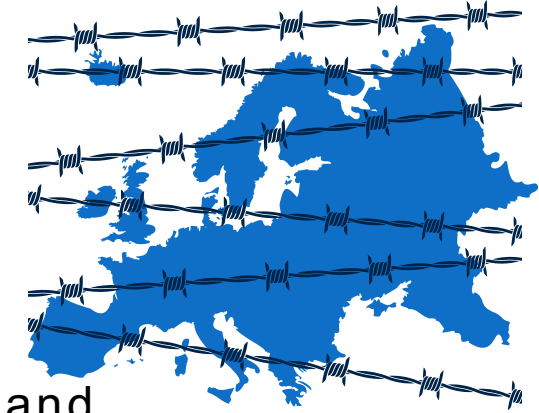




the **HOLOCAUST**

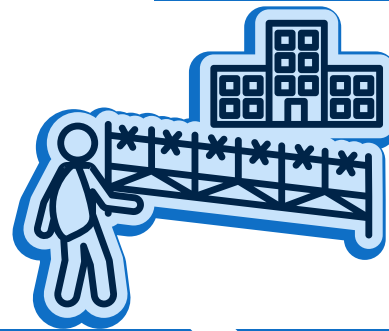
THE HOLOCAUST



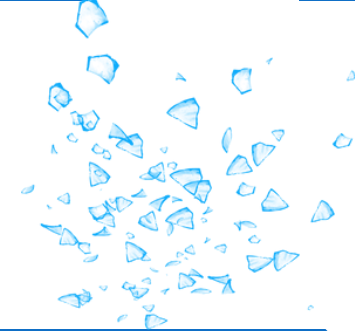
3.10 EXPLORE the significance of genocide, including the causes, course and consequences of the Holocaust



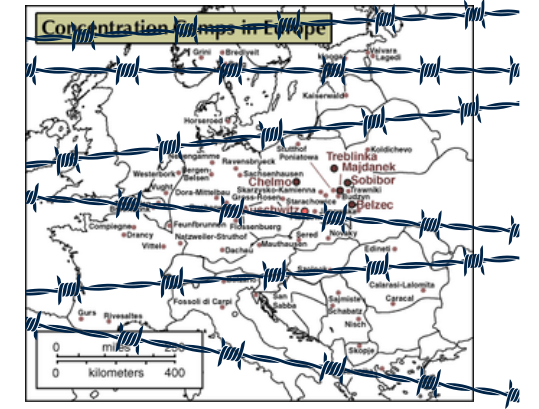
The first **Concentration Camp** is opened at **Dachau**.



Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass); hundreds of Jewish properties and business are destroyed.



The Final Solution is discussed, and actions are taken to implement the plan.



Adolf Hitler becomes the **Chancellor of Germany**.



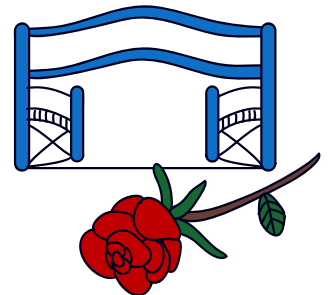
The Nuremberg Laws are put in place, stripping Jews of numerous rights.



Establishment of **Auschwitz II (Birkenau)** for the extermination of "**undesirables**"



Auschwitz is liberated by the **Soviet Red Army**



Learning Outcomes

3.10 EXPLORE the significance of genocide, including the causes, course and consequences of the **Holocaust**.



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2024 Mock Exam Topics

- **Life in the 1960s/The Cold War**
- The Holocaust
- World Wars
- Life in Communist Russia/Fascist Italy/Nazi Germany

- The 1798 Rebellion
- The American/French Revolution
- The Struggle for Irish Independence
- Rise of Nationalism and Unionism

- The Historian/The Archaeologist
- The Renaissance
- The Age of Exploration
- The Middle Ages
- The Reformation



Introduction

Throughout history, there have been many examples of genocide, the attempt to eliminate entire peoples, or religious or ethnic groups. The most studied example is the Holocaust, in which Hitler and the Nazis aimed to systematically wipe out the entire European population of Jewish people. In this chapter, you will learn about this horrific period of history and look at other examples of genocide: those of Native Americans, the people of Armenia, Cambodia and Rwanda.



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What is Genocide?

Tens of millions of men, women and children have lost their lives to genocide or mass atrocities over the last few centuries. **Genocide** is defined as “the deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.” Some of these attempts have been backed and organised by governments while others have seemed spontaneous. All of them began with the process of **dehumanisation** – treating people as they were (are) somehow less than human.

According to the United Nations, '*Genocide is a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups*' and '*is a crime under international law.... whether the crime is committed on religious, racial, political or any other grounds*'.



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26.1: GENOCIDES BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST

Genocides of Native Americans

Numerous atrocities (severe crimes) have been committed against Native Americans over several centuries. When European explorers first arrived in modern day USA, it is estimated **10 million Native Americans** were living there. By the **early 20th Century**, that number had fallen to **under 300,000**.

European expansion into North America directly led to the destruction of Native American livelihoods. **Unfamiliar diseases** such as measles, influenza, and whooping cough.

Malnutrition as tribes were forced from their traditional land and food sources. Tribal villages were **ambushed** during the gold rushes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Several **wars** broke out between native tribes and settlers.

