

# Stages of Genocide

A Toolkit for Educators



**The Genocide Education Project**  
51 Commonwealth Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94118  
(415) 264-4203  
[GenocideEducation.org](http://GenocideEducation.org)



**Woven Teaching**  
1660 Bush Street, Ste 300  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
[WovenTeaching.org](http://WovenTeaching.org)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who We Are .....	2
Introduction.....	3
Lesson Overview .....	4
Considerations for Teaching Ethically and Effectively .....	5
Introducing the Topic.....	6
Handout A: What is genocide?.....	7
Lesson Instructions: Mapping the Path to Genocide .....	8
Handout B: Ten Stages of Genocide.....	10
Handout C: Key terms .....	11
<b>Group Work</b>	
Guidelines .....	12
Values and norms .....	13
Roles.....	14
Project instructions .....	15
Graphic organizer.....	16
Handout D: Group evaluations .....	17
Teacher grading rubric .....	18
<b>Genocide Summaries and Supplemental Materials</b>	
Armenian Genocide.....	20
Cambodian Genocide .....	24
Guatemalan Genocide .....	28
The Holocaust .....	32
Genocide of Native Americans .....	36
Genocide in Rwanda.....	40
<b>Appendix</b>	
Answer keys .....	46
Educational standards.....	52
Online resources .....	54

# WHO WE ARE

## The Genocide Education Project

Genocide education is the starting point for ending genocide. The Genocide Education Project (GenEd) creates instructional materials and provides professional development workshops and consultation to assist educators in teaching about human rights and genocide.

Since the advent of modern technology, the act of genocide has taken on horrific proportions. Less than 25 years after the modern-era prototype case, that of the Armenians, which prompted the creation of the word “genocide,” the world witnessed the Holodomor and then the Holocaust. Indeed, Hitler’s quote on the eve of his invasion of Poland is a quintessential illustration of the disastrous consequences of genocide ignored: “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”

Only after the true nature of genocide is understood, can individuals and societies move to prevent it. The Genocide Education Project helps educators teach their students about the forces that bring about genocide and the common stages, features, and societal consequences of the most extreme examples of inhumanity. Only then can students become empowered to act effectively against genocide.



## Woven Teaching

Woven Teaching is the human rights education arm of the Bylo Chacon Foundation. Through a combination of original programming and grantmaking, Woven Teaching advances the foundation’s focus on long-term change towards a widespread acceptance of basic human rights for all.

Our programmatic work is dedicated to supporting classroom teachers with practical help for ethical and effective instruction. We believe that by weaving human rights education into the curriculum, we can help educators create socially responsible global citizens.

Woven Teaching envisions a world in which every student’s education includes:

- A sense of historical perspective;
- The development of critical thinking skills;
- A feeling of global citizenship;
- The ability to identify bigotry—understanding its negative effects on both individuals and society—and the analytical tools to combat it.





# STAGES OF GENOCIDE

## INTRODUCTION

Studying genocide is a critical part of a student's understanding of both history and of current events. The Stages of Genocide Toolkit is designed to help teachers cover the topic in a meaningful and incisive way. Using the "Ten Stages of Genocide" framework provides an opportunity to explore multiple instances of mass atrocity. The Toolkit also highlights the connection between genocide and human rights. Finally, this resource encourages reflection and discussion of personal and institutional actions and responsibility, connecting these historical events to current events and to students' lives.



Demonstrators protesting genocide.  
*Credit: Wilfredo Benitez for Orange County for Darfur.*

"Ten Stages of Genocide" is an important framework developed by Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, a professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention at George Mason University in Virginia and the founding president of Genocide Watch, a non-profit organization dedicated to the fight against genocide. The Toolkit is rooted in the "Ten Stages of Genocide" and includes resources to teach students about the causes and patterns of genocide.

The Stages of Genocide Toolkit contains six case studies of historical genocide:

- Armenian Genocide
- Genocide in Cambodia
- Genocide in Guatemala
- The Holocaust
- Genocide of Native Americans in the United States
- Genocide in Rwanda

These specific case studies were chosen for their wide geographic range and their place in modern historical chronology.

It is important to note that these genocides are not the only examples of genocide that one can find throughout history, nor do the authors of this toolkit consider them to be "worse" or more important than those that are not included in this toolkit. We believe strongly that there is no place for a "hierarchy of suffering" in genocide education.

Additionally, these summaries are not meant to be comprehensive histories of each genocide. They were written to align with Dr. Gregory Stanton's Ten Stages of Genocide and as such, there are many historical details that are not included in the summaries.

# LESSON OVERVIEW

## Content Level

Grades 9-12

## Time

1-2 class periods

## Guiding Questions

- Why is studying genocide important?
- Why is it important to examine genocide in the context of other genocides?
- Does Dr. Gregory Stanton's framework, the Ten Stages of Genocide, help us understand how hate escalates?
- Could studying Stanton's framework possibly prevent future genocides?
- In what ways does studying these historical atrocities help us better understand current events?

## Learning Objective

Students will learn about the Ten Stages of Genocide by exploring genocide case studies:

- Armenian Genocide
- Cambodian Genocide
- Guatemalan Genocide
- The Holocaust
- Genocide of Native Americans
- Genocide in Rwanda

## Materials

Student handouts (one per student):

- Ten Stages of Genocide primer
- Genocide key terms
- Genocide summary
- Group evaluation

Group handouts (one per group):

- Group work norms, values, roles
- Project instructions and grading rubric
- Graphic organizer

## Common Core Standards

Reading Informational Text: 1, 2

Writing: 4, 9

Speaking and Listening: 1, 4

History/Social Studies: 1, 2

*Full explanation of Common Core Standards located in the Appendix, page 52.*

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEACHING ETHICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY

These principles draw upon guidelines from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Advocates for Human Rights. They have been synthesized and expanded into guidelines for teaching about difficult topics related to gross human rights violations in history.

- Center learning on students.
- Integrate human rights and history.
- Avoid comparisons of pain; there is no hierarchy of suffering and each genocide is unique and tragic.
- Acknowledge the sensitive nature of the topic. Plan for a variety of emotional responses from your students.
- Complicate thinking; avoid oversimplification.
- Avoid inevitability; these events were not inescapable and occurred because of the decisions and actions of individuals and institutions.
- Emphasize personal agency.
- Promote action and avoid cynicism.
- Be sensitive to learners and victims.
- Allow time to process the material.
- Approach sources with care; preview all materials before sharing with students.

# INTRODUCING THE TOPIC

Before discussing the stages of genocide, it is important for all students to have an understanding of “genocide” as a concept. If your students are not yet familiar with the term, consider using this activity in your classroom.

## What is Genocide?

Begin by posting the following quote by Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations:

**“A genocide begins with the killing of one man—not for what he has done, but because of who he is.”**

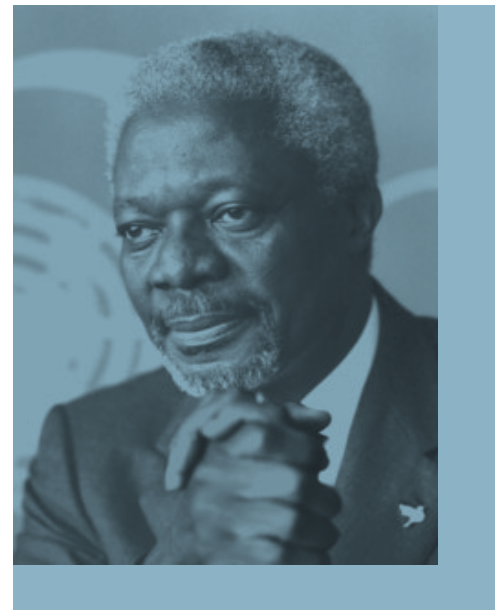
Ask for quick and brief responses to the quote. Explain to students that you will be studying genocide and learning about its patterns by examining different historical events.

Then, read or post the following explanation from The Genocide Education Project:

*“Ten Stages of Genocide” is a formula for how a society can engage in genocide. Genocide cannot be committed by an individual or small group; rather, it takes the cooperation of a large number of people and the state. The genocidal process starts with prejudice that continues to grow. By knowing the stages of genocide, citizens are better equipped to identify the warning signs and stop the process from continuing.*

Debrief and check for understanding. What do students think “genocide” is?

Review the United Nations’ definition of genocide on the following page (Handout A) and consider as a class: how closely do early student responses match the legal definition?



Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations. Credit: United Nations Photo.

# WHAT IS GENOCIDE?

There is not just one definition of genocide. Scholars around the world continue to debate what kinds of actions or targeted groups should be included in the definition. The most commonly cited definition for genocide is the legal definition as set out by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948):

**“[G]enocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:**

**(a) Killing members of the group;**

**(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;**

**(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;**

**(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;**

**(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”**

## Discussion:

1. What sets the concept of genocide apart from the concept of murder?
2. This definition states that killing could be genocide if it is directed toward a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. Are there other groups missing from the UN's definition?
3. Are you surprised by any of the acts? Do you think there are other ways of committing genocide?



# MAPPING THE PATH TO GENOCIDE

## Anticipatory Set

1. Put the agenda for the day on the board so students know what to expect. Start by explaining the topic for the day; namely that they will be learning about the stages of each of the examples of genocide presented.
2. As students enter the room, have them read the handout on the Ten Stages of Genocide and key terms (Handouts B and C). They should write on it, circling things they have questions about and underlining or starring parts that grab their attention. Allow a couple minutes for questions about vocabulary and concepts.
3. Students should either write for a moment, do a quick pair-share, or raise their hands to share why they think that such a framework was developed. Why would people who work in places with the threat of mass violence want a tool like this? Why should people in other countries want to be familiar with it? These should just be quick guesses to get them thinking on the topic.

## Instructions

1

### Purpose

Explain your purpose for teaching this topic. Why should they learn it? Why are you spending time teaching it?

### Input

Divide the class into groups of 3-4, taking time to carefully go over group roles and responsibilities and how group participation/evaluation will play into individual grades.

Review the norms, roles and values for group work. If possible, hang those as posters in clearly visible spaces around the classroom. Either have them choose roles or assign them yourself. Pass out the information sheet on one genocide to each group.

Allow time for students to read the information silently and actively, marking on the paper, circling what they have questions about, underlining things that strike them, making any notes they want.

2

**3**

### Modeling

Explain that each group is going to create a graphic organizer showing the path to genocide in their case study using the information on the handouts and citing specific examples to illustrate each stage of the genocide.

Remind students that each group member must be able to understand the information and communicate it to the class when asked by the teacher.

If possible, take an example from a topic that is not being used (ideally one that the whole class has already learned about, such as the Holocaust). Show how that topic/event/action can represent a stage of genocide.

**4**

### Guided Practice

Have all groups take two minutes to decide on what the example of stage one is in their topic. Check each group's answer before asking them to proceed.

**5**

### Independent Practice

Allow the groups to work on the graphic organizer together. This may take between 15-45 minutes, depending on students' familiarity with the topic. Check in with each group on its progress and group tone, reminding students of group norms.

**6**

### Evaluation

Groups will present their work in turn. They will be evaluated by the criteria on the rubric on their instruction sheet. Ask each student in the group a question about their topic or the stages.

**7**

### Closure

Have students fill out the group evaluation forms.

Have students write a response to the question: "Why would the stages of genocide be helpful in preventing mass violence?"

# TEN STAGES OF GENOCIDE

According to Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, author of the Ten Stages of Genocide, the path to genocide usually includes the following stages. These stages do not always occur in order; sometimes stages happen simultaneously. At each stage in the process, it is possible to intervene and prevent genocide from occurring.

- 1 Classification** is something that all societies have. It is a way to divide societies into different groups and distinguish between “us” and “them.” Bipolar societies (that are divided into only two major groups) are more likely to experience genocide.
- 2 Symbolization** is characterized by naming different groups or distinguishing them through symbols, colors, or dress. This happens everywhere and is not necessarily negative unless it is combined with hatred, which can lead to discrimination or dehumanization.
- 3 Discrimination** occurs when a group holding power uses law, custom, or political power to deny the rights of other groups. Members of the group(s) with less power have fewer rights and may even lose their citizenship.
- 4 Dehumanization** occurs when one group denies the humanity of another group. As part of this process, people are commonly called insects, vermin, or diseases. By first dehumanizing victims, the general public may be less shocked by mass murder, because they do not view the victims as fully human. At this stage, propaganda including newspapers, television, radio, and social media could be used to foment resentment against the targeted group.
- 5 Organization** happens when perpetrators create a plan for genocide and train and arm militias. Those in charge may set up secret police to spy on, arrest, torture, and murder people suspected of being in opposition to the regime or to the genocide.
- 6 Polarization** occurs when moderate leaders and groups are eliminated, leaving a polarized society. At this point, propaganda is more widespread, laws may be created to keep people from marrying into other groups, and often emergency decrees are announced in order to “protect the nation.”
- 7 Preparation** is the process of preparing for mass murder. Leaders use euphemisms to hide their intentions (e.g. “purification,” “relocation,” or “counter-terrorism”). Propaganda about the victimized group(s) continues to be promoted and armies are given weapons and training.
- 8 Persecution** occurs when victims are identified and separated from society. For example, victims are sometimes forced into living in ghettos. Leaders of the genocide draw up lists of people or communities targeted for death and deprive their victims of basic resources like water and food. Violent acts often begin at this stage.
- 9 Extermination** is the mass killing we know as genocide. The term ‘extermination’ usually refers to the killing of insects and vermin; in the context of genocide, this term is used to further dehumanize victims.
- 10 Denial** is the final stage of genocide and it takes many forms. In some cases, perpetrators attempt to cover up the evidence. In other cases, they deny that any crimes were committed or minimize the number of people killed. Denial often begins during the extermination and can last long after the genocide, continuing harm for generations.

