

Genocide throughout History

Armenia, Middle East

- Armenia is a region between Russia and the Middle East, it is largely an orthodox Christian ethnic group but were surrounded by Islamic countries and influences. Throughout history they have been ruled by various other ethnic groups and have rarely been self-determining.
- The genocide in Armenia took place between 1915 and 1923, though, at first it did not appear to be genocide, more of a forced relocation of the Armenian people.
- It didn't involve concentration camps as in many other examples of genocide, but instead included the newly laid down Istanbul-Baghdad railway, Armenians under the rule of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) were carried into the deserts of Iraq and Syria.
- However, many Armenians who were not marched out and sent into the deserts, were taken from their homes and murdered in daylight. This was relatively easy because WW1 gave them a cover, European powers were not concerned and the US wanted to isolate itself.
- The Armenian genocide included the use of new technology such as trains and the telegraph. This meant it could be carried out quickly and silently, without the need to move military forces.
- While the overall Armenian population in Turkey was estimated to be around 1.75 million individuals, it is thought the final death toll of the genocide was more than 1 million individuals.
- Many Armenians only survived the genocide because they lived under Russia rather than Turkey.
- The post-genocide fallout was massive of course, but little was done about it. Many historians regard it as an unfortunately successful genocide as even today the Turkish government denies that its predecessors or people ever did anything wrong.
- The genocide largely went unpunished because many US and European politicians knew their people were war-fatigued and that the most important thing now was to get back to normal. Unfortunately, this meant that almost an entire race was exterminated without justice.
- One of the main problems is that Turkey has accused Armenia of actually committing genocide against them as well. There is little evidence other than that presented by the two countries and so justice is unlikely to ever be fulfilled.
- Today, the issue is such a bitter one that the Armenians have largely chosen to forget it and get on with reconstruction of their nation to prevent further conflict, a key Christian belief.

Cambodia, South-East Asia

- The Cambodian genocide was never intended to be a genocide against any particular ethnic group unlike most other genocides. Rather, it was a systematic dehumanisation of all people.
 - It all started when Pol Pot and his 'Khmer Rouge' military movement took grip of northern Vietnam, fighting the capitalist south in an effort to push out western control.
 - The dream of Pot was to create a 'year zero' society where all people would contribute to an agricultural society, however, this was only loosely based on the reform by Stalin and Mao.
 - In order to get the biggest workforce possible Pot's plan was to gather all the people in the country into various labour camps to make them work. Children and parents and family would be separated, and unlikely to ever see each-other again. Anyone incapable of working was killed on the spot as well as those who refused to assist the regime.
 - Since the genocide, an international tribunal has been made. Sadly, many of the perpetrators have died, and so justice cannot be fulfilled. This includes Pol Pot and his cabinet. However, 5 of Pot's political allies and military commanders have been charged and punished.
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Darfur, Eastern Africa

- The events in Darfur are relatively recent and began in February 2003, they officially ended the war in 2010, but there is still conflict in the region because of instability due to famine.
- The genocide largely took the form of ethnic cleansing between nomadic Arab communities and the farming tribal groups of Fur, Massaleet and Zaghawa that represent the eastern African black community in Sudan. It is not considered true genocide because there was violence on both sides, it was more of a conflict than one group suppressing the other.
- It began in 2003 when black African Sudanese nationals said that they wanted to be treated equally to Arab Sudanese nationals in terms of land and grazing rights in the region. Conflict erupted and a revolt began in western Sudan, called Darfur.
- While the UN concluded the government didn't commit genocide, they said that war crimes had been committed, namely the targeting of innocent civilians. The main issue however as the Arabic Janjaweed militia who followed up attacks on villages by the government.
- These attacks by the Janjaweed included slaughter, rape and thievery among other offences.
- The Sudanese government criticised the Janjaweed and branded them terrorists and criminals. However, little has been done practically to stop them such as clearing the area.
- The real death toll is unknown, but it is known that around 2.7 million people in the Darfur area have fled their homes and live in refugee camps elsewhere in the region. Around 200,000 people have fled to the neighbouring country, Chad, in an effort to escape Sudanese influence altogether. The UN says that resultant forces such as disease and famine have killed 300,000 people, but the Sudanese government significantly shrinks that and only takes responsibility for around 10,000 deaths overall.
- Nobody has of yet been charged of any crime, but there has been an arrest warrant put out for the Sudanese president by the International Criminal Court. It has not yet been used.

Myanmar, South-East Asia

- The crisis in Myanmar is an ongoing one, there appears to be no clear end to the ethnic group, the Rohingya, being left alone any time soon. It has been a long time in the works.
- Myanmar is a majority Buddhist country, the Rohingya are a Muslim minority group, this makes them an easy target. At the end of 2017, around 1m Rohingya lived in Myanmar, that is out of the 54m people living in Myanmar at the minute.
- The Rohingya didn't wish to have their own nation, but rather had an independent culture and language coming from generations of Muslim traders from Islamic countries.
- Tensions initially erupted in 2012 when the oppressed Buddhist population began rioting against the equally oppressed Rohingya driving tens of thousands of people from their homes.
- It has been branded 'a textbook example of ethnic cleansing' by the UN, but nothing can be done other than verbal criticism due to a lack of commitment by the west.
- The main part of the genocide performed by the military government was a targeted campaign on Rohingya villages using systematic and strategic murder, rape and the destruction of homes.
- Most of the people fleeing the violence have gone to Bangladesh totalling to about 900,000 Rohingya individuals living in Bangladesh at this current time.
- The government claims that just 400 people have been killed, but the UN published contradicting reports that say there are at least 1000 dead, if not many more.
- Many people have been blamed, including the honorary president, Aung San Suu Kyi, who has previously received awards for peacekeeping and liberation in Myanmar from several sources. However, the probable culprit is likely the military presence found in Myanmar.