In modern-day USA, laws exist to protect some 500 tribes that survived. Each tribe has a distinct culture, way of life and history. Despite these laws in place, Native Americans still face major challenges such as **poverty, cultural losses** and **discrimination**.



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Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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The Armenian Genocide

In **1915**, there were **two million Armenians** living within the multicultural but declining **Ottoman Empire**. These Armenians were mostly **Christian**. The Ottoman Empire lost all of its European territory in the **Balkan Wars** of **1912-1913**, creating instability amongst nationalist groups.

During World War I, the **Turkish government** attempted to unify all the Turkish people by creating a new empire with one language and one religion. The Armenian people did not belong to the idea of the Turkish Empire. Turkish military leaders **accused** the Armenians of being traitors, claiming they were siding with their fellow Christians: Russia, the enemy. From 1915 to 1923, an **estimated 1.5 million ethnic Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks** were murdered. The Turks used a combination of **massacres, forced deportation, death marches** into the Syrian Desert, disease and brutality in the **concentration camps**. The Turks **also demolished all traces of Armenian cultural heritage**, including masterpieces of architecture and remarkable libraries/archives.

Today, numerous organisations and nations (including Ireland) recognise this event as the **'Armenian Genocide'**. **It is considered the first genocide of the twentieth century.** However, it has not yet been acknowledged as such by the Turkish government.

When there are any form of genocide, ethnic cleansing or mass massacre we see a pattern that goes with it.

Where else have you seen a pattern where a group of people have been blamed or outed as the root of the problems in a country or society?



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Checkpoint pg. 346 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Explain the terms genocide and dehumanisation.
2. How were so many Native Americans killed in the nineteenth century?
3. Why were the Armenians targeted by the Turkish state?
4. How were they slaughtered?



Checkpoint pg. 346 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Genocide: the attempt to eliminate entire peoples or religious or ethnic groups;
Dehumanisation: treating people as though they were somehow less than human.
2. Unfamiliar European diseases such as measles, whooping cough and influenza; malnutrition resulting from tribes being driven from their land and traditional food sources; during the Gold Rush villages were ambushed and their people slaughtered; several wars broke out between tribes and settlers.
3. The Armenians were targeted by the Turks because the government was trying to unify all the Turkish people in a new state with one religion and one language. Armenians were Christian and didn't belong within the new concept of a Turkish state. They were accused of siding with Turkey's enemy, fellow Christian state Russia, and called traitors.
4. The Armenians were slaughtered in a combination of massacres, forced deportations, death marches into the Syrian desert and also by disease or brutality in concentration camps.



26.2: *THE HOLOCAUST*



Diagram taken from *Artefact*, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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Anti-Semitism

The **Holocaust** (**Shoah** in Hebrew, meaning “catastrophe”) is one of the most significant atrocities in history. The first clear examples of anti-Jewish sentiment can be traced to the **3rd century BCE** to Alexandria, Egypt and Ancient Greece. This became the norm throughout Europe during **First Crusades (1096–1099)**. Centuries of anti-Semitism were heightened by Nazi beliefs about their own racial purity and the supposed inferiority of the Jewish people. As we covered in Life In Fascist Germany, Hitler publicly declared the Jews a threat to Germany in ***Mein Kampf***.

As Hitler and the Nazi Party rose to power, Jews came under increasing threat. The **Nuremberg Laws (1935)** removed the rights from Jews, including their right to vote, own property, hold certain jobs, and to marry non-Jewish citizens. Nazis believed that Germans and other Nordic people were the master race (**Aryans**). Jews were made to wear the **Star of David** to mark them out as Jews.

The **Night of the Broken Glass (Kristallnacht)** resulted in the destruction of Jewish property and 100 Jews were killed. Others were sent to **concentration camps** or fled the country (**Albert Einstein**). Following Kristallnacht in 1938, Jews were **segregated** from the general community and **persecuted**. Ultimately, the Nazis aimed to exterminated over **eight million Jews** living in Nazi-occupied Europe.



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Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))

Jewish Ghettos

After the outbreak of World War II, life became even harder for the Jews. More than **400 ghettos** were set up to isolate Jews from the non-Jewish population. A **ghetto** is a part of a city where a minority group lives, due to social, legal or economic pressure. When Jewish people were transferred to the ghetto, their homes and belongings were taken over.

The ghettos were closed off by high walls and barbed wired fences while the gates were guarded. Food and fuel shortages led to a high mortality rate, along with overcrowding and unsanitary conditions led to many outbreaks of diseases.

The first ghetto was set up in **Lodz, Poland** on **8th February 1940**. Approximately, 155,000 Jews (1/3 of the of the city's total population) were forced to relocate there and made to work in the factories. However, the ghettos were only a temporary solution. They served as round-up centres – made it easier to control the Jewish population and later put them on trains for “resettlement”.



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Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))

The Einsatzgruppen and the Final Solution

From 1941, as the German army advanced eastward, it was followed by the **Einsatzgruppen**. This group were special mobile killing squads that executed 'anti-German elements' in the occupied territories. They killed Jews, local resistance fighters, government officials and others. Mass executions took place in forests or other isolated areas. Senior officers noted that this method (a) badly affected their soldier's mental health and (b) was not efficient enough.