# KEY TERMS RELATED TO GENOCIDE

- **bystander:** a person who is present but does not take part in an event. In the context of genocide and mass atrocity, a bystander is someone who understands what is happening but does nothing to help victims.
- **civil rights:** the rights of people in a society to equality and political and social freedom.
- **crimes against humanity:** According to the International Criminal Court, crimes against humanity are acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population.
- **discrimination:** unfair treatment of different categories of people, often based on “race,” religion, ethnicity, age, or gender.
- **ethnic cleansing:** the forced removal, by mass expulsion or killing, of a group from a given territory (with the purpose of making it ethnically homogenous).
- **euphemism:** a mild or indirect word used to hide or soften the truth (e.g. “passed away” instead of “died”). Euphemisms are often used by genocide perpetrators to cover their actions and crimes.
- **extremist:** a person who holds fanatical political or religious views and supports radical action to achieve their goals.
- **hate speech/symbols:** speech or symbols that threatens or expresses prejudice against a particular group.
- **mass atrocity:** large-scale and deliberate attacks on civilians.
- **moderate:** a person who is able to compromise, meet in the middle, or see both sides of an argument.
- **perpetrator:** a person who does an illegal or harmful act. In the context of genocide, a perpetrator is someone who orders, assists, or engages in the act of killing.
- **propaganda:** misleading or biased information used to promote a certain point of view.
- **repression:** subduing, restraining, or limiting someone, often by force.
- **stereotype:** a widely held but unchanging and oversimplified image or idea of a certain group of people. Stereotypes are sometimes based on a kernel of truth, but are often false.
- **victim:** a person hurt or killed as a result of a crime or other event. In the context of genocide, a victim is a person who belongs to a targeted group.

# GROUP WORK GUIDELINES

## General Guidelines:

- Respect everyone
- Hear all voices
- Listen carefully without interrupting
- Say something meaningful
- Value and respect all ideas and opinions
- Take turns
- Think about what is being said
- Participate actively in the discussion
- Ask questions
- Be fair and open to other ideas

## When you have questions about the project requirements:

The Fact Checker should ask the teacher.

## Questions to ask when you need more information:

- Why do you think that?
- Where can I find that in the handout?
- Can you explain what you mean?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- What did you mean when you said . . . ?

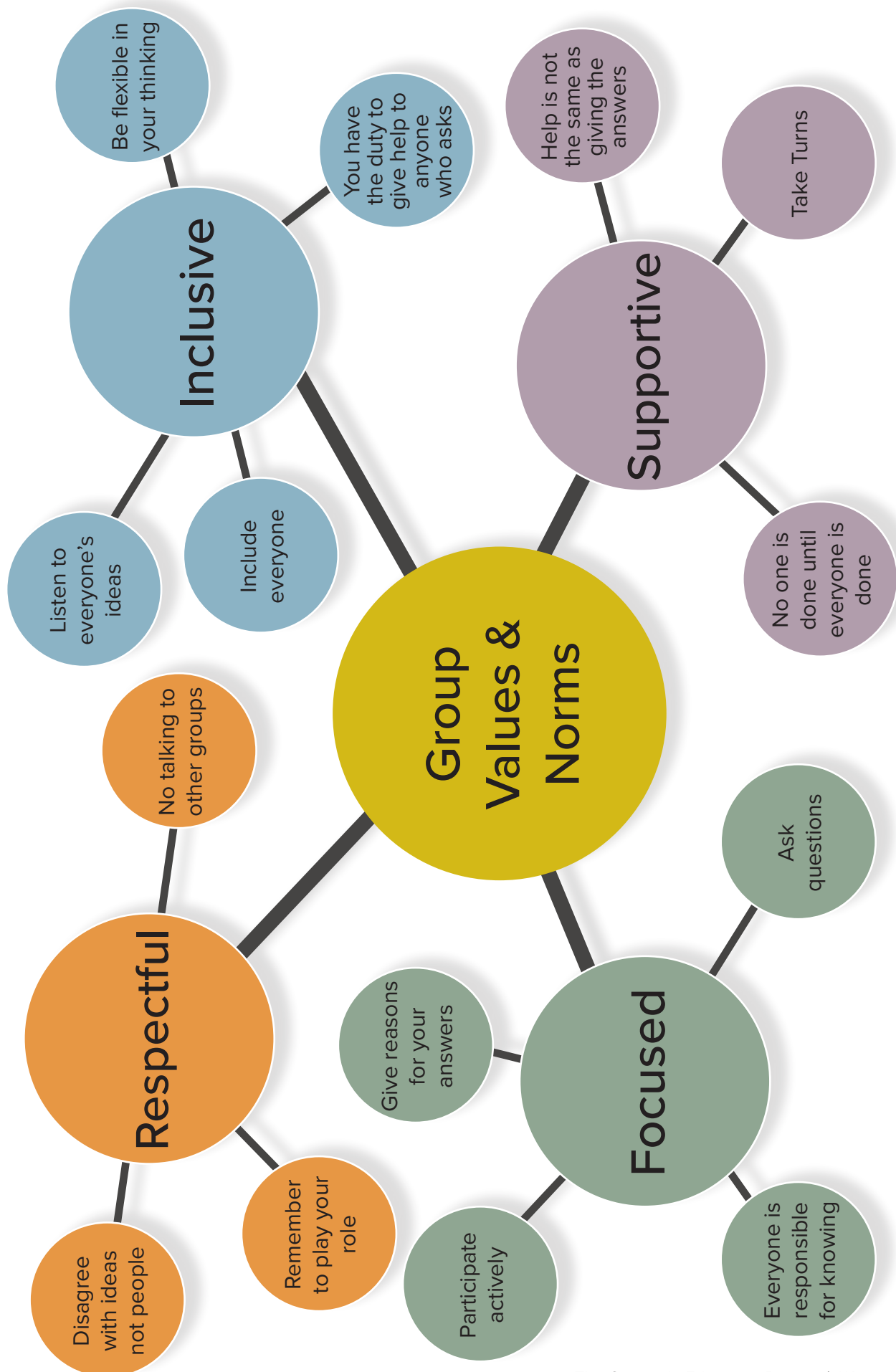
## Statements to use when you agree/disagree:

- I agree because . . .
- I disagree because . . .
- That's a good idea. Another could be . . .
- I'm not sure I agree. Maybe . . .
- Let's look at it from a different perspective.
- Has anyone thought about . . .

## Other useful phrases:

- I'd like to go back to what . . . said about . . .
- I'd like to add . . .
- Another example is . . .
- So what you're saying is . . .





# GROUP WORK ROLES

## Facilitator

- Makes sure everyone in the group is included in discussions and work and understands the assignment
- Keeps group focused and on task
- Makes sure all parts of the project are completed

## Creative Director

- Comes up with theme and style for presentation
- Helps members practice their roles and determines the order they will present in
- Illustrates presentation with charts, graphs, cartoons, etc.

## Fact Checker

- Asks teacher for clarification when needed and communicates the answer to the group
- Checks assignment for accuracy
- Checks the facts to make sure questions during presentation are answered with accurate information

## Head Writer

- Wordsmith
- Helps check for grammar and spelling in individual parts of the presentation
- Organizes order of information presented

## Resource Manager (if a group of 4, this role is shared by all)

- Gathers supplies for group, puts away supplies at end
- Is mindful of time and keeps group on track
- Helps all group members with their tasks

# GROUP WORK INSTRUCTIONS

## Instructions

Each group will create a graphic organizer to map the path of genocide of a historical case study. After reading the assigned case study handout, groups will use the information on their handout to cite specific examples that illustrate each stage of the genocide.

After creating a graphic organizer outlining the genocide's stages, each group will present an overview of the genocide, as well as their conclusions, to the class. At the end of the project, each student will evaluate both themselves and their group members.

Throughout the project, students should refer to the guidelines and roles for group behavior.

**Your teacher will use the grading rubric below to evaluate your project.**

<b>/10</b>	Completed on time
<b>/5</b>	Presentation lasted 3-7 minutes
<b>/10</b>	Graphic organizer was neat, logical, and easy to follow
<b>/30</b>	Examples were appropriate and well-explained
<b>/25</b>	Each member was able to answer questions thoughtfully with accurate information
<b>/5</b>	Students filled out individual and group evaluations
<b>/15</b>	Group members filled their roles and followed norms for behavior
<b>/100</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

**On the back of their completed group evaluation form, each student should complete the following sentences:**

1. Three things I learned from this lesson are:
2. Two things I contributed to this project are:
3. A question I still have after completing the lesson is:

# GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

<b>1. Classification</b>
<b>2. Symbolization</b>
<b>3. Discrimination</b>
<b>4. Dehumanization</b>
<b>5. Organization</b>
<b>6. Polarization</b>
<b>7. Preparation</b>
<b>8. Persecution</b>
<b>9. Extermination</b>
<b>10. Denial</b>

# STUDENT GROUP EVALUATION

Evaluate yourself and your group members according to the rubric below. You will be scored for how thoughtfully and completely you reflect on the group experience.

Facilitator	Name
/5	Makes sure everyone in the group participates in discussions/work and understands the assignment
/5	Keeps group focused and on task
/5	Makes sure all parts of the project are completed
<b>/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

Creative Director	Name
/5	Comes up with theme and style for presentation
/5	Determines presentation order and helps group members practice their parts
/5	Illustrates points with charts, graphs, cartoons, etc.
<b>/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

Fact Checker	Name
/5	Asks teacher for clarification when needed and communicates the answer to the group
/5	Checks assignment for accuracy
/5	Checks facts to make sure presentation questions answered with accurate information
<b>/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

Head Writer	Name
/5	Wordsmith
/5	Helps check for grammar and spelling in individual parts of the project
/5	Organizes order of information presented
<b>/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

Resources Manager	Name
/5	Gathers supplies for group, puts away supplies at end
/5	Keeps track of time and reminds group members of time
/5	Helps all group members with their tasks
<b>/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>



# TEACHER GRADING RUBRIC

**Group Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<b>/10</b>	Completed on time
<b>/5</b>	Presentation lasted 3-7 minutes
<b>/10</b>	Graphic organizer was neat, logical, and easy to follow
<b>/30</b>	Examples were appropriate and well-explained
<b>/25</b>	Each member was able to answer questions thoughtfully with correct information
<b>/5</b>	Everyone filled out individual & group evaluations
<b>/15</b>	Group members filled their roles and followed norms for behavior
<b>/100</b>	TOTAL



# Genocide Case Studies

# ARMENIAN GENOCIDE 1915-1922

**A**midst the turmoil of World War I, the Turkish government of the Ottoman Empire undertook the annihilation of the Armenians living within its ruled territories. During the Armenian Genocide, an estimated 1,500,000 Armenians, more than half of the Armenian population living on their historic homeland, were destroyed and dispossessed of all their personal and community properties on the orders of the empire's Turkish leaders.

The vast murders were carried out through execution, death marches, drowning, burning and other means. In addition to the Armenians, who constituted the largest ethnic minority in the empire, hundreds of thousands of Assyrians and Greeks were also targeted and massacred.

Founded at the end of the thirteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was once a major world power. It had long been a diverse home to many ethnicities and religions, but major dividing lines separated Ottoman Turks from non-Turkic people. Under the Ottomans, Armenians were allowed to maintain some cultural traditions, such as their style of dress, but they were subject to more restrictive and repressive laws than those applied to Turks. For instance, Armenians paid extra taxes and were not allowed to testify in court. Additionally, Turks often referred to Armenians pejoratively as *infidels* or *gavours* (non-believers) and *dogs*.

By the mid-1800s, the once-powerful Ottoman Empire appeared to be crumbling. It suffered from extreme corruption and mismanagement and continued to lose territories when provinces under its control fought for and won independence. Many in the empire felt humiliated by its defeats and Turkish nationalist movements gained prominence. In 1908, a group called the Committee of Union and Progress, or "Young Turks," had enough power to overthrow the Ottoman sultan.

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) said they wanted to modernize the country, and at first, non-Turkic people of the Ottoman Empire joined Turks in the revolutionary movement with the goal of creating a new government based on a democratic constitution. Soon after gaining power, however, the more extreme nationalist wing of the party took hold of the movement. They instituted a policy to create a homogenous Turkish nation, turning against anyone in the empire who was not ethnically Turkish. From the beginning of its rule, the CUP's leadership planned for the future massacres. As the largest minority group, the politically defenseless Armenians were its primary targets.

Despite Armenians' loyalty to the Ottoman government and its war efforts, the CUP ran a propaganda campaign to convince the population that Armenians were enemies and traitors. By 1913, it created the secret "Special Organization," an army of killing units largely comprised of violent individuals, who the CUP had released from prison for the purpose of

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

- The Armenian Population in the Ottoman Empire
- Other groups, such as Greeks and Assyrians

### Perpetrators:

- Committee of Union and Progress ("Young Turks")
- Leadership: the "Three Pashas": Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha, Djemal Pasha
- Kurds, an ethnic group who also lived in the Ottoman Empire

### Results:

- 1.5 million Armenians killed (about 80% of the pre-1914 Armenian population)
- The end of an Armenian presence in their historic homeland
- The destruction of Armenian cultural and historical sites and landmarks throughout the Ottoman Empire
- Diaspora, or dispersion, of Armenian genocide survivors across the world

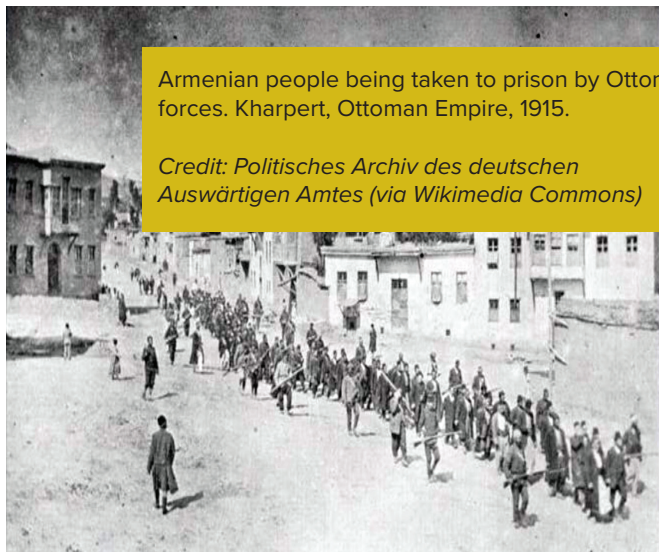
joining the units. The “Special Organization” participated in the genocidal process under the pretext that minority groups were influenced by outside powers and posed a threat to national security.

