuitions and labor of the many people with whom one has come in contact while writing the book. Perhaps the acknowledgments page is the space in which one tries—who knows if successfully—to ensure that such appropriation is not transformed into the vile practice of simple plagiarism.

Many people have collaborated with me in the task of constructing this text. Therefore, many can share in its merits but not, of course, in its defects, which are solely the result of my own thoughtlessness or inability to present ideas and concepts clearly. I must also now thank the many people who have made possible this newly revised edition, updated and prepared especially for an English-speaking audience.

I must acknowledge first the help of Guillermo Levy, a friend since adolescence who has thought with me about these issues for more than twenty years, always trying to be sure that theoretical analysis should inform political practice. It is difficult to identify in our writings what belongs to whom. We usually can't recall our original starting position once our discussions end. It does not seem that important, after all.

Survivors of the genocides both in Europe and Argentina have a relevant voice in this book, particularly in chapters 1, 6, 8, and 9. The conversations with Charles Papiernik—who lived for almost four years in the Auschwitz concentration camp—lasted through the year 2000. They gave rise to this book and to the many questions that guided my thinking in writing a large part of what I present here. Of equal importance are my conversations with Jack Fuchs (survivor of Auschwitz) and my interview with Marek Edelman (a major leader of the Jewish resistance in Warsaw). Also, the dialogue with survivors of the Argentinian repression was a central element in the overall purpose of this book, as were the interviews carried out as part of research projects that I have led at Tres de Febrero University (UNTREF) and the University of Buenos Aires. I recall, in particular, the many conversations, discussions, and coffees shared with Graciela Daleo and Adriana Calvo, who allowed me to cast original and lucid glances on

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Finally, I'd like to tell my children, Ezequiel and Tamara, that I hope to be able to collaborate in the fight to leave them a future that can dispense with the terror, allow them to keep smiling as they do today, or, at least, to let them know that their future is not something that I am willing to negotiate.

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