In 1942, the Nazis formulated their official plan to exterminate the Jewish population of Europe. This was called "**The Final Solution**". It was agreed at a conference lasting less than two hours in the Wannsee suburb of Berlin on 20th January 1942. Fifteen senior Nazi and German government members were present. **Heinrich Himmler** was placed in charge of this secret policy. Approximately **11 million Jews** lived in wider Europe at the time. The Nazis began to empty the ghettos by deporting the Jewish population to **concentration camps**. Over 450,000 Jews once lived in the Warsaw ghetto. By the summer of 1943, it is estimated that 395,000 had either died or had been deported to the camps.



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Checkpoint pg. 315 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Explain the terms; Holocaust and ghetto.
2. How did the Nazis target the Jewish people before World War II?
3. How many Jews lived in Nazi-occupied Europe?
4. Describe what happened on *Kristallnacht*.
5. What were the Einsatzgruppen?
6. What was decided at the Wannsee Conference?



Concentration Camps

Concentration camps had been in use by the Nazis since 1933; at first they were **forced labour camps**. The first was **Dachau** in Germany. Germany, Poland, Austria, Latvia, the USSR, France, Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands all contained concentration camps. From 1942, **special extermination camps** were built – all outside Germany. Among these were **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, **Majdanek**, **Chelmno** and **Treblinka**. There were 28 main concentration camps in total; 22 labour camps and 6 extermination camps. Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland would become the largest of the extermination camps, consisting of 40 sub-camps.



- Arbeitsdorf
- Auschwitz-Birkenau**
- Bergen-Belsen
- Belzec**
- Buchenwald
- Chelmno**
- Dachau
- Flossenburg
- Gross-Rosen
- Herzogenbusch
- Hinzert
- Kaiserwald
- Kauen
- Kraków-Plaszów
- Majdanek**
- Mauthausen
- Mittlebau-Dora
- Natzweiler-Struthof
- Neuengamme
- Niederhagen
- Ravensbruck
- Sachsenhausen
- Sobibor**
- Stutthof
- Treblinka**
- Vaivara
- Warsaw





Life and Death in the Concentration Camps

Jews from all Nazi-occupied Europe were transported to the camps on trains where they would be told to work. Several camps had signs reading “**Arbeit macht frei**” (*work makes one free*). Anyone who arrived unwell or unable to work were separated from the rest and killed immediately.

Women, men and children were separated. The camps were set up to **remove a person’s identity** – both to diminish fighting spirit amongst the prisoners and to allow soldiers to not think of them as human. **Prisoners’ heads were shaved and a number was tattooed on their forearm.** They were herded into crowded barracks. Many able-bodied Jews worked until they died of **disease, starved** or were **murdered** while others died due to the harsh conditions and living conditions.

Some prisoners – especially twins – were used for **medical experiments** without their consent. An SS physician named **Josef Mengele** carried out such experiments in Auschwitz.

In the six extermination camps, some prisoners were shot but the majority were killed in large fake shower units which were actually **gas chambers**. **Zyklon B** (a cyanide poison) or **carbon monoxide** gases were used. Any gold fillings in their teeth was extracted and their bodies were cremated by other prisoners. The Nazis had first used the gas years earlier to kill thousand of Germans with physical or intellectual disabilities. As the tide of the war started to turn in favour of the Allies, the deportation to the camps, executions and gassings all accelerated because Hitler wanted to kill as many Jews while he could. While the Allies closed in, the SS destroyed as much evidence as they could and forced prisoners from the camps in death marches. Many died due to starvation or harsh weather while others were executed when they collapsed or fell behind.







Oskar Schindler, 1908-1974



Oskar Schindler was born in Moravia, Austria-Hungary (now in Czechia). Schindler grew up in the Sudetenland but was ethnically German. In 1935 he joined the pro-Nazi Sudeten German Party and in 1939 he joined the Nazi Party. He leased a formerly Jewish-owned enamelware factory in Krakow, Poland. By 1942 nearly half of the workers at the plant were Jewish. Helped by his wife and staff and using his German connections, he sheltered approximately 1,200 Jews from deportation by employing them in his factories, which supplied the German army during World War II. By the end of the war, Schindler had spent his entire fortune on bribes for officials and on supplies for his employees. In 1962 he was named Righteous Among the Nations - an award recognising non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust - by Yad Vashem, Israel's official Holocaust memorial. He died aged 66 and was buried in the Catholic cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

The liberation of the camps

The **Soviet soldiers** were the first Allies to encounter the camps. Their advance westward was so rapid that the Nazis had no time to dismantle the Madjanek camp in eastern Poland. The Soviets arrived on 23rd July 1944, finding the camp nearly intact. **Crematorium ovens, mass graves and unburied piles of corpses** were found in many camps. On **27th January 1945**, they entered Auschwitz to find thousands of prisoners dying and sick. Medics tried to save the remaining prisoners but many were too weak to digest food – half of those discovered died days after discovery.

British, Canadian, American and French troops were liberated concentration camps. The Americans liberated Buchenwald and Dachau while the British liberated Bergen-Belsen (only a few weeks after the death of Anne Frank). By May 1945, all concentration camps had been liberated. Reports of these atrocities shocked the world.