On April 24, 1915, the CUP closed all Armenian political organizations and arrested 200-300 intellectuals and political and religious leaders in Constantinople, the capital. Most of these men were deported east and killed. Men serving in the Ottoman army were disarmed and forced into labor battalions. Soon after, Interior Minister Talaat Pasha ordered the deportation of the Armenian population. Those Armenians who were not killed were taken as wives or servants or were sent on death marches. The people forced to march into the desert often died from starvation, dehydration, exhaustion, or physical attacks including rape and mutilation, and burning. One such march began with 18,000 Armenians and ended with only 150 survivors. Additionally, property belonging to Armenians—their personal belongings, businesses, farms, community institutions, including schools, hospitals, churches, etc.—were stolen or destroyed. Entire villages were burned. A program to repopulate the area with Turks was carried out.

After the genocide, there was a short-lived attempt at justice. Under pressure from Europe, a series of war crimes trials were undertaken, but mostly abandoned, with the major perpetrators of the genocide, who had fled the country, going unpunished. In the absence of criminal trials, in the 1920s, a secret group of Armenians assassinated the architects of the genocide. Meanwhile, a new nationalist movement—including many of the genocide’s perpetrators—took control of the government. The multicultural nature of the Ottoman Empire, now called Turkey, was destroyed. Surviving Armenians who had escaped death dispersed across the globe.

In 1918, Armenians living in the small piece of their homeland that had been controlled by Russia, declared independence. But it only lasted until 1920, when it was taken over by the newly-established Soviet Union. After 70 years of Soviet rule, Armenia again declared itself an independent republic in 1990.

Although the United Nations, the International Association of Genocide Scholars, and many governments and historical institutions recognize the Armenian Genocide, the Turkish government has always denied that genocide was committed. It has conducted a massive campaign to prevent the global population from knowing about the genocide and to discredit scholarly and political efforts that address it. In recent decades, those who have written or taught about this genocide have been intimidated, imprisoned, and even assassinated.



Armenian people being taken to prison by Ottoman forces. Kharpert, Ottoman Empire, 1915.

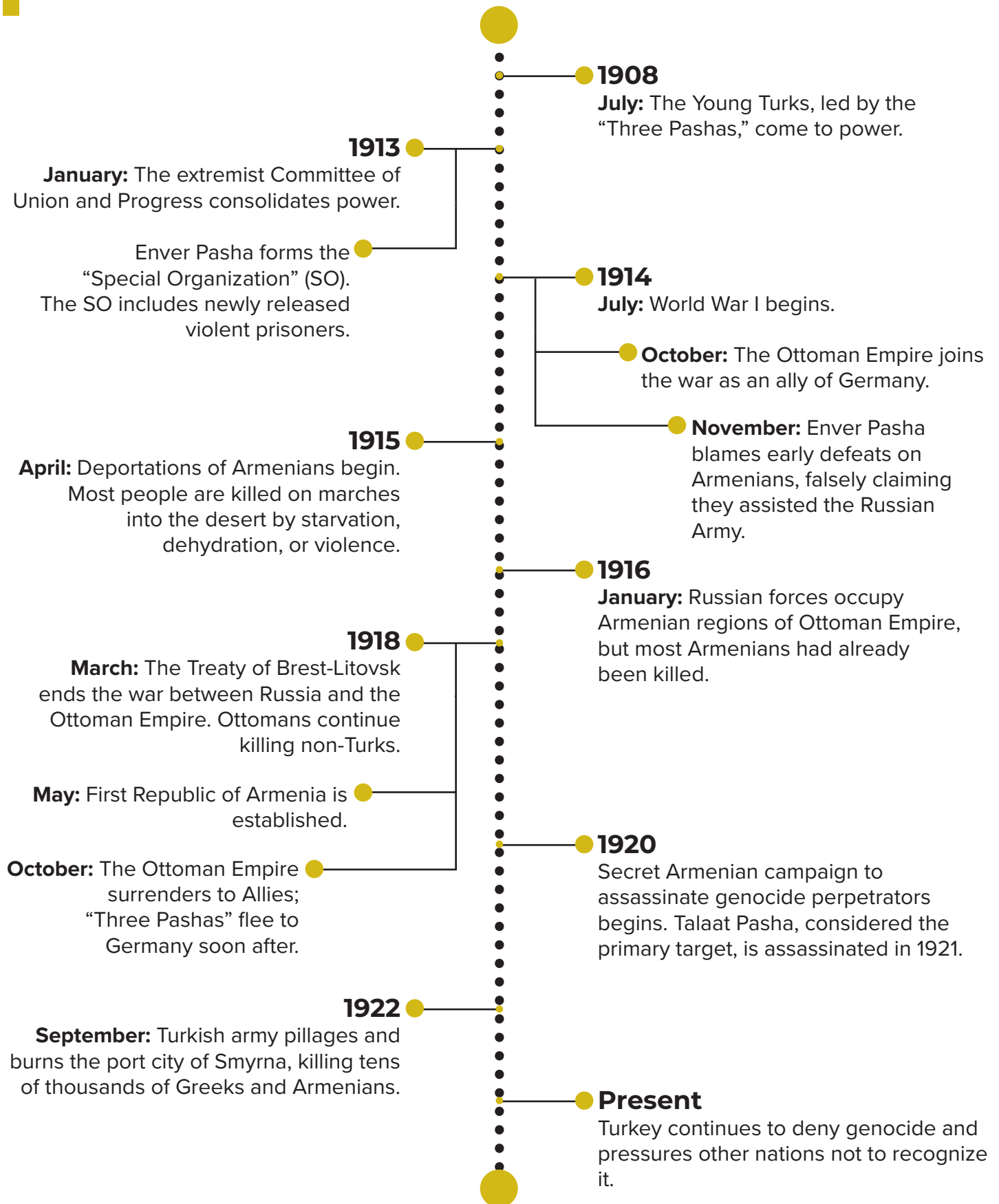
*Credit: Politisches Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes (via Wikimedia Commons)*



The Armenian church of Trabzon, used as an auction site of confiscated goods during and after the Armenian Genocide, 1918.

*Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

# ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: TIMELINE





# ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: KEY TERMS

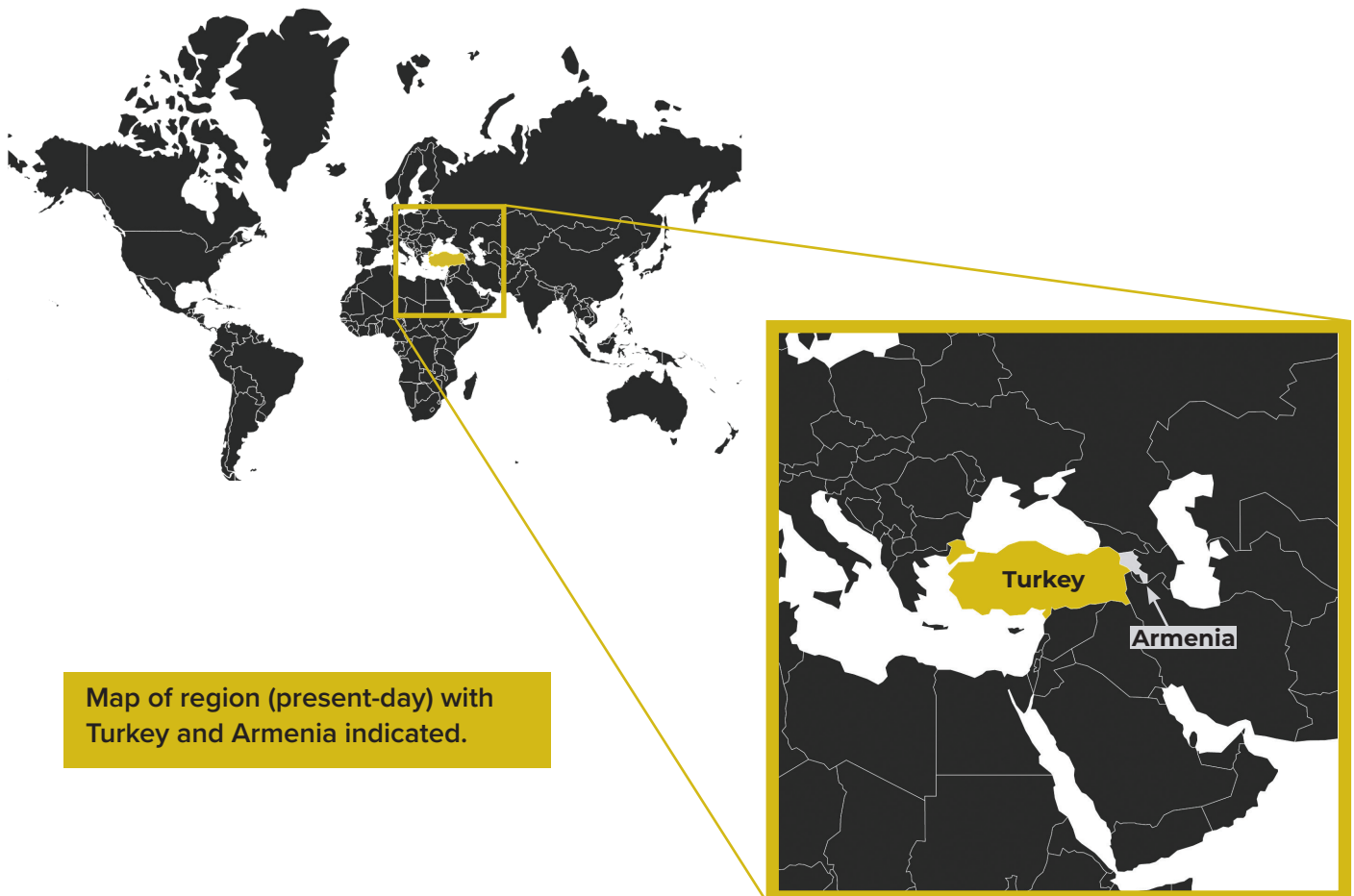
**Committee of Union and Progress:** an organization within the Young Turk movement. It ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1913 to 1918 and oversaw the Armenian Genocide.

**diaspora:** the dispersion/scattering of people from their original homeland to other places.

**Special Organization (SO):** a special forces unit associated with the War Department in the Ottoman Empire. As part of the recruitment process for the SO, the Ottoman government released violent people from prison if they were willing to join the group. The SO participated directly in carrying out the Armenian Genocide.

**Turkification:** the process of turning a non-Turkish area into one of predominantly Turkish people and culture.

**Young Turks:** a coalition of various groups, founded in the late nineteenth century, working towards a more liberal and modern Ottoman Empire.



Map of region (present-day) with Turkey and Armenia indicated.

# CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE 1975-1979

**T**he Cambodian Genocide was the killing of approximately 1.7 million to 2.2 million people by the Khmer Rouge (KR) regime from 1975 to 1979.

The genocide arose from the regime's attempt to create an agrarian society based on communist principles. Those targeted included anyone that the KR felt threatened these ideals, including people with different political views, the educated class, and people of different ethnicities or religions, who were banned from speaking minority languages and practicing religious customs under the regime.

Cambodia is a country in Southeast Asia bordering Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. The majority of its population identifies as Khmer, an ethnic group with its own language and culture. Before gaining independence in 1953, Cambodia was a French colony for nearly a century. Norodom Sihanouk ruled the country following independence, a period which coincided with the Vietnam War. During this time, Vietnamese refugees flooded into Cambodia and U.S. bombing campaigns killed 50,000 to 150,000 Cambodians.

Attempting to regain power after he was overthrown by a pro-western military coup in 1970, Sihanouk encouraged his followers to revolt. The communist Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, responded by taking up arms against the government, initiating a civil war. The bombing by the Americans and the mistrust of the Vietnamese helped Khmer Rouge forces to grow, and with over 700,000 members, the group successfully took over Cambodia in April 1975. The Khmer Rouge was very well organized; within hours of invading the capital, Phnom Penh, it immediately began removing people from their homes and instituting discriminatory policies to create its new communist "paradise" called Democratic Kampuchea.

According to the KR's beliefs, many people were considered "class enemies" of its agrarian revolution or agents of imperialist powers. The regime divided society into two groups: "Old People" and "New People." Old People were peasants who lived in the countryside; this group was idolized and considered trustworthy. New People included nearly everyone else: city dwellers, intellectuals, people of non-Khmer ethnicities, and religious people, including Buddhist monks who the KR identified by their robes. Even people who wore glasses or spoke a second language were targeted, as the regime believed them to be educated or have connections outside Cambodia.

Upon taking power, the Khmer Rouge systematically emptied urban areas, separating families and forcing people into the countryside. Now at the bottom of the KR's supposed classless society, the New People received far harsher treatment than the Old People. Professionals, including teachers, doctors, and former government officials, were murdered right away.

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

Wide variety of people targeted, including:

- Urban dwellers
- Intellectuals and those with advanced education
- Former government officials
- Ethnic minorities

### Perpetrators:

- Khmer Rouge
- Leadership: Pol Pot, communist leader of the Khmer Rouge military and political organization

### Results:

- More than 1.7 million people killed (20 percent of population)
- 11-year occupation by Vietnam
- Unstable governments, guerrilla war, and famines

Additionally, the regime abolished all rights for those not killed immediately. It closed schools, factories, and hospitals and banned radios and music. The remaining population was forced to perform slave labor in the “killing fields,” communal farms where many died from exhaustion, malnutrition, and disease. These deaths were the direct result of the harsh conditions imposed by the Khmer Rouge.

In addition to enslaving its own population, the KR created prisons for the torture and killing of perceived enemies, and even publicly marked some people for death (people in the Eastern Zone, for example, had to wear a blue scarf that meant they would be killed). Anyone who wasn’t designated an ethnic Khmer peasant was targeted, and those perceived to be unsupportive of the regime’s policies and actions were deemed enemies. There was no room for any type of moderate. In addition, the KR targeted religious groups: it murdered 97 percent of Buddhist monks, 8,000 Christians, and half of the Cham Muslim population. The genocide ended in early 1979 when the Vietnamese Army invaded Cambodia and defeated the Khmer Rouge. As a result of the Khmer Rouge’s anti-imperialist worldview and opposition to U.S. intervention, many western academics opposed to the Vietnam War minimized or denied the crimes of the KR.

