

Ultranationalism and Genocide

Chapter

9



Figure 9-1 ▲

Relatives pray in front of the caskets of some of the 8000 victims killed in the Bosnian Genocide, during the tenth anniversary of the Srebrenica Massacre, 11 July 2005.

Under certain circumstances, such as times of economic and political stress, there is the possibility that nationalism can become ultranationalism.

American author and political activist Howard Zinn has said:

“*[Nationalism is] a set of beliefs taught to each generation in which the Motherland or the Fatherland is an object of veneration and becomes a burning cause for which one becomes willing to kill the children of other Motherlands or Fatherlands.*”¹

Charles de Gaulle was a French general during the Second World War and then became president of France. He said:

“*Patriotism is when love of your own people comes first; nationalism, when hate for people other than your own comes first.*”²

In her article “The Politics of Hate: Ultranationalist and Fundamentalist Tactics and Goals,” academic writer Joan Davison wrote:

“*Nationalism offers identity and demands loyalty, but ultranationalism subordinates all other claims for loyalty and allegiance. This explains why a Serbian nationalist could kill a Bosnian relative. Loyalty to the nation transcends loyalty to the family. ... Ultranationalist groups often perceive threats to their existence and argue that they must engage in preventive measures, such as ethnic cleansing or deportation, to counter these dangers.*”³

How can ultranationalism provoke one nation to violence against another? In groups, discuss and brainstorm possible answers to this question.

¹ From: http://thinkexist.com/quotation/-nationalism_is-a_set_of_beliefs_taught_to_each/161468.html.

² From: <http://www.worldofquotes.com/author/Charles-De-Gaulle/1/index.html>.

³ Joan Davison, “The Politics of Hate: Ultranationalist and Fundamentalist Tactics and Goals,” *Journal of Hate Studies* 5, no. 37 (May 2007): 37–61. <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/againsthate/journal5/GHS106.pdf>.

Chapter Issue

To what extent does ultranationalism contribute to extreme acts?

Chapters 7 and 8 explored the pursuit of national interests, nationalism, and ultranationalism. You know from these chapters that *ultranationalism* is an extreme form of nationalism often involving extreme patriotism, and that ultranationalism often causes conflicts, and can interfere with co-operation between nations. In this chapter you will look at the extent to which ultranationalism is a cause of genocide. Acts of genocide have also been referred to as *mass murder*, *democide*, and *ethnic cleansing*. The following inquiry question will be used to guide your exploration:

- What is the relationship between ultranationalism and genocide?

This chapter will help you develop an informed response to the Main Issue for Part 2 (chapters 6–10): *To what extent should national interest be pursued?*

SKILL PATH

SP Thinking to Make Decisions

Synthesizing Information to Draw Conclusions

Synthesizing information means taking information you have gathered and bringing it together in a new way to help you make an informed decision. In this Skill Path, you will gather and synthesize information on the following issue: To what extent are extreme acts a possibility in Canada?

Step

1

Gather, Organize, and Analyze Information

- a) Gather: To obtain an accurate synthesis of relevant facts, opinions and ideas, gather information from multiple reliable and valid sources on the following issue: To what extent are extreme acts a possibility in Canada? Ask students in your class to offer an opinion or to contribute information about this issue. Next, work through this Skill Path with the information gathered and make an informed decision about the issue.

- b) Organize: Decide whether you will organize your information
- chronologically
 - to show cause and effect
 - to show similarities and differences
 - to show contrasting views
- c) Analyze: Ask yourself
- if there are any noticeable trends
 - what you can infer from the information

Step

2

Synthesize Information

Synthesizing information involves developing new ideas that show your understanding. Think of it as a fabric in which the information is woven together, rather than a quilt, where separate pieces are merely organized into a pattern. Try using some of the following strategies:

- Create a graphic organizer like the one in Figure 9-2.
- Write key ideas on sticky notes, then cluster common ideas.
- Draw conclusions from brainstorming.
- Determine trends.
- Develop generalizations.

To what extent are extreme acts a possibility in Canada?	
Towards extreme acts	Away from extreme acts
Synthesize: Make connections and conclusions Record understandings	

Figure 9-2

Summarize each of the key points of different views on an issue. Look for relationships among the information in the boxes, such as similarities, differences, conflicting ideas, or trends.

Step 3 **Review and Revise New Ideas; Develop Conclusion**

Review your results before drawing conclusions. Ask questions about your synthesis to ensure it is accurate and thorough enough to allow you to make an informed conclusion. Some questions you might ask are:

- Are any ideas repeated?
- Can I eliminate any information?
- Have I considered multiple perspectives?
- Can I arrive at new understandings by considering the information from a different perspective?

Practise It!