*The 27th January is the **International Holocaust Remembrance Day** to commemorate the 6 million Jews and the other millions of victims of the Nazi regime and its collaborators.*



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Mary Elmes, 1908-2002



Mary Elmes was born in Cork, Ireland. She studied French and Spanish literature at Trinity College Dublin. In February 1937, Elmes joined the University of London Ambulance Unit and was sent to a children's hospital in Almeria during the Spanish Civil War. In 1942 Elmes, with help from colleagues, rescued dozens of children from Vichy France, taking them to safe houses or helping them to flee the country. Elmes hid many children in the boot of her car and drove them to safety. She aided others by securing documents that allowed them to escape through the undercover network in Vichy France. Early in 1943, Elmes was arrested on suspicion of aiding the escape of Jews and was imprisoned in Toulouse. She was later moved to the Fresnes Prison run by the Gestapo near Paris, where she spent six months. After World War II, Elmes was awarded the Legion of Honour (then the highest civilian award in France), which she refused to accept because it brought unwanted attention for her actions. In 2013, she was posthumously recognised by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. She is the only Irish person to hold the honour, which is given to non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during World War II. On the 9th July 2019 Cork City Council named a new pedestrian bridge in honour of Mary Elmes.

The Aftermath of the Holocaust

It is estimated that **six million Jews** were murdered in the Holocaust – **one million in Auschwitz alone**. Millions of others were killed as well including (but not limited to): 2.5 million Soviet prisoners of war; 2 million Poles and 500,000 Roma. Generations were wiped out and many loved ones' fates would never be known. Many Jewish survivors of the camps left Europe for good after the war and **emigrated**. They moved to the US, Canada or South Africa. In 1948, the new Jewish state of **Israel** was founded in Palestine and today its Jewish population numbers 6.5 million. For many, the sense of a shared Jewish identity became stronger in the wake of the terrible collective trauma and loss that was the Holocaust.

Consequences of the Holocaust

The mass murder of six million Jews

The mass murder of Slavic people, Roma, LGBT+ people, prisoners of wars and people with disabilities.

Jewish emigration to the US, Canada, France and South Africa

Strengthening of a shared Jewish identity.



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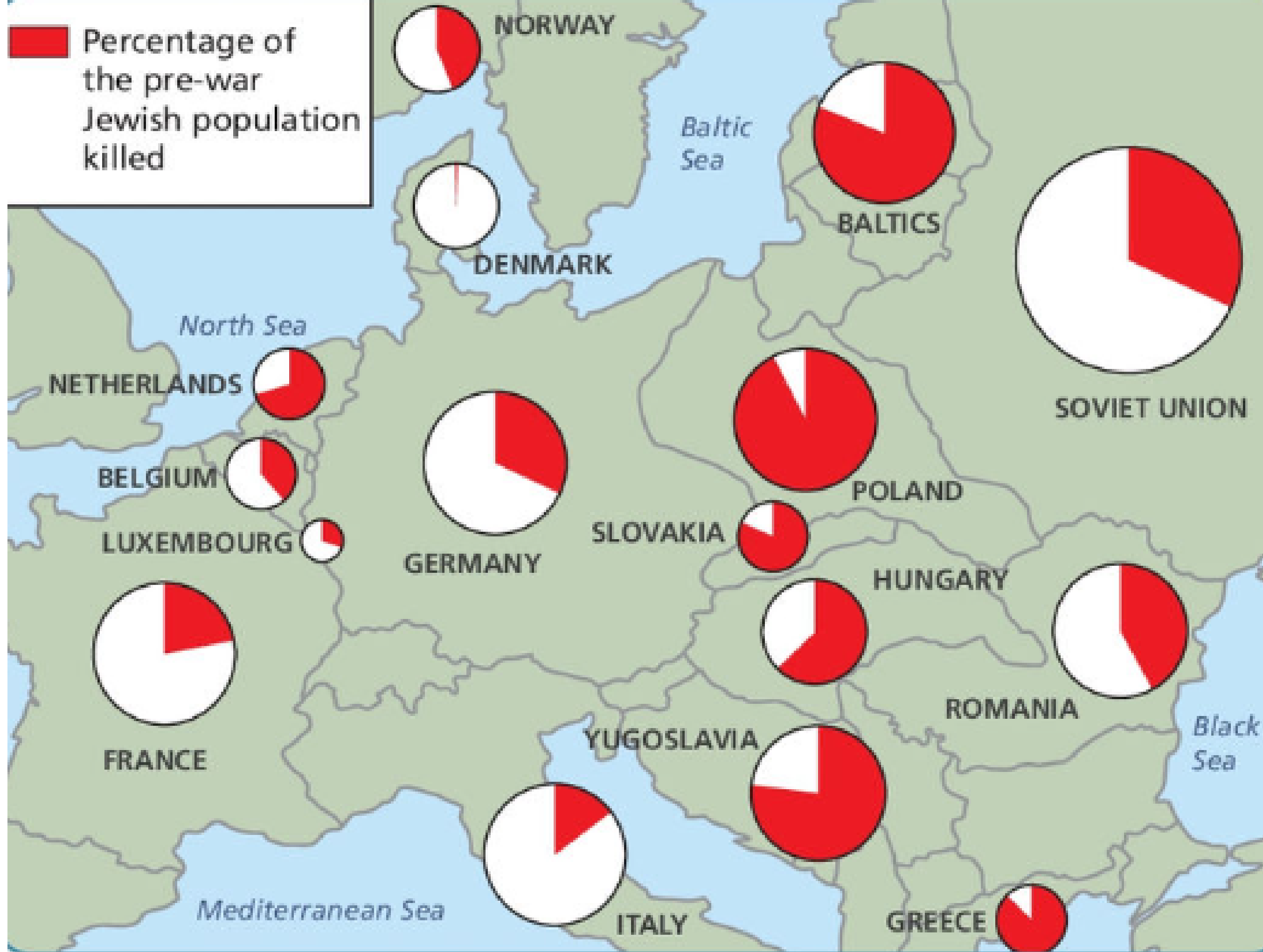


Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



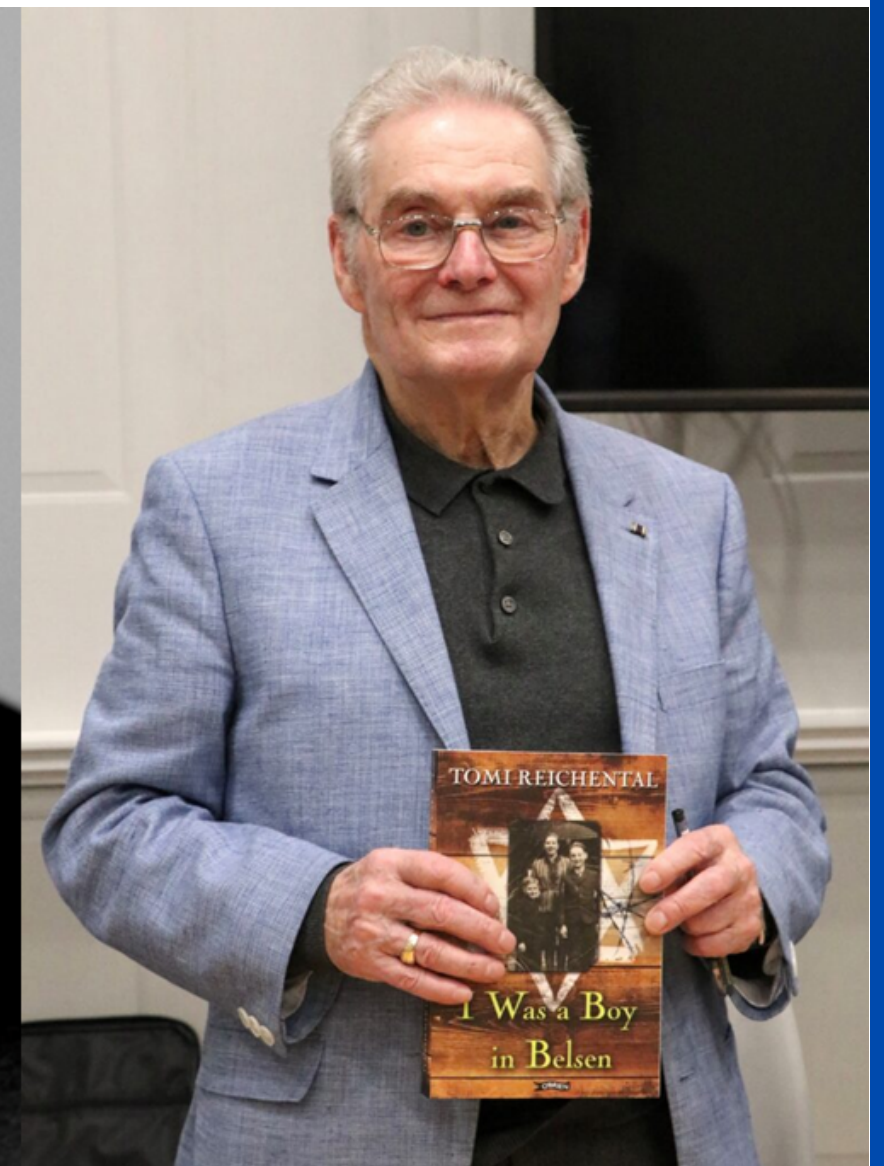
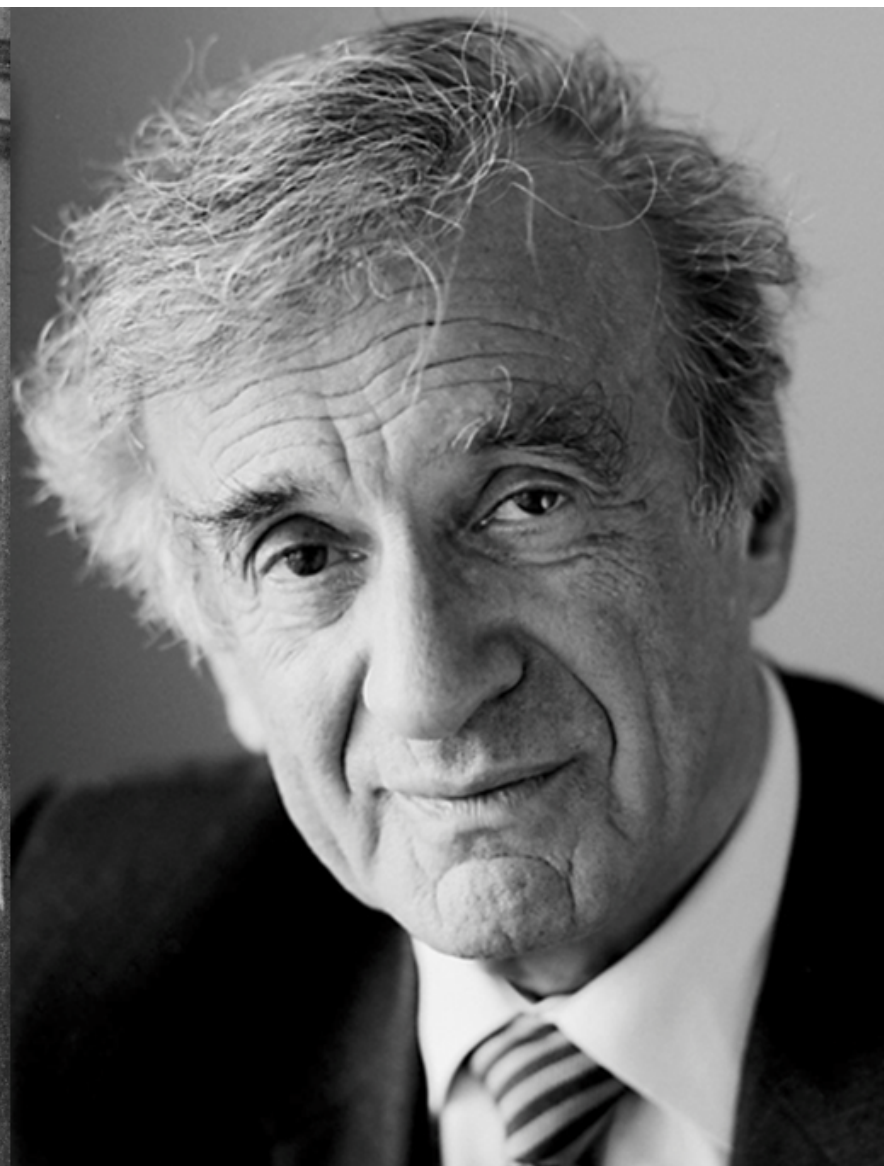
Checkpoint pg. 354 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. What were concentration camps? Name four and the countries where they were located.
2. What happened to people in the concentration camps?
3. Describe the liberation of the camps.
4. What were the results of the Holocaust?
5. After World War II, Jewish people strove to establish the state of Israel. Why do you think they did this?



