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Barbaric Civilization: A Critical Sociology of Genocide

By Christopher Powell

McGill-Queen's University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Barbaric Civilization: A Critical Sociology of Genocide, Christopher Powell, Why have the largest mass murders in human history taken place in the past hundred years? Why have European colonizers so often denied the humanity of the colonized? In Barbaric Civilization, Christopher Powell advances a radical thesis to answer these questions: that civilization produces genocides. From its beginnings in the early twelfth century, the Western civilizing process has involved two interconnected transformations: the monopolization of military force by sovereign states and the cultivation in individuals of habits and dispositions of the kind that we call "civilized." The combined forward movement of these processes channels violent struggles for social dominance into symbolic performances. But even as the civilizing process frees many subjects from the threat of direct physical force, violence accumulates behind the scenes and at the margins of the social order, kept there by a deeply habituated performance of dominance and subordination called deferentialization. When deferentialization fails, difference becomes dangerous and genocide becomes possible. Connecting historical developments with everyday life occurrences, and discussing examples ranging from thirteenth-century Languedoc to 1994 Rwanda, Powell offers an original framework for analyzing, comparing, and discussing genocides...



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Reviews

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