Follow steps 1–3 to synthesize information and draw conclusions about the issue: To what extent are extreme acts a possibility in Canada? Share your conclusions with others in the class.

Extend It!

Using what you have learned so far, develop your conclusions about the Main Issue for Part 2: **To what extent should national interests be pursued?** Add to and revise these conclusions at the end of Part 2.

Ultrationalism and Genocide: A Tragedy of Humankind

Question for Inquiry

- **What is the relationship between ultrationalism and genocide?**

In January 2008, the website Genocide Watch posted an article about a potential genocide that could occur in Kenya, Africa. Consider this excerpt from the article:

Genocide Watch has called a Genocide Alert because of genocidal massacres that are increasing daily in Kenya in the wake of a disputed election between President Mwai Kibaki, who is a member of the Kikuyu ethnic group, and Mr. Raila Odinga, who is ethnically a Luo.

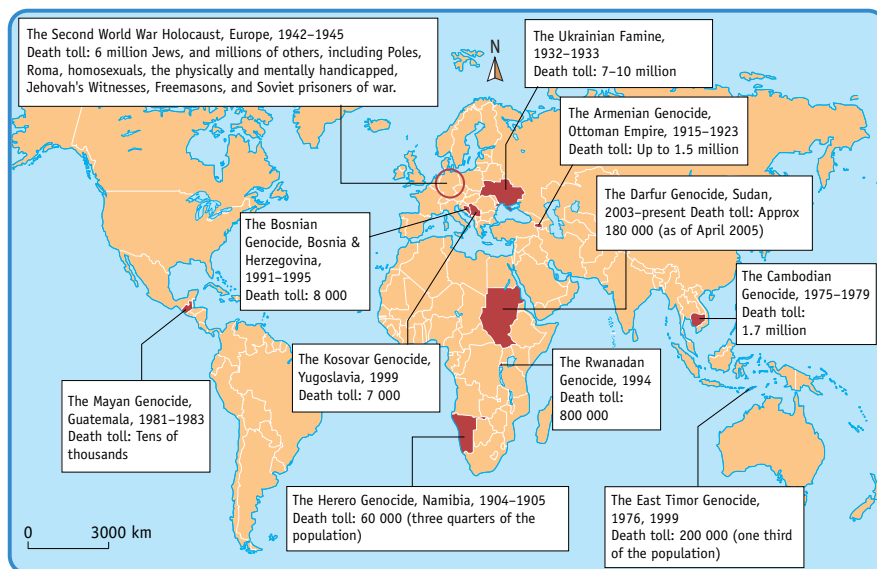


Figure 9-3

The locations of major acts of genocide around the world.



Visit the *Perspectives on Nationalism* website and follow the link to Genocide Watch. Make a chart identifying the eight stages of genocide described by the International Campaign to End Genocide.

Ethnic riots have broken out in Nairobi, Kisumu, Eldoret, and numerous other places in Kenya. People have been pulled from their cars and their identification cards checked for their names, which symbolize their ethnic identity, and then killed if they belong to groups being targeted. Hundreds of people have already been murdered. Today a church in Eldoret was locked and the people inside were burned to death by a mob.

Ethnic massacres are an indicator that the risk of genocide in Kenya has risen to Stage 6, the Preparation stage. Kenya has not yet descended into actual genocide. However, the next stage in the process is actual genocide, and Kenya is close to that stage.⁴

Genocide is a tragedy of humankind. You can see in current events in Kenya that genocide is not relegated to history, but is a threat that continues to this day. In this section you will consider three historical examples that show a relationship between ultranationalism and genocide: Nazi ultranationalism, the 1932–1933 famine in Ukraine, and the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. As you proceed through this chapter, think about why these nations decided to carry out genocide as an act of nationalism and the pursuit of their national interest. When and how did nationalism turn into ultranationalism, and how did ultranationalism lead to such an extreme act as genocide?

Not all ultranationalist acts by nations go to the extreme of genocide. Some would suggest that the United States, in reacting to the tragedy of 11 September 2001, adopted some aspects of ultranationalism, and that it has taken extreme action in invading Iraq in response to the attack.

Fast Facts

The term **genocide** was coined by expatriate Polish Jew Raphael Lemkin in 1944. When trying to find a term that could describe the inhumanity of the Nazis toward his people, Lemkin combined the Greek word *genos* (“family,” “tribe,” or “race”) with the Latin word *occidere* or *cideo* (“to massacre”).



PAUSE AND REFLECT

- Identify two nations involved in ultranationalism. What are some of the common characteristics of their ultranationalism?
- When genocide is planned, who is usually the target?
- Are there common factors or circumstances that lead to genocide?

⁴ Genocide Watch, “Genocide Watch: Kenya,” 1 January 2008. <http://www.genocidewatch.org/kenya.html>.