Famous Jews from the Holocaust

- Anne Frank – died in 1945
- Elie Wiesel – died in 2016
- Tomi Reichental – moved in Ireland in 1959



26.3.3 GENOCIDES AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

The Crime of Genocide

In the decades since the Holocaust, the world has seen many more acts of genocide, for example in Cambodia and Rwanda. The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was passed in 1948; however, the international community has repeatedly failed to prevent it.

Presently, there are 42 recognised genocides throughout history, 3 of which are still ongoing. These include:

- The Genocide of Aboriginals in Tasmania (1820s-1832) and Australia (1840-1897)
- Assyrian genocide - Ottoman Empire (1915-1919)
- Holodomor - Ukraine (1932-1933)
- Chetniks' Genocide of Bosniaks and Croats - Yugoslavia (1941-1945)
- Bosnian Genocide - Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995)
- Darfur genocide - Darfur, Sudan (2003-Present)
- Uyghur genocide - Xinjiang, China (2014-Present)
- Rohingya genocide - Rakhine State, Myanmar (2016-Present)



The Cambodian Genocide

In 1975, the Cambodian government was overthrown by **Pol Pot** and the **Khmer Rouge**, followers of the **Communist Party of Kampuchea**. Their idealised vision of their country was based on the **country's "pure" peasant past**. They **closed the country** to the outside world, forced city dwellers to move to **collective farms**, **outlawed all religions** and **brutally targeted** anyone who was **educated** or **suspected of opposing the new regime**. In addition, the **Khmer Rouge** aimed to **eliminate ethnic minorities** such as the **ethnic Vietnamese**, **Thai** and **Chinese people** as well as the **Muslim Cham people**.

Starvation and **disease** killed great numbers of people at the forced-labour farms. **Torture** was also widespread. It is claimed that 17,000 people passed through the notorious Tuol Sleng prison and only seven survived. As more and more people were sent to prison, the Khmer Rouge switched to a system of '**killing fields**' – mass executions at hundreds of sites all across Cambodia. As well as the people mentioned previously, the Khmer Rouge also executed people who could no longer work or make the journey to the camps, the families of anyone deemed 'undesirable' and at least 25,000 Buddhist monks.

In the years 1975 to 1979, between **1.7 and 3 million Cambodians** died in the Khmer Rouge's killing fields roughly one-quarter of the population.