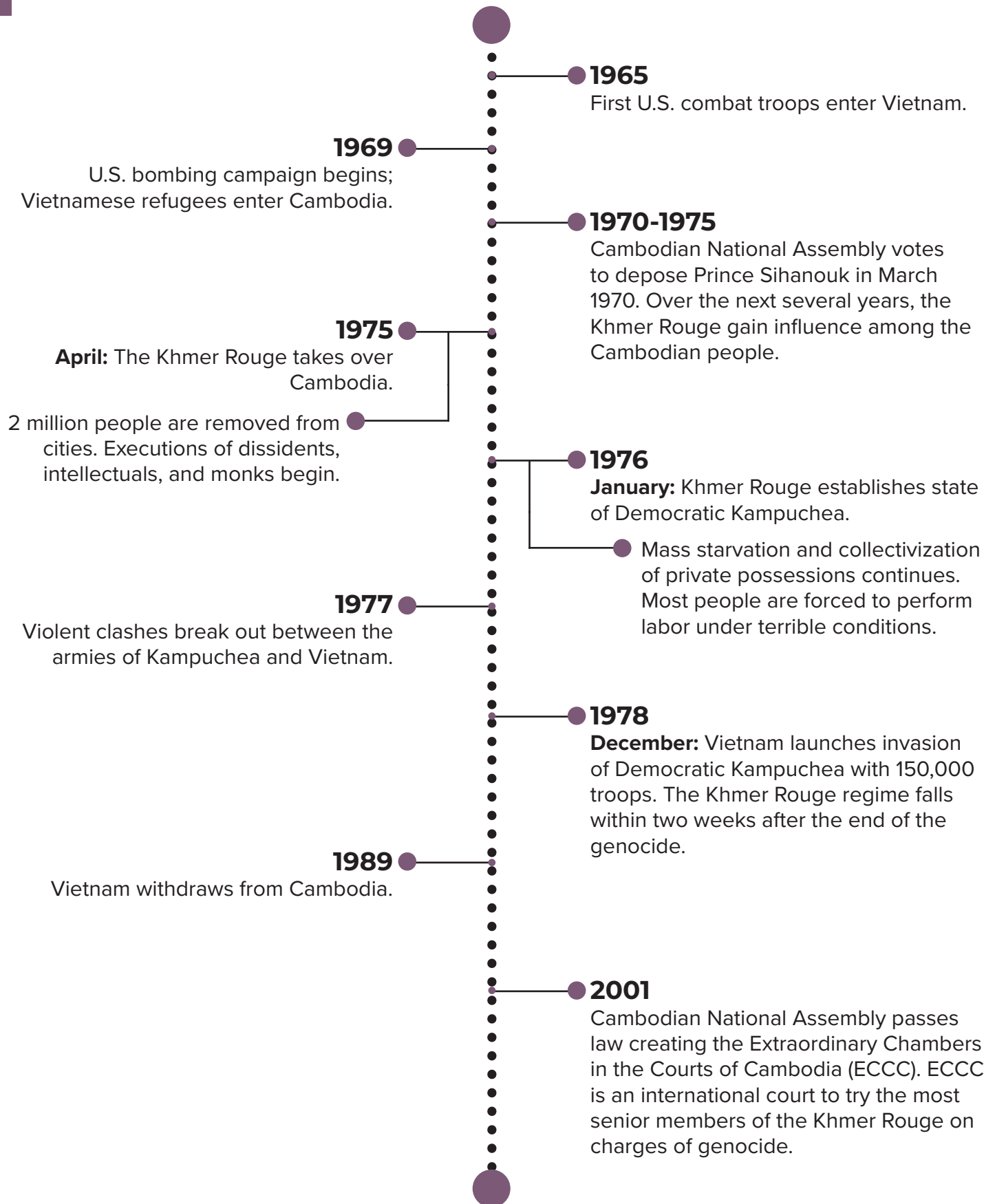
Cambodia today still suffers effects from the genocide. Its industry, education systems, healthcare, and commerce were all but destroyed by the Khmer Rouge, so the country faced many difficulties as it rebuilt in the wake of the atrocities. In 2018, a UN-backed international court found two former Khmer Rouge leaders guilty of genocide. The ruling has been the only genocide conviction to date for the atrocities in Cambodia.



Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum at the site of a former Khmer Rouge prison.

*Credit: Bjørn Christian Tørrissen (via Wikimedia Commons)*

# CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE: TIMELINE



# CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE: KEY TERMS

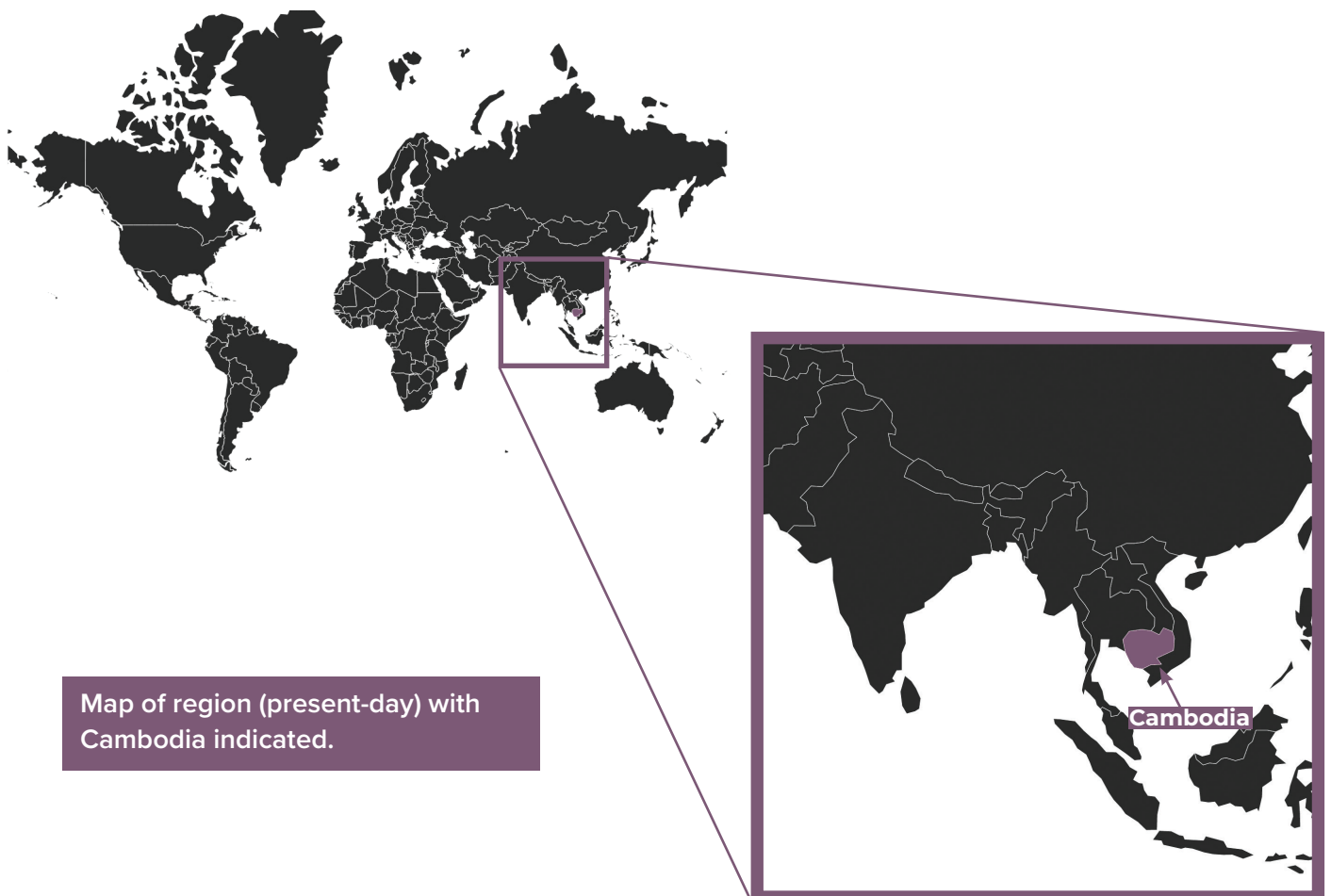
**agrarian:** related to agriculture or farming.

**coup:** a sudden, illegal, and often violent taking of government power.

**Khmer Rouge:** a communist guerrilla organization, led by Pol Pot, which perpetrated the Cambodian Genocide.

**Killing Fields:** sites in the Cambodian countryside where people were murdered and buried in mass graves.

**Old People / New People:** labels given to individuals in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime. Old People were peasants and were valued by the regime; New People were city dwellers, intellectuals, or anyone else considered to be a “class enemy” of the Khmer Rouge.



Map of region (present-day) with Cambodia indicated.

# GUATEMALAN GENOCIDE 1982-1983

**D**uring the Guatemalan Genocide, the Guatemalan government attempted to destroy the country's Mayan population. During the civil war from 1960 to 1996, more than 200,000 people were killed, mostly by the country's armed forces. The Guatemalan army and paramilitaries persecuted Indigenous communities, union leaders, students, religious people, and other civilians claiming that they formed a subversive 'internal enemy.' The height of the genocide took place between 1982 and 1983, during which tens of thousands of Mayas were killed.

Guatemala is a small country in Central America, bordered by Mexico, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador. It is located at the center of what used to be the powerful Mayan empire. After Spanish Conquistadors arrived in the 1500s, the Maya were treated poorly and often enslaved. In the centuries that followed, most of the Mayan peoples ceased to exist and with them their way of life and their religion.

As a result of colonization, the racist belief that people of Spanish descent (Ladinos) were superior to those of indigenous heritage persisted through the centuries. Mayan groups were easily distinguished from Ladinos because of their distinct cultural traits, including languages and clothing. As a result, Mayans suffered under a system of discrimination and persecution for centuries, during which they could not access services in their own languages and had limited access to healthcare, education, and basic services.

In 1944, a revolutionary junta took power and ushered in the Guatemalan Revolution. Over the next decade, the government enacted social and agricultural reforms which improved living standards for some of the Indigenous population. These reforms distributed unused farmland and allowed workers to go on strike. Guatemala's largest landowner, the American-owned United Fruit Company (UFC), lobbied against the reforms. Because its projects in Guatemala accounted for 25 percent of UFC's total production, these reforms meant that the company would lose both control and revenue. The government of the United States supported the company, viewing the reforms as a step toward communism.

In 1954, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) backed a military coup in Guatemala. During the coup, the CIA established a secret radio station to broadcast anti-government propaganda and U.S. pilots bombed strategic points in the capital, Guatemala City. The coup led to the overthrow of democratically-elected leader Jacobo Árbenz and restored the rights of the United Fruit Company.

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

- People of Mayan ethnicity, including peasants, students, and community leaders

### Perpetrators:

- Guatemalan military and paramilitary forces
- Leadership: General Efraín Ríos Montt, president of Guatemala from 1982-1983

### Results:

- Approximately 80,000 Maya killed
- 626 villages destroyed
- Over 150,000 refugees fled to Mexico



During the military dictatorship that followed the coup, many leftist guerrilla groups rose up in the countryside. This uprising led to the brutal 36-year civil war that provided the cover for genocide. Launched in the early 1980s, “Operation Sofia” was the Guatemalan government’s plan to eliminate the Mayan population, whom it accused of supporting the rebels. With the help of paramilitary ‘death squads,’ the army destroyed much of the Mayan region as it attempted to root out the leftist opponents that were supposedly being hidden in Indigenous communities. Operation Sofia was part of a campaign to destroy Mayan life in the villages and to “re-educate” the surviving Indigenous population.

Although Indigenous groups comprised more than half of Guatemala’s population, the government often expressed racist anti-Indigenous sentiment which encouraged troops to treat the Mayan population with brutality. Some propaganda stated that Mayas were animals. Others accused Mayan communities of supporting the guerrilla fighters and infecting the country with their communist ideas. The government drew up lists of Mayan leaders to be eliminated and publicly questioned people’s loyalty. They used informants to spy on villages and spread propaganda that the Maya were planning to overthrow the government. Applying a “scorched earth” policy, the army burned buildings, killed livestock, and desecrated cultural symbols. 626 Mayan villages were destroyed in the operation.

Some historians refer to the events in Guatemala between 1982 and 1983 as the “Silent Holocaust.” During this short period, the government massacred, tortured or “disappeared” (kidnapped and likely killed) approximately half of the 166,000 Mayan men, women and children who were killed during the entire civil war. Entire Mayan communities were massacred and tortured, including thousands of sexual assaults against women.

Many became refugees in southern Mexico and other neighboring countries, and 1.5 million were internally displaced. The civil war officially ended in 1996 with the signing of peace accords. A part of the treaty gave perpetrators amnesty, legal protection from being punished for their crimes, and many of the leaders of the genocide are now powerful members of government. Many perpetrators have denied that they did anything wrong; they claim that the killing was part of a civil war and there were casualties on both sides. Today, the Maya face continued discrimination, human rights abuses, and a renewed government policy of taking over native lands and evicting villagers.



Women from the Ixil community (a Mayan people) celebrate after General Efraín Ríos Montt is convicted of genocide.