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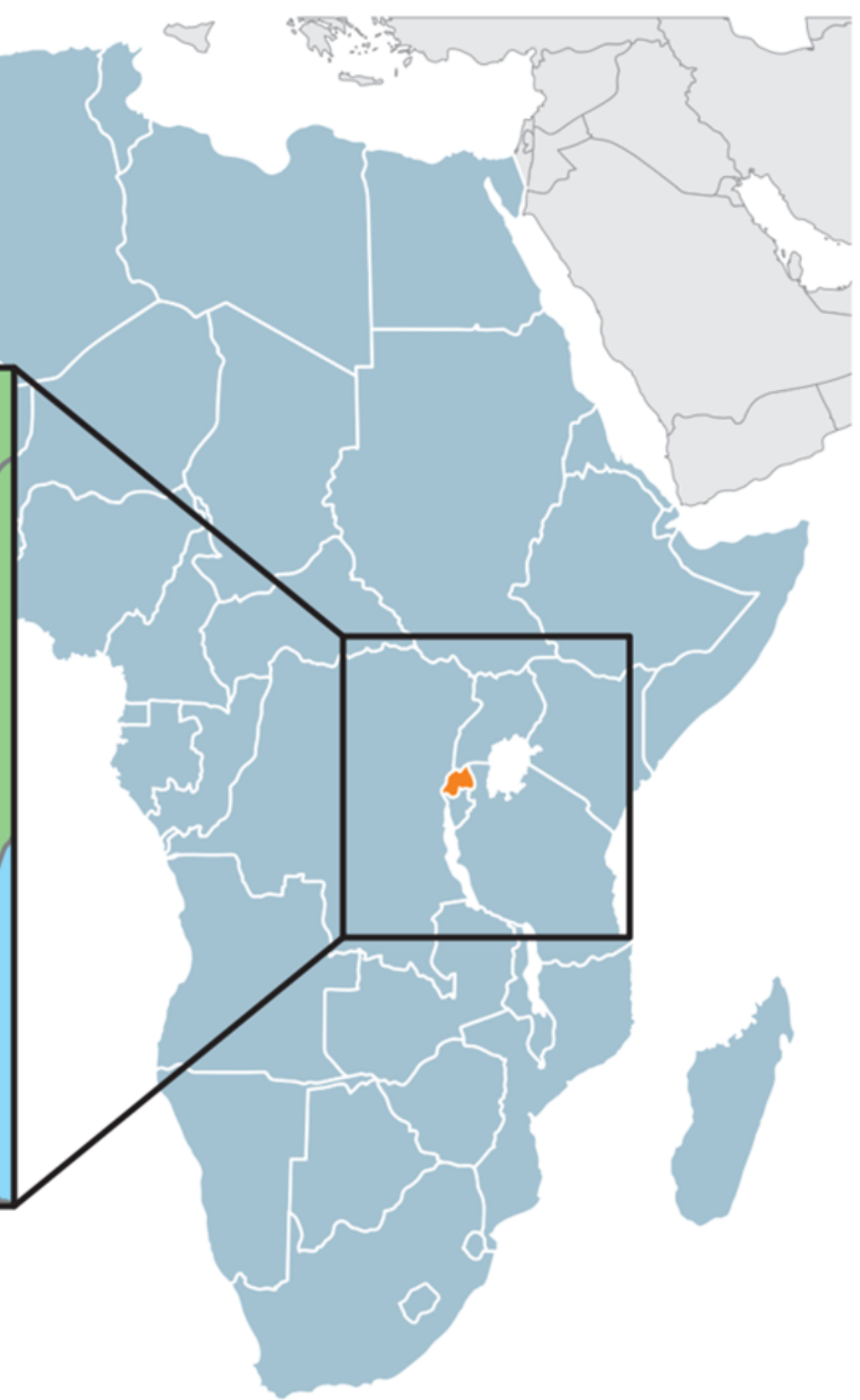
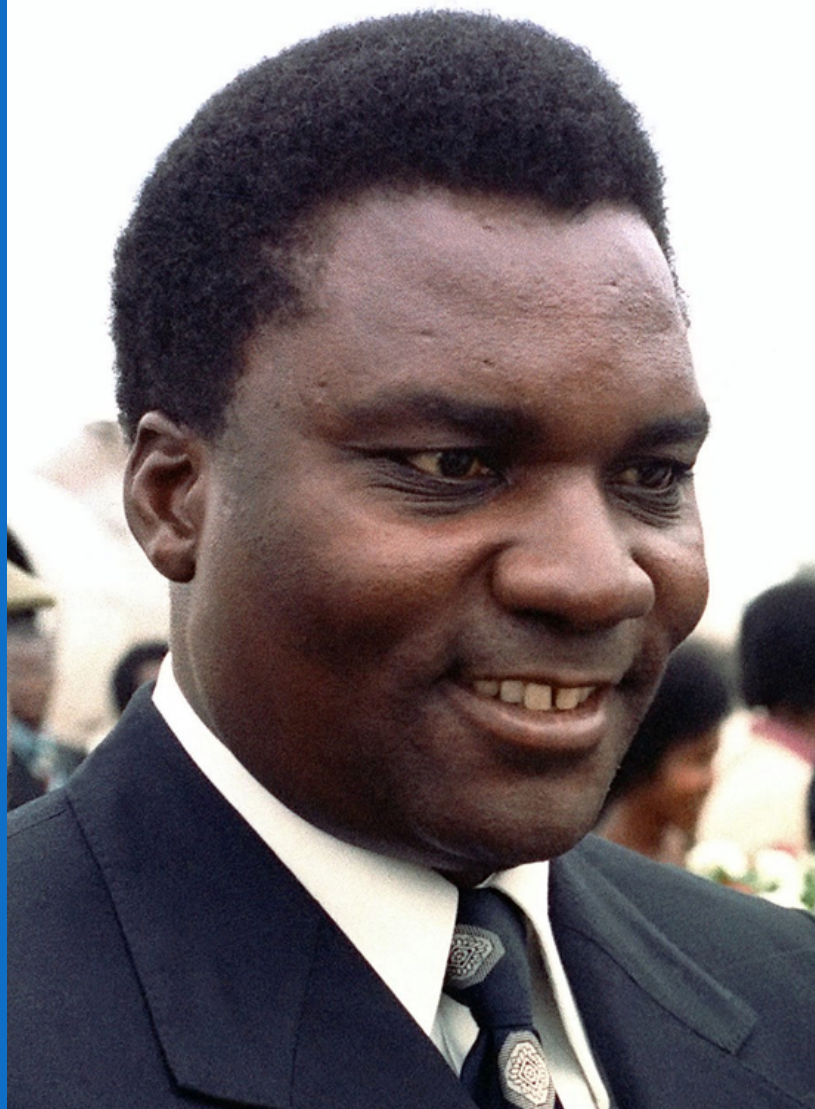
The Rwanda Genocide