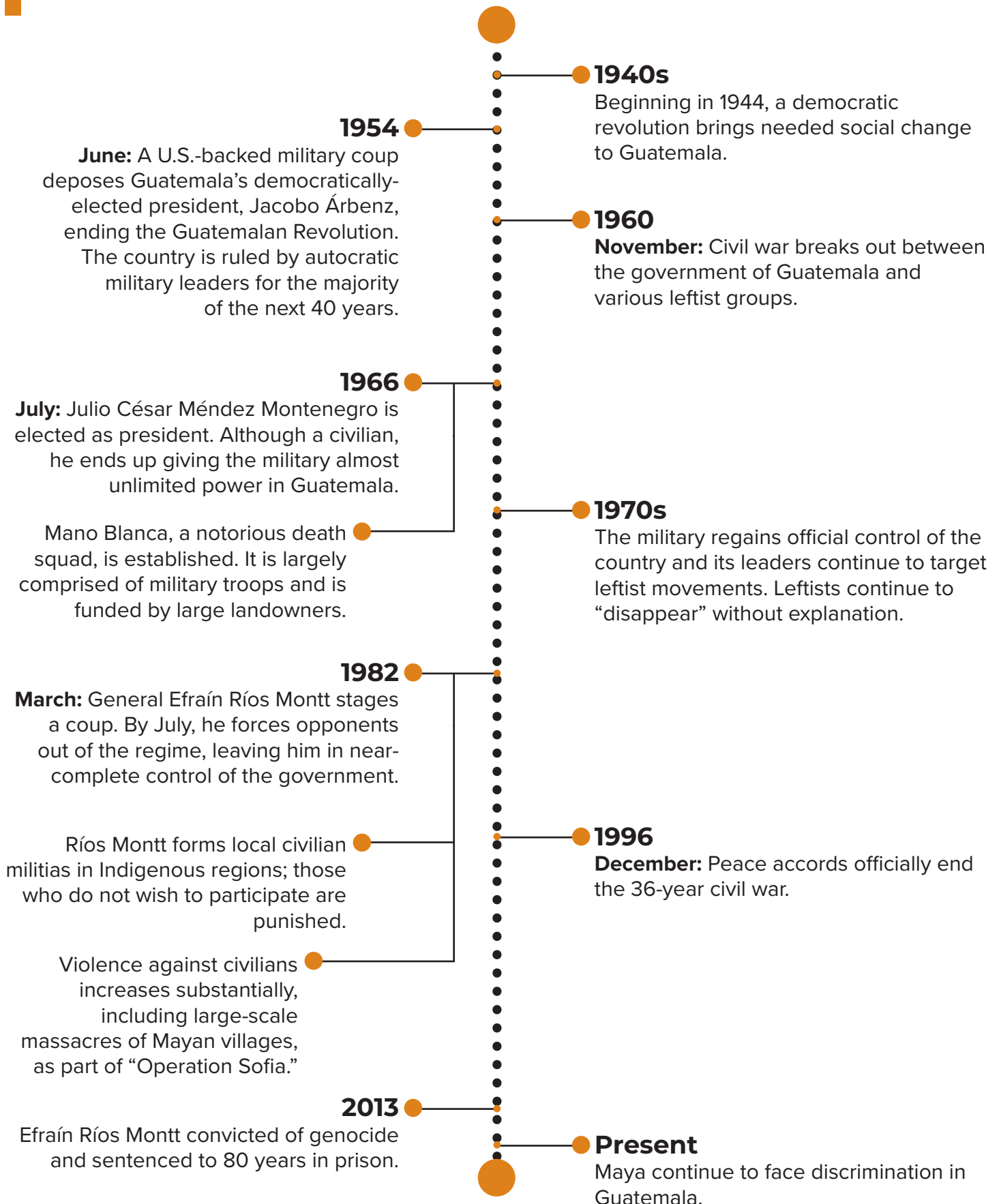
*Credit: Elena Hermosa/Trocaire (via Wikimedia Commons)*



Guatemalan army carries out ‘scorched earth’ policy on a Mayan village.

*Credit: World Without Genocide*

# GUATEMALAN GENOCIDE: TIMELINE





# GUATEMALAN GENOCIDE: KEY TERMS

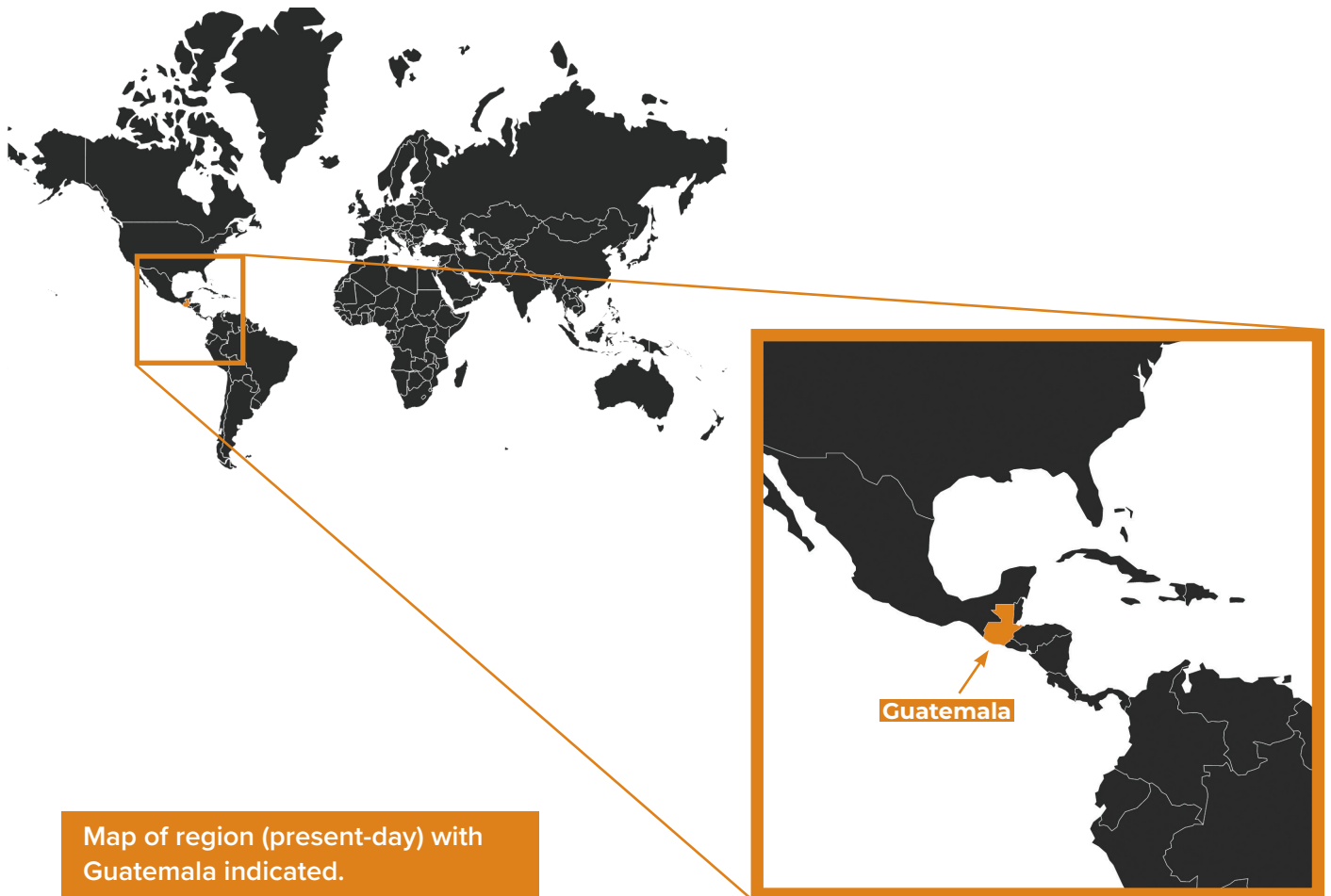
**Cold War:** period of hostility between two power blocs, led by the United States and the Soviet Union, respectively. During the Cold War (1945-1990), the U.S. took a strong stance against communism and any country that it perceived to be a Soviet ally.

**disappeared:** when a person is secretly kidnapped or abducted by the state (or an organization working for the state) and no information about their fate or whereabouts is revealed to their friends and loved ones.

**junta:** a military or political group that rules a country after taking power by force.

**paramilitary:** a force whose function and structure is similar to the military; however, paramilitary groups are not part of the state's official military forces.

**scorched earth:** military strategy of destroying anything that might be useful to the enemy (e.g. houses, crops, livestock, etc.).



# THE HOLOCAUST 1933-1945

The Holocaust was the planned, deliberate attempt to destroy Europe's Jewish population by Germany's Third Reich. Six million Jews and five million others were killed during the Holocaust. Jews were the main target of Nazi persecution; however, Roma ("Gypsies") were also targeted for destruction by the Nazis. Policies of the Third Reich were based on extreme racism that categorized everyone on "racial" grounds. In an attempt to create a strong and "racially pure" Germany, the Nazis also targeted other groups, including: gay men, communists, Jehovah's Witnesses, people with physical or mental disabilities, and Slavic peoples. As Germany gained control of territory in Europe and Northern Africa between 1933-1945, more people became subject to Nazi persecution.

Although Europe is home to people of many ethnicities and religions, it has a long history of prejudice against Jews (antisemitism). As a result, Jews were often viewed as distinct from the rest of the community. Before the nineteenth century, this prejudice was directed toward Jews as a minority religious group. During the late 1800s, however, the false idea that Jews are a distinct biological race gained popularity. This idea heavily influenced the Nazi Party, who believed that "Aryans" (Germanic peoples) were racially superior and that the Jews and members of certain other groups were subhuman. They also believed that the Jews were a "threat to the purity of German blood" and discouraged association between Jews and non-Jews.

When the Nazis were democratically elected in Germany in 1933, they immediately acted on these prejudices. They quickly banned other political parties, including communists and moderate socialists, so that they could control the country without opposition. The Nazis conducted a massive propaganda campaign to persuade non-Jewish Germans to view the Jews as different and dangerous, often comparing them to vermin. Over the next several years, the Nazis instituted laws which stripped Jews of their citizenship and other important rights, including their right to work in certain professions and the right to marry "Aryans." These laws also established who was officially considered a Jew. Jewishness was not determined by religion, but instead by biological heritage. This meant that even if someone had converted to Christianity or never practiced Judaism, they would still be considered a "full Jew" if they had three Jewish grandparents.

Additional laws made people the Nazis had classified as Jewish stand out from the general population. All Jews had to have 'J's stamped on their passports, change their middle names to Sara (for women) or Israel (for men), and in some places, wear identifying badges such as a yellow Star of David. The government created the SS, a security force, to enforce its racial laws and to run its complex system of concentration and extermination camps. It also created the Gestapo, a secret police force responsible for eliminating perceived threats to the Nazi state.

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

- Jews
- Roma and Sinti
- Slavs, including Poles and Russians
- Gay men
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- People with disabilities

### Perpetrators:

- National Socialist ("Nazi") government of Germany
- Leadership: Adolf Hitler, Führer (leader) of Germany
- Collaborators (non-Germans who chose to help the Nazis)

### Results:

- 6 million Jewish people and 5 million others killed
- Creation of the UN Genocide Convention
- Creation of the state of Israel
- Destruction of almost all Jewish communities in Europe

World War II began in Europe when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. The Nazis used the war to expand their territory to provide more *Lebensraum*, or living space, for ethnic Germans. As their territory grew, the Nazis drastically increased the number of Jews under their control, leading to increasingly drastic plans and methods for keeping Jews separate from the rest of the population. The violence steadily progressed into genocide: some Jews were killed by people in their villages, sometimes by their neighbors. Many were imprisoned in ghettos, then deported to extermination centers, where they were murdered with poison gas upon arrival; others were deported to concentration camps and used as slave labor until they died. The Nazis also killed many people under the cover of war, often by using the *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing squads). These squads followed behind the German army to kill Jews, Roma, communists and other supposed “enemies of the Reich.” Toward the end of the war, the genocidal methods also included death marches as Allied troops neared the camps. Forced to flee from liberating armies, many died from exhaustion or starvation during the marches. The genocide finally ended when Germany surrendered to the Allies in May 1945.

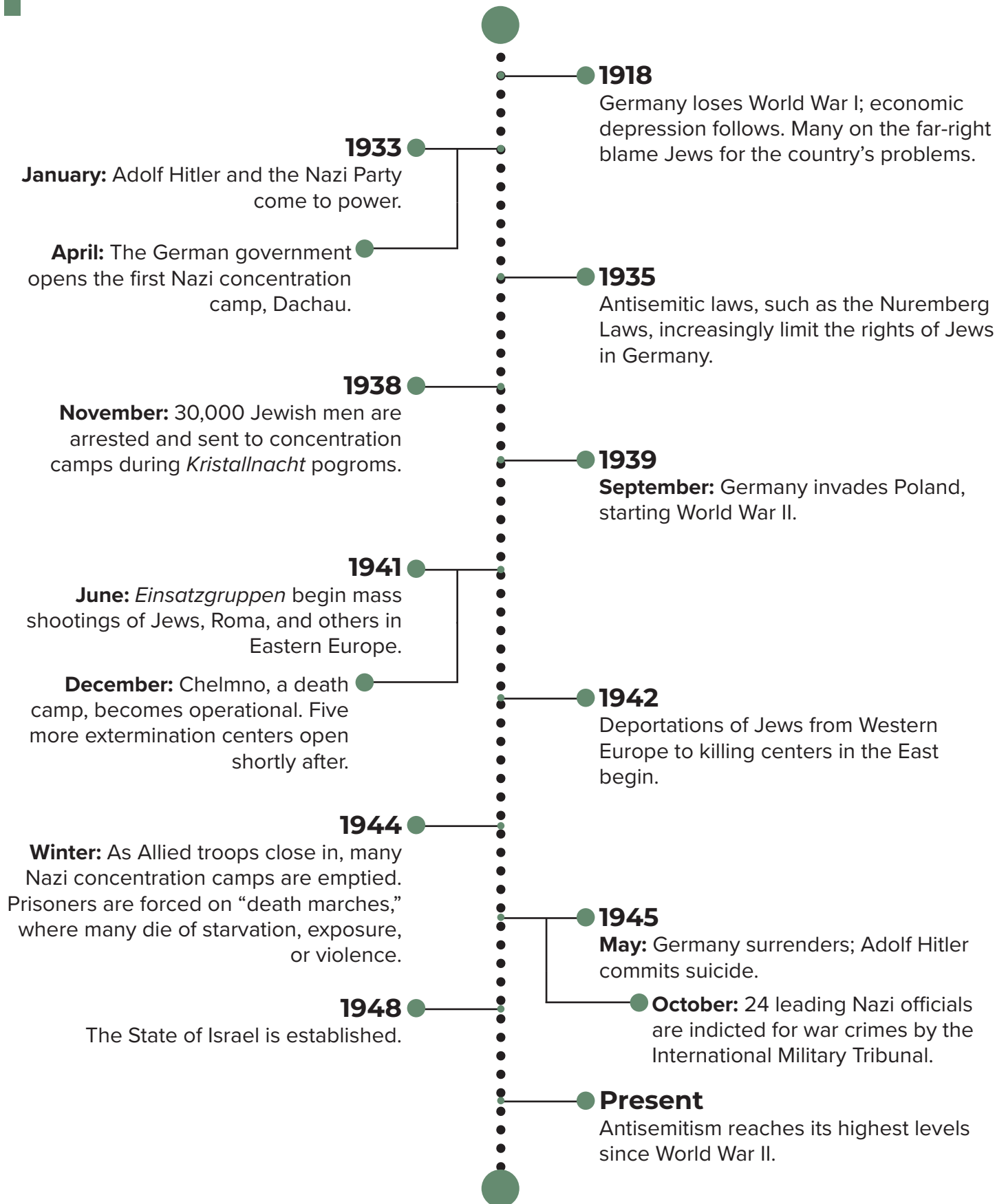
By the end of the genocide, nearly two-thirds of Europe’s Jews and one-quarter of Europe’s Roma had been killed. Between two and three million Soviet prisoners of war and two million non-Jewish Poles died at the hands of Nazis and their collaborators. Today, white supremacists, neo-Nazis, and others deny that the Holocaust happened or suggest that its death tolls are grossly exaggerated. They often make extensive efforts to discredit Holocaust survivors and historians of the genocide.



A group of Hungarian Jews arrives at Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp, summer 1944.

Credit: German Federal Archives (via Wikimedia Commons)

# THE HOLOCAUST: TIMELINE



# THE HOLOCAUST: KEY TERMS

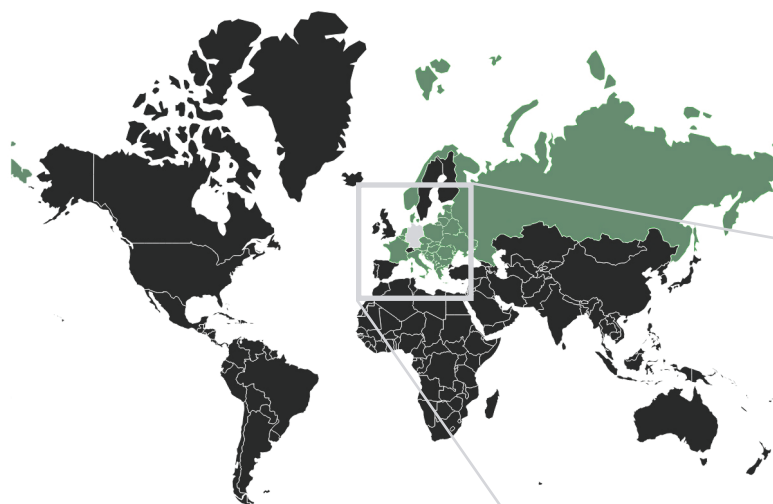
**antisemitism:** prejudice or discrimination against Jewish people.

**Aryan:** a term referring to people of Indo-European heritage. According to Nazi ideology, Nordic peoples, which included Germans, were the “purest” people of the “Aryan race.”

**concentration camp:** a place where victims were imprisoned and forced to do slave labor. Concentration camps were part of the Nazi policy of “extermination through labor” whereby prisoners worked until they died—usually as a result of exhaustion, starvation, or disease.

**extermination camp:** a place where victims were killed upon arrival, usually by poison gas. The Nazis created and ran six extermination camps during the Holocaust: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno, and Majdanek.

**Roma and Sinti:** traditionally nomadic groups who migrated from India during the 1100s. These groups are sometimes referred to as “Gypsies,” but this is now considered to be a derogatory term.



Map of region (present-day) with  
Germany indicated.





# GENOCIDE OF NATIVE AMERICANS 1607-1968\*

According to moderate estimates, 50 to 60 million people lived in the Americas when Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492. An estimated eight to ten million lived in what is now the United States. By 1900, 80 percent of the Indigenous population of the Americas had died. Diseases brought by the Europeans caused a large number of Native American deaths; however, violence against Native populations also contributed to the large death toll. In many cases, this violence was directed by colonial governments and settlers.

As soon as European colonization in what is now the United States began, settlers made distinctions between themselves and the “Indians”—the Indigenous inhabitants of the land. The colonists referred to Native Americans as *reds*, indicating that they were different because of the color of their skin. Not only did the Native Americans look and dress differently than the Europeans, but they also had different languages, customs, and religious practices. Most European settlers believed that they were superior to Indigenous peoples and often described people from Native tribes as “savages,” “barbarians,” or wild animals.

The American Revolution marked a decline in relations between the white settlers and the Indigenous population. Some tribes supported Great Britain during the Revolutionary War, so after the United States won

independence, Indigenous peoples were considered traitors regardless of whether they had supported the British or not. Over the next century, U.S. government policy toward Native Americans moved from assimilation to separation. Before the 1820s, the government pushed tribes to give up their cultural practices and integrate into white American society. Later it pursued a policy of segregation, separating Native Americans from the rest of the population or physically removing Indigenous peoples from their land.

One of the reasons the U.S. government moved to separate and remove Native peoples was because the ideal figure of the farmer—someone who worked and lived off of the land—was central to America’s new identity. As a result, the desire for land and westward expansion intensified throughout the 19th century. According to government officials, the Native American inhabitants of the land were preventing the United States from becoming a large empire. Occasionally the government would negotiate treaties for land with tribal bodies, but in many cases, it encouraged settlers to use violence against the Indigenous inhabitants and take the land by force. Government officials armed militias and warned settler populations that if they did not kill the Indigenous peoples first, the Indigenous peoples would kill them.

Hoping to survive, some tribes attempted to assimilate into white society, adopting new ‘American’ customs and practices. The Cherokee were one tribe that attempted to assimilate by adopting European customs. Despite this, the law continued

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

- Indigenous peoples of what is now the United States

### Perpetrators:

- United States government and military
- Settlers and colonizers

### Results:

- Estimated 7.7 million to 9.7 million Native Americans killed by 1900
- More than 10,000 Native Americans killed on the Trail of Tears

*\* Dates indicate first British settlement in what is now the United States to the passage of the Indian Civil Rights Act*

to discriminate against the Cherokee and other Indigenous groups, including banning them from testifying against whites or publicly protesting their living conditions.

In 1829, gold was discovered in Cherokee territory and the following year, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. Under this act, the U.S. president could initiate treaties with Native American tribes that took tribal lands in the east in exchange for land in the west. This process was voluntary at first, but when tribes refused to leave (including the Cherokee), the government began removing them by force.

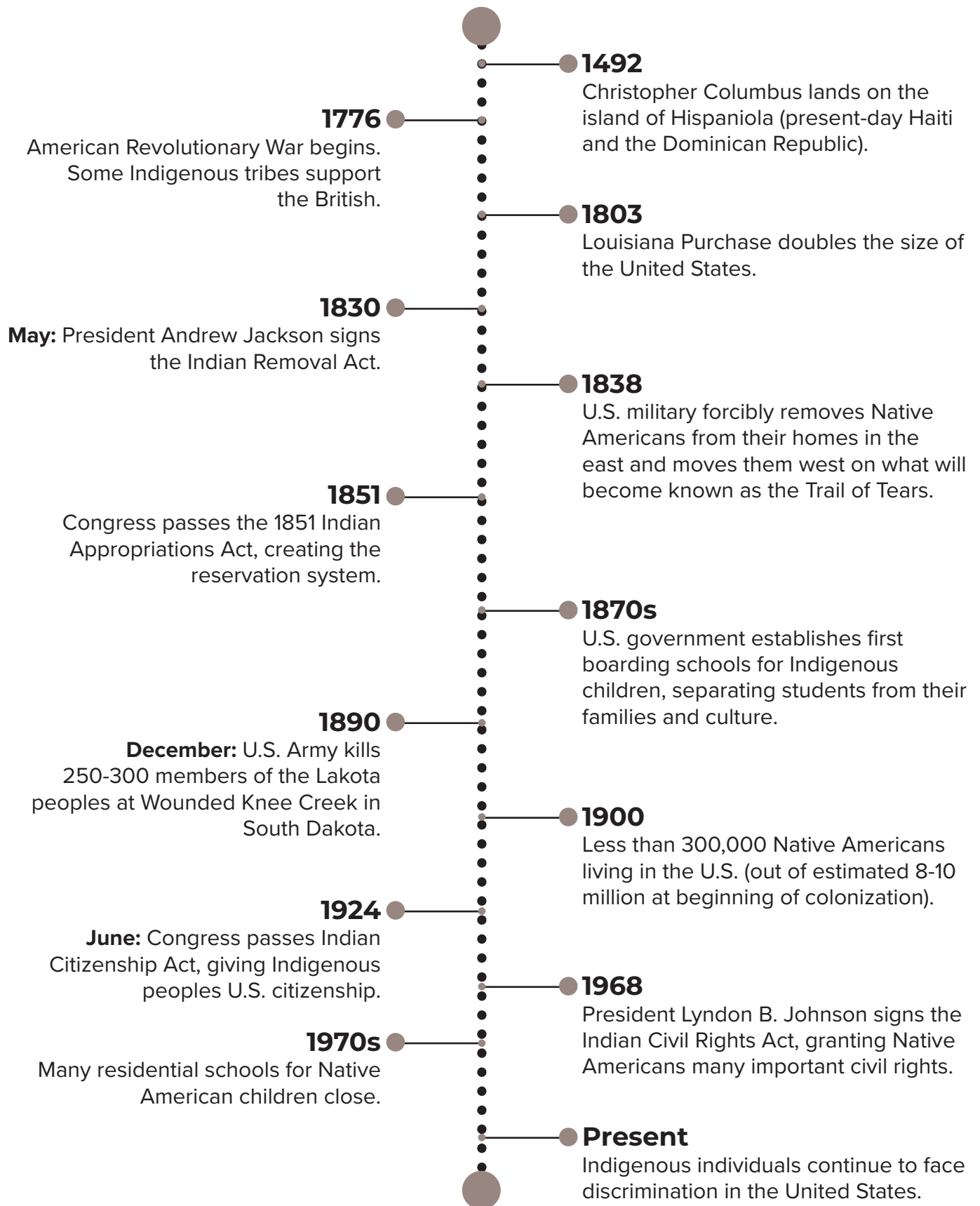
In 1838, approximately 16,000 Cherokees still remained on their land in the east. The government responded by sending 7,000 troops to their homes and forcing them to leave. They were not allowed time to gather any supplies or belongings, so they began the 800-mile march west toward what is now Oklahoma with nothing but the clothes on their backs. This forced removal—or ethnic cleansing—of the Cherokee and other tribes is often referred to as the Trail of Tears. Approximately 46,000 Native Americans were forced from their homelands in this way and close to 4,000 Cherokees died, primarily from cold, disease, or starvation. More than 6,000 Native Americans from other tribes also died on forced westward marches.

The Trail of Tears is one example of genocide, but there were many other genocidal policies and actions initiated against the Indigenous population of the United States. The U.S. government maintains it did not pursue a policy of genocide, and as a result, the history of Indigenous genocide has been left out of history textbooks and federally-funded museums. As a result of this historical revision and the legacy of these racist policies, many Native Americans today still suffer from the effects of the genocide and centuries of persecution.



*The Trail of Tears*, painting by Robert Lindneux, 1942.

# GENOCIDE OF NATIVE AMERICANS: TIMELINE





# GENOCIDE OF NATIVE AMERICANS:

## KEY TERMS

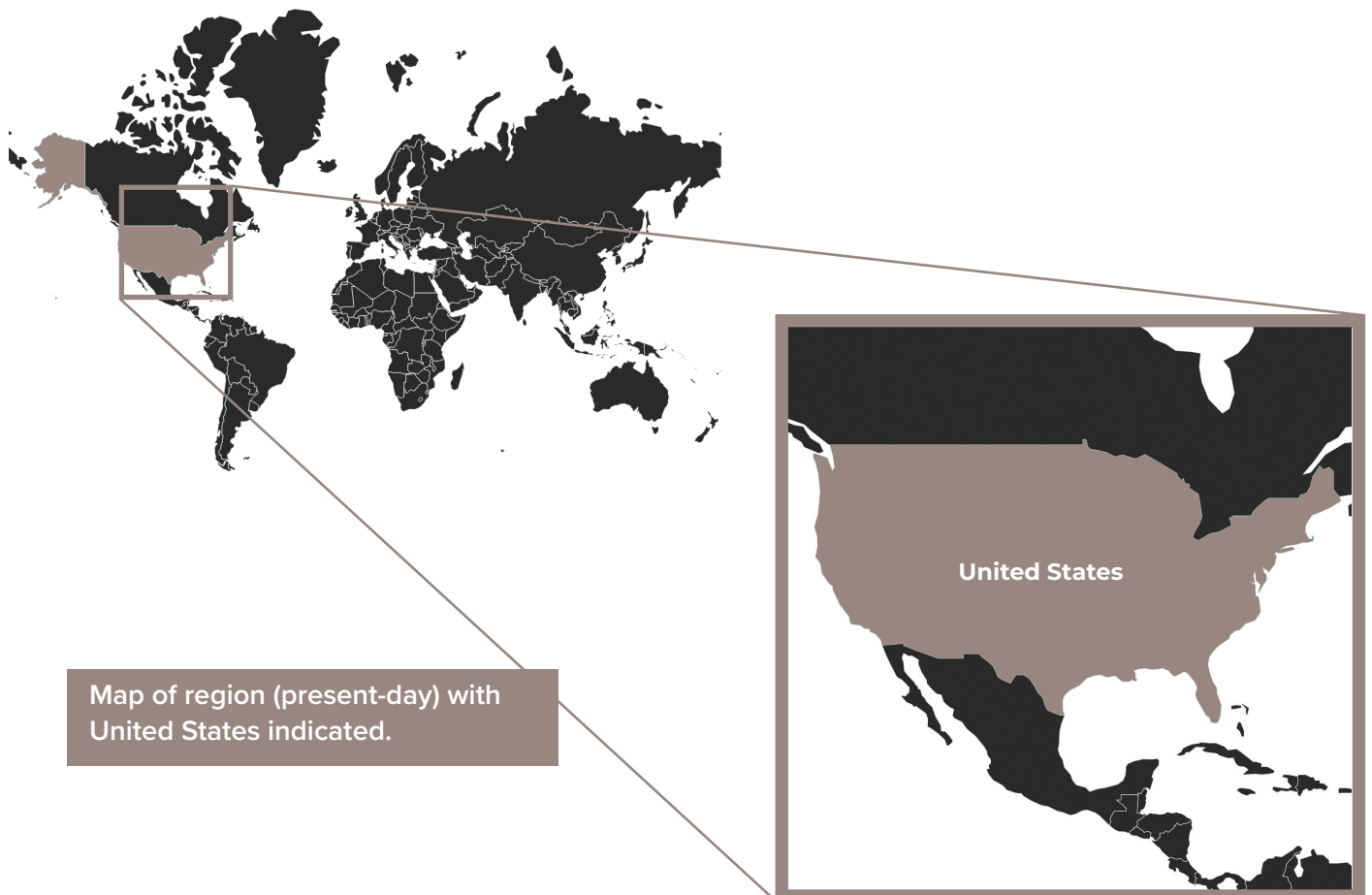
**assimilation:** the process by which a person or minority group adopts the language or culture of a dominant group in society.