In the 1990s, Rwanda was a small agricultural country with the highest population density in Africa. About 85% of its population was ethnically **Hutu**; the rest was **Tutsi**, along with a small number of **Twa** (the original inhabitants of Rwanda). Tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi had developed over time and had led to civil war. A power-sharing agreement had angered Hutu extremists. Evidence exists of planning, weapons purchase and dehumanising propaganda (especially radio broadcasts) in the early 1990s.

Rwanda President **Juvénal Habyarimana**, a Hutu, was killed when his plane was shot down on the 6th April 1994. Responsibility for this is still unknown. Hutu extremists began the Rwandan Genocide in the capital city, Kigali, the next day. Among the first victims were the Hutu Prime Minister **Agathe Uwilingiyimana** and 10 Belgian peacekeepers. Mass killings of Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Kigali quickly spread to the rest of Rwanda. Officials rewarded killers with food, drink, drugs and money.



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The Rwanda Genocide

By the time the **Rwandan Patriotic Front**, led by **Paul Kagame**, gained control through a military offensive in early July, hundreds of thousands of Rwandans had been slaughtered. Over 90% of these were Tutsi, representing around two-thirds of the Tutsi population. Another two million refugees (mainly Hutus) had fled to refugee camps in the Congo and other neighbouring countries. A coalition government was set up, with **Pasteur Bizimungu** (a Hutu) as President and **Paul Kagame** (a Tutsi) as Vice President and Minister for Defence. Kagame has now been President since 2000.

In October 1994, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was established to hold the **Rwandan Genocide trials**. This was the first international tribunal since the Nuremberg Trials of 1945-46, and the first to prosecute the crime of genocide. In 1995, the ICTR began trying a number of high-ranking people for their role in the Rwandan Genocide. When the tribunal closed in 2015, it had convicted 61 people.



Checkpoint pg. 356 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Why did a genocide take place in Cambodia?
2. How did the Khmer Rouge kill up to one-quarter of the population?
3. Describe the course of the Rwandan Genocide.
4. What was the impact of the Rwandan Genocide.



26.4: SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have learned that...

- There have been many examples of genocide through history, including the genocide of Native Americans from the fifteenth century onwards, the Armenian Genocide in 1915-1923, the Cambodian Genocide in 1975 and the Rwandan Genocide in 1994.
- The Holocaust is one of the most significant atrocities in our past. It evolved slowly between 1933 and 1945. Adolf Hitler was deeply anti-Semitic. The Nazis built on existing centuries-old anti-Semitism with the Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht. Jewish people were isolated and finally deported and murdered in extermination camps.
- The concentration camps were liberated between mid-1944 and May 1945 by Soviet, British, American and French troops.
- Approximately six million Jews died during the Holocaust. Millions of others were also killed, including (but not limited to) 2.5 million Soviet prisoners of war, two million Poles and half a million Roma.
- Many European Jews emigrated after World War II to countries such as the USA, Canada, France and South Africa. After the state of Israel was founded in 1948, many began new lives there.



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Reflecting on... The Holocaust

Sadly, we do not always learn from past atrocities. For example, the Cambodian Genocide and the Rwandan Genocide both happened after the whole world had learned of the Holocaust. However, through studying history it is possible to recognise patterns - of power, of discrimination, of 'othering' and dehumanisation - that have preceded these atrocities in various societies. To prevent further atrocities in the future, we must remain vigilant for these warning signs and work to uphold human rights.



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Examination Questions

2021 SEC Sample Q7

2022 SEC Q7

2023 SEC Q6



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Project

Guidelines:

1. **Length:** The depth of your project should reflect about 2-3 weeks of work.
2. **Sources:** Use at least three different sources for your research. These can be books, scholarly articles, or reputable online resources.
3. **Citations:** All information and images that are not your own should be properly cited.
4. **Mediums:** You may choose to present your project in one of the following ways:
 - **Poster:** Your poster should be informative and visually engaging.
 - **Minecraft or Lego Model:** If choosing this option, please also include a brief report explaining your model.
 - **Painting/Drawing:** Your artwork should be accompanied by a description.
 - **Recycled Materials:** Create your model using recycled materials and provide an explanation of your creative process.

Assessment:

Your projects will be assessed based on:

1. Research and Content
2. Creativity and Presentation
3. Understanding of Context
4. Adherence to Guidelines



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Project

Historical Sites

The Anne Frank House, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oświęcim, Poland
Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Israel
Bergen-Belsen, Saxony, Germany
The Holocaust Memorial, Berlin, Germany

Historical Figures

Adolf Hitler
Heinrich Himmler
Rudolf Hoss
Adolf Eichmann
Reinhard Heydrich
Anne Frank
Tomi Reichental
Oskar Schindler
Mary Elmes
Nicholas Winton
Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty
Irma Greese
Ettie Steinberg
Elie Wiesel