**colonization:** the process by which one group or country takes political and economic control of other territory. This process is usually accompanied by the introduction of settlers from the dominant country to their 'new' territory.

**ethnic cleansing:** the forced removal, by mass expulsion or killing, of a group from a given territory (with the purpose of making it ethnically homogenous).

**Indigenous peoples:** groups of people which are native to a given territory.

**segregation:** the enforced separation of groups in society, usually along racial or ethnic lines.



Map of region (present-day) with United States indicated.

# GENOCIDE IN RWANDA 1994

The Rwandan Genocide was the destruction of Tutsi and moderate Hutu people in Rwanda by members of the Hutu majority. It was planned by Hutu political elites and carried out by the media, militia, and everyday people. The killing lasted one hundred days, from April through July of 1994. In this short period, close to one million people were murdered out of a pre-genocide population of more than seven million.

Rwanda is a small country in the Great Lakes region of East Africa. A majority of the population were either Hutu (85 percent) or Tutsi (14 percent). Before colonization, these two designations simply distinguished farmers (Hutu) and cattle herders (Tutsi), but in the 1900s under colonial rule, these labels were solidified and turned into ethnic categories. Before this transformation, people could move freely between the Hutu and Tutsi groups; however, when European powers ruled colonial Rwanda, they determined who belonged to which group based on “racial traits,” deciding that Tutsi were taller, thinner and lighter skinned than Hutu — and therefore racially superior. The Belgian colonial administration maintained this false racial hierarchy by establishing a system of ethnic identity cards that legally distinguished individuals as belonging to a certain group. In reality, there was no such “racial” distinction between the Hutu and Tutsi.

These same rulers also deepened the divide by favoring Tutsis in schools and leadership positions, which made many Hutu resentful of their Tutsi neighbors. When Rwanda became independent in 1962, a Hutu elite gained political control of the country and began discriminating against Tutsis. In the following decades, violence forced more than 300,000 Tutsi into exile in Uganda and neighboring countries. Refugees trying to return to the country were rebuffed, and in 1990 a civil war began when an armed Tutsi refugee group, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), advanced into Rwanda. In the midst of the civil war that followed, preparation for genocide began. Hutu leaders ordered machetes, trained militias, and incited hatred against the minority group through an extensive campaign of anti-Tutsi propaganda. Radio and print media called Tutsis cockroaches and snakes. Hutu extremists killed politically moderate Hutu officials and community leaders.

Despite this climate, the government and the RPF reached an accord in 1993 to share power between Hutu and Tutsi. But on April 6, 1994, before the agreement was implemented, the Rwandan president’s plane was shot down. Tutsi were blamed for the assassination and this became the pretext for genocide. Almost immediately, a previously agreed upon signal went out over the radio; Hutu leaders drew up and shared death lists; and members of the machete-wielding *Interahamwe* militia erected and guarded roadblocks. Those who tried to get by without a Hutu identity card were killed. Many Tutsi fled to churches for safety, but most priests were unwilling to offer protection. Perpetrators also carried out a

## BASIC FACTS

### Targets:

- Tutsi
- Politically moderate Hutu

### Perpetrators:

- Leadership: Hutu extremists
- Media, particularly radio and newspapers
- *Interahamwe* paramilitary groups

### Results:

- Approximately 800,000 people killed
- More than 2 million refugees fled to neighboring countries
- 250,000 to 500,000 women raped
- First & Second Congo Wars

campaign of rape to torture and spread HIV to Tutsi women and girls. Despite the unfolding violence, the United Nations pulled out most of its peacekeepers. Most of the killing was done with machetes and clubs.

The genocide ended when the RPF defeated the government and won the civil war. Many Hutus fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo and their continuing activities have led directly to the First and Second Congo Wars. After the genocide, Rwanda was traumatized and economically devastated. Since the violence, the Rwandan government, now led by a mix of moderate Hutu and Tutsi, has affected a remarkable turnaround in many ways, with positive developments in education, women's roles, and new methods of justice. It developed a system of community-based justice known as *Gacaca* courts to deal with the large number of genocide perpetrators. This system, however, has many critics, and many difficulties remain in the country. Perpetrators and their supporters outside Rwanda spread denial by characterizing the 100 days of genocide as a civil war with equivalent casualties on both sides, rather than what it actually was: a carefully planned genocide under the cover of a civil war.

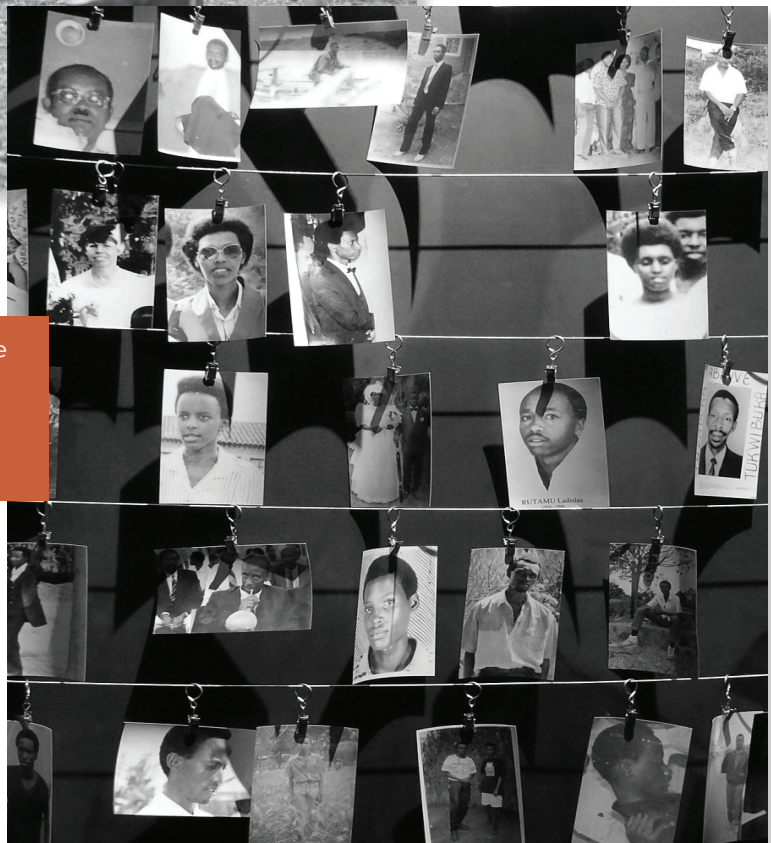


A Hutu man and a Tutsi man visit a cemetery where 6,000 victims of genocide are buried.

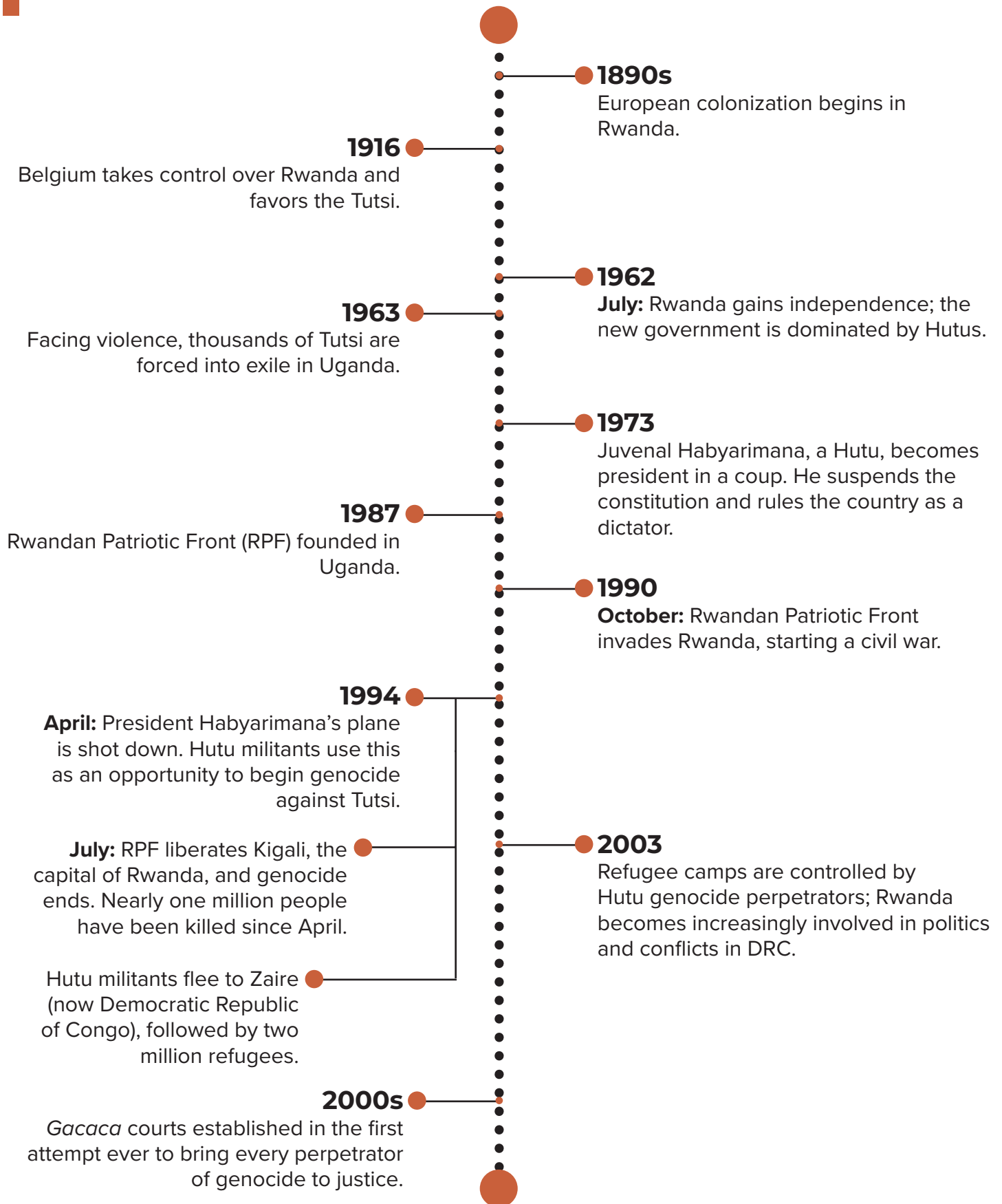
*Credit: Jon Warren/World Vision*

Photographs of genocide victims at the Genocide Memorial Centre in Kigali, Rwanda.

*Credit: Adam Jones, Ph.D (via Wikimedia Commons)*



# GENOCIDE IN RWANDA: TIMELINE



# GENOCIDE IN RWANDA: KEY TERMS

**Gacaca courts (pronounced ga-cha-cha):** community-based court system set up to process the large number of perpetrators following the Rwandan Genocide. Unlike the traditional legal system, the *Gacaca* system focuses on reconciliation and community rebuilding, rather than just jail sentence-based punishment.

**Interahamwe:** Hutu paramilitary group that participated in the genocide. *Interahamwe* translates to “those who attack together.”

**paramilitary:** a force whose function and structure is similar to the military; however, paramilitary groups are not part of the state’s official military forces.

**peacekeepers:** a force, overseen by the United Nations, of soldiers and volunteers who monitor peace processes in areas of conflict. All peacekeepers are members of their own country’s military working for the United Nations, as the UN does not have its own army.

**Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF):** political and military movement formed in Uganda in 1987 with the aim of helping Tutsi refugees return home to Rwanda. The RPF eventually overcame the genocidal government of Rwanda, thus ending the genocide. It is now the ruling political party of Rwanda.









# Appendix

# ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** The Ottoman Empire was multiethnic, with major dividing lines between Turks and Armenians and other minority groups.
- 2 Symbolization:** The Armenians stood out at times because of different ethnic dress and cultural traditions.
- 3 Discrimination:** The Armenian community was subject to different laws than the majority Turkish community, often leaving them politically defenseless.
- 4 Dehumanization:** The Committee of Union and Progress (Young Turks) ran a propaganda campaign that convinced the majority population that Armenians were enemies. Turks often called Armenians *infidels* or *gavours* (non-believers) and *dogs*.
- 5 Organization:** Talaat Pasha and the Committee of Union and Progress were responsible for organizing ways to take Armenian property, planning death marches to relocate them to the desert, and creating the “Special Organization,” killing units made up of violent individuals released from prison.
- 6 Polarization:** Propaganda labeled Armenians as threats to national security who could not be trusted. Stronger legal restrictions were imposed against non-Muslim groups.
- 7 Preparation:** On April 24, 1915, Armenian intellectuals and other leaders were killed. Armenian soldiers were disarmed and put into labor battalions.
- 8 Persecution:** The men were forced into labor and entire villages were deported. Armenian property was confiscated, looted and destroyed.
- 9 Extermination:** Deportation of the Armenian population through death marches into the desert, shootings, beatings by the “Special Organization,” and other violent deaths became policy.
- 10 Denial:** In Turkey today, those who write or teach about the Armenian Genocide are often intimidated, imprisoned, or—in some cases—assassinated. The Turkish government pressures other nations not to acknowledge that the genocide occurred.



# CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE: ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** Before the Khmer Rouge took power, people of many different religions and ethnicities lived in Cambodia. People lived in the cities and the countryside. The population included many intellectuals and educated professionals.
- 2 Symbolization:** Eyeglasses were interpreted to mean that a person could read, was educated, and therefore had been influenced by Western values and capitalism. Religious clothing, like the robes that Buddhist monks wore, also distinguished different groups in Cambodian society.
- 3 Discrimination:** The takeover by the Khmer Rouge happened so quickly that discrimination was sudden and extreme. City dwellers were discriminated against as “new” people by both peasants and Khmer Rouge soldiers. They were given harder work, longer hours, and less food in the work collectives, any one of which would make it less likely to survive.
- 4 Dehumanization:** The Khmer Rouge portrayed anyone that wasn’t fully supportive of their ideas as enemies and criminals. They were seen as foreign and alien to true Cambodian culture and values. With this mindset, KR followers considered it acceptable to eliminate them as a threat.
- 5 Organization:** The KR was very well organized, with several strategies for controlling the population. After its takeover, the KR quickly evacuated the cities by force and moved people as far from their homes as possible. They divided people into categories of “old” and “new” people and forced them to work in collectives in the countryside.
- 6 Polarization:** Those who were not completely supportive of the KR regime were considered the enemy. This included intellectuals, people of faith, urban residents, anyone influenced by the West, ethnic minorities, and those who worked for the previous government. The KR divided the population into “old” people (peasants) and “new” people (city dwellers, etc.).
- 7 Preparation:** The Khmer Rouge emptied cities to separate people from their homes, families, and familiarity. The regime created prisons such as Tuol Sleng (also known as S-21) where victims were questioned, tortured, and killed.
- 8 Persecution:** On the collective farms and work projects, the Khmer Rouge gave “new” people the harder jobs, longer hours, and fewer rations, speeding up their rate of collapse from exhaustion, hunger, and malnutrition. The KR also required Cambodians living in the Eastern Zone to wear a blue scarf, which indicated that they were marked for death.
- 9 Extermination:** The KR murdered their victims through: forced labor (which often led to death by exhaustion and starvation); mass executions; and purges, during which people were sent to prisons to be tortured, interrogated, and executed.
- 10 Denial:** There are many people who argue that the mass killings were a result of the civil war and that no genocide occurred. Some people have argued that the Khmer Rouge actually helped peasants or that death tolls weren’t nearly as high as reported.

# GUATEMALAN GENOCIDE: ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** In Guatemala there are two main groups: the indigenous Mayan peoples, and those of Spanish descent. These distinctions began with Spanish invasion in the 16th century.
- 2 Symbolization:** A racist hierarchy had been part of Guatemalan society since Spanish colonization in the 1500s. The Maya were easy to distinguish because they had a different culture, language, and style of dress.
- 3 Discrimination:** Over centuries, Guatemalans have been trained to believe that the Indigenous population was lesser than those descended from Europeans. Indigenous peoples continue to have limited access to education, health care, and basic services. Their native languages are not officially recognized.
- 4 Dehumanization:** Propaganda equated Mayas with animals. Common messaging claimed that the Maya would 'infect' the population with communism and overpower the government.
- 5 Organization:** The government trained paramilitary 'death squads' to kill Maya. Propaganda was spread that the Maya were planning to revolt and take over the government.
- 6 Polarization:** The government claimed that Mayans were going to overthrow the regime and that extreme measures were needed to protect the country.
- 7 Preparation:** The government planned "Operation Sofia," a genocidal operation meant to eliminate Mayan communities. It made lists of Mayan leaders to eliminate.
- 8 Persecution:** The government made lists of people to kill. It continued a propaganda campaign to dehumanize the Maya. It also started to question people's loyalty in public.
- 9 Extermination:** From 1982-1983, the army destroyed 626 villages, killed approximately 80,000 people and displaced 1.5 million more. The army used a "scorched earth" policy, ruining water supplies, burning villages, and violating sacred and cultural places.
- 10 Denial:** Perpetrators denied they did anything wrong and claimed the killing was part of civil war, with atrocities on both sides. The government blocked all investigations until they were driven from power.

# THE HOLOCAUST: ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** Antisemitism has a long history throughout Europe. Jews were often viewed as distinct from the rest of the German population.
- 2 Symbolization:** The Nazi regime used propaganda to reinforce perceived differences between Jews and Germans. Later, Jews had 'J's stamped in their passports, were forced to add middle names of 'Sara' or 'Israel,' and in some places were made to wear yellow Stars of David.
- 3 Discrimination:** Beginning in 1933, the Nazis adopted many laws to take away basic rights from Jews, including the right to work in certain professions and the right to marry "Aryans." These laws also took away German citizenship from Jews.
- 4 Dehumanization:** Propaganda promoted the idea that Jews were parasites, vermin, and a disease "infecting" the German nation. Many laws prohibited Jews from doing things generally allowed to all people: freedom to marry and work, freedom to travel without fear of discrimination (Js on passports), and freedom to self-identify (forced middle names).
- 5 Organization:** Two major components of organization for the genocide were the formation of the SS/Gestapo and the creation of concentration and extermination camps. The Gestapo worked as a political police force, superseding the regular civilian police to enforce Nazi laws. The SS ran the concentration camp system.
- 6 Polarization:** One of the first things the Nazis did after coming to power was to eliminate communists and the moderate socialist political leaders. Propaganda increasingly forced people into defining themselves as either German or Jew.
- 7 Preparation:** The Nazis prepared for genocide. They drew up detailed plans and built death camps. They slowly tested new (and more efficient) methods of oppression: arrest, imprisonment in ghettos, death by forced labor, and eventually death by poisonous gas.
- 8 Persecution:** Jews and others were stripped of citizenship. They were harassed and persecuted by the SS, which enforced Nazi racial laws. Some Jews were killed by their neighbors in villages, others were forced into ghettos across Europe.
- 9 Extermination:** Nazis and their collaborators used many methods to kill their victims. Many Jews died in ghettos, usually from starvation, overcrowding, disease, or brutality. Others were murdered by the *Einsatzgruppen*, mobile killing units that rounded up people in their towns and shot them in mass graves. Millions of victims were killed in concentration and extermination camps. Towards the end of the war, victims were also killed on death marches.
- 10 Denial:** In the last days before liberation, Nazis used death marches and mass shootings to kill remaining witnesses to the genocide. Despite being very well-documented, many people (driven by antisemitism) deny the Holocaust, either by minimizing its death toll or by stating that it did not happen at all.

# NATIVE AMERICAN GENOCIDE:

## ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** As soon as European colonization in (what is now) the United States began, settlers made distinctions between themselves and the Indigenous inhabitants of the land. The colonists referred to Native Americans as “reds,” indicating that they were different because of the color of their skin.
- 2 Symbolization:** Not only did the Native Americans look and dress differently than the European colonizers, but they also had different languages, customs, and religious practices.
- 3 Discrimination:** Despite adopting European customs, the law continued to discriminate against Cherokees and other Indigenous groups, including banning them from testifying against whites or publicly dissenting (protesting) their conditions.
- 4 Dehumanization:** Most Europeans settlers believed that they were superior to Indigenous peoples and often described people from Native tribes as savages, barbarians, or wild animals.
- 5 Organization:** In 1829, gold was discovered in Cherokee territory and a year later, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. Under this act, the U.S. president could initiate treaties with Native American tribes that took tribal lands in the east in exchange for land in the west.
- 6 Polarization:** Some tribes supported Great Britain during the Revolutionary War, so after the United States won independence, Indigenous peoples were considered traitors regardless of whether they had supported the British or not.
- 7 Preparation:** Government officials armed militias and warned settler populations that if they did not kill the Indigenous peoples first, the Indigenous peoples would kill them.
- 8 Persecution:** The removal process of Indigenous peoples from their homelands in the east was initially voluntary, but when tribes refused to leave (including the Cherokees), the government started removing them by force.
- 9 Extermination:** The forced removal—or ethnic cleansing—of the Cherokees and other tribes is often referred to as the Trail of Tears. Approximately 46,000 Native Americans were forced from their homelands in this way and close to 4,000 Cherokees died, most from cold, disease, or starvation. More than 6,000 Native Americans from other tribes also died on forced westward marches.
- 10 Denial:** There are many people today who believe that the U.S. government did not pursue a policy of genocide and who work to leave the history of Indigenous genocide out of history textbooks.

# GENOCIDE IN RWANDA: ANSWER KEY

- 1 Classification:** A majority of Rwandan people were classified as either Hutu or Tutsi. The distinction was primarily made between being a farmer and a cattle herder. After colonization, ethnic identity cards made it impossible to switch between groups.
- 2 Symbolization:** European colonists determined who belonged to which group based on supposed “racial” traits. These traits became symbols of membership in the different groups, as well as the ethnic identity cards every person was required to carry.
- 3 Discrimination:** Discrimination took many forms. The colonial administrations favored Tutsis, and this caused animosity among Hutu. After Rwanda gained independence and a Hutu majority gained power, Hutu extremists used violence to force Tutsis out of Rwanda.
- 4 Dehumanization:** Hutu power groups and propaganda spread by radio and newspapers called Tutsis cockroaches and snakes.
- 5 Organization:** Hutu political leaders organized an intensive propaganda campaign to dehumanize, delegitimize, and increase bigotry against Tutsis. They created local *Interahamwe* militia groups and planned code words to signal when killing would begin. They also ordered and distributed machetes.
- 6 Polarization:** Propaganda in hate radio and newspapers convinced people that Tutsis were cockroaches. They also worked to convince average Hutus that a moderate position could not be taken on this issue. Moderate officials and community leaders were assassinated.
- 7 Preparation:** Radio signals (that were planned in advance) announced when the killing would start. Leaders distributed machetes to Hutus and planned roadblocks to capture their victims.
- 8 Persecution:** Hutu leaders drew up and shared death lists. People fled to churches and other community venues out of fear; many were turned away.
- 9 Extermination:** Between 800,000 and 1.1 million Tutsi and moderate Hutus were killed in 100 days. Most were killed by machete and clubs. The militias initiated a campaign of rape to torture and spread HIV, ensuring that the legacy of genocide would continue long into the future.
- 10 Denial:** Perpetrators and their supporters who fled the country after the genocide spread denial by saying the killing were the result of the civil war and not a carefully planned genocide. Creating this equivalency makes it seem as if both sides suffered equally and the goals of violence were the same.

# EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

## Common Core Standards (9-10)

### Reading Informational Text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

### Writing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### Speaking and Listening

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

### History/Social Studies

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

## Other Relevant Standards (California)

### **UCLA National World History Standards**

2D: The student understands major sources of tension and conflict in the contemporary world and efforts that have been made to address them. Therefore, the student is able to: Analyze the causes, consequences, and moral implications for the world community of mass killings or famines in such places as Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

### **CA History Content Standards**

10.5.5: Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government's actions against Armenian citizens.

10.8.5 Analyze the Nazi policy of pursuing racial purity, especially against the European Jews; its transformation into the Final Solution; and the Holocaust

# ONLINE RESOURCES

## ■ Armenian Genocide

- **Armenian National Institute**  
[armenian-genocide.org](http://armenian-genocide.org)  
Organization dedicated to the study, research, and affirmation of the Armenian Genocide.
- **Genocide Education Project (GenEd)**  
[genocideeducation.org](http://genocideeducation.org)  
Nonprofit organization assisting educators in teaching about human rights and genocide, particularly the Armenian Genocide, as the predecessor of the pattern of genocides that followed. The organization develops instructional materials and provides teaching workshops, consultation and presentations.

## ■ Cambodian Genocide

- **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: Country Case Studies - Cambodia**  
[ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/cambodia](http://ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/cambodia)  
History of the Cambodian Genocide. USHMM conducts its work on genocide and genocide prevention through the Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide.
- **World Without Genocide: The Cambodian Genocide**  
[worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/cambodia](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/cambodia)  
Overview of the Cambodian Genocide. World Without Genocide works to prevent genocide by combating racism and prejudice.

## ■ Guatemalan Genocide

- **Encyclopedia.com: Mayan Genocide in Guatemala**  
[encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mayan-genocide-guatemala](http://encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mayan-genocide-guatemala)  
Detailed overview of the genocide against the Mayans of Guatemala.
- **USC Shoah Foundation: What is the Guatemalan Genocide?**  
[sfi.usc.edu/video/what-guatemalan-genocide](http://sfi.usc.edu/video/what-guatemalan-genocide)  
Brief overview video of the Guatemalan Genocide. The USC Shoah Foundation's mission is to develop empathy, understanding, and respect through testimony.



## ■ The Holocaust

- **Holocaust Encyclopedia (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)**  
[encyclopedia.ushmm.org](https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org)  
Encyclopedia with entries on nearly all aspects of the Holocaust. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website is one of the world's leading online authorities about the Holocaust.
- **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)**  
[holocaustremembrance.com](https://holocaustremembrance.com)  
The IHRA unites governments and experts to strengthen, advance, and promote Holocaust education, remembrance, and research worldwide.

## ■ Genocide of Native Americans

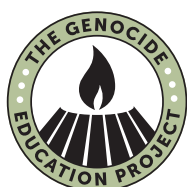
- **Encyclopedia Britannica: Trail of Tears**  
[britannica.com/event/trail-of-tears](https://britannica.com/event/trail-of-tears)  
Detailed overview of the Trail of Tears, the forced relocation of several Native American tribes during the 1830s.
- **World Without Genocide: Native Americans**  
[worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/american-indian](https://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/american-indian)  
Overview of the genocide of Native Americans in what is now the United States. Includes information on the twentieth century and current issues facing Indigenous communities.

## ■ Genocide in Rwanda

- **Encyclopedia Britannica: Rwandan Genocide of 1994**  
[britannica.com/event/Rwanda-genocide-of-1994](https://britannica.com/event/Rwanda-genocide-of-1994)  
Detailed overview of the genocide in Rwanda.
- **Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations**  
[un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda](https://un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda)  
Overview of the genocide in Rwanda, including survivor testimonies.

# The Stages of Genocide

## A Toolkit for Educators



### **The Genocide Education Project**

51 Commonwealth Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94118  
(415) 264-4203  
[GenocideEducation.org](http://GenocideEducation.org)



### **Woven Teaching**

1660 Bush Street, Ste 300  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
[WovenTeaching.org](http://WovenTeaching.org)