Figure 9-4 ▲

German children play with stacks of German *marks*. When inflation rendered the money worthless following the First World War, the economy crumbled and poverty resulted. Why might ultranationalist governments employ the philosophy that “desperate times require desperate measures”?

Fast Facts

The Nazi Party was officially known as the National Socialist German Worker’s Party, or NSDAP. *Nazism* or *National Socialism* refers to the policies of the NSDAP under Adolf Hitler from 1933 to 1945. A *Nazi* was someone who was a member of the party and supported the beliefs of Nazism, including belief in “blood and soil,” as represented by the red and black colours on the Nazi flag; a rejection of democracy; the need for racial purity; and the need to create *Lebensraum*, or “living space,” for Germans.

In his State of the Union Address in 2002, US President George W. Bush described Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil.” He accused the governments of these three countries of building and using weapons of mass destruction, and of furthering acts of terrorism in the world. He used these reasons as his justification for the United States waging a war on terrorism. As the United States pursues this war on terrorism as one of their national interests, US actions affect other countries.

Nazi Ultrationalism

Why Hitler? Why the Holocaust?

Following the First World War, Germany was a defeated nation and, because it was held responsible for starting the war, it was forced to pay war reparations. However, the economy of postwar Germany simply could not manage the payments. The country was largely shut out of international markets. By 1923, the German *mark* faced high inflation. This had a serious effect on the average German, and set people up to support the leadership of a “saviour” who might be able to fix the problem.

Ideas and Opinions

“Countless children, even the youngest, never get a drop of milk and come to school without a warm breakfast ... The children frequently come to school without a shirt or warm clothing or they are prevented from attending school by a lack of proper clothing. Deprivation gradually stifles any sense of cleanliness and morality and leaves room only for thoughts of the struggle against the hunger and cold.”⁵

—Report by the Mayor of Berlin, 1923

Ultrationalism can arise out of desperate situations. How could politicians use conditions like these to gain support for their ultranationalist ideas and actions?

Eventually, inflation was controlled and a new currency temporarily stabilized the economy. However, world events, such as the Great Depression of the 1930s, led to social, economic, and political upheaval in Germany and around the world.

⁵ From: Greenfield History Site, http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar_hyperinflation.htm.

Challenges to the Weimar Republic (1919–1933)

As you consider some of the following economic and political factors that led to the collapse of the German government (the Weimar Republic), imagine or jot down what you would expect to be some of the social consequences of these circumstances.

Economic Problems

- Large reparation payments (over \$30 billion) resulting from the Treaty of Versailles collapsed the German economy.
- Hyperinflation of the German mark (1920–1923) sparked mass spending as German citizens sought to use their currency before it lost value.
- The Great Depression contributed to anti-Weimar-government feelings.

Political Problems

- The humiliating terms of the Treaty of Versailles caused discontent among soldiers and nationalist groups on the extreme right.
- The myth that the Weimar politicians had betrayed Germany by signing the Treaty (that is, by giving away territory and colonies) prompted a shift in support to the Nazi Party.
- French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr Valley when Germany could not meet its reparation payments in 1923.
- The large number of political parties did not make for effective government.
- Communists and other political groups worked to overthrow the government.

Social, Economic, and Political Factors Leading to Ultrationalism

In the early 1930s, Adolph Hitler was elected to the Reichstag, the German parliament, as leader of the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP), or National Socialist German Workers' Party, commonly called the **Nazi** party. In the Reichstag were parties with competing interests and ideologies, such as the Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Centre Party, and the Nazi Party. Manipulating the democratic laws of the fledgling Weimar Republic to meet his needs, Hitler got rid of his opponents and seized power. He eventually ascended to the Chancellery, becoming the head of the German government. Using the powers of this office and capitalizing on a growing public fear of communism, Hitler forced through the Enabling Act in March 1933. This Act allowed Hitler and the Nazi Party to pass laws without the approval of the Reichstag. Hitler used this new-found political power to eliminate his political opponents and establish a single-party state.

Nazi National Interests

- Establishing Germany as a powerful nation and empire, the Third Reich
- Providing new space for the growth of the German population through *Lebensraum* and German expansionism
- Unifying all German people (including those in Denmark and Austria)
- Dealing with the so-called “Jewish problem”
- Rebuilding the country’s military power

How did these Nazi national interests become transformed into ultrationalism?

Fast Facts

The term *Aryan* originally described a family of languages—that is, it defined people who spoke Indo-European languages. Academics and others used the terms *Aryan* and *Semitic* to refer not only to speakers of particular languages, but also to people of particular ethnic backgrounds, and so the terms became associated with race. Some writers in the early 1900s identified the speakers of Aryan languages to be of superior physiques and intelligence, and it was this notion of superiority that the Nazi Party took up as part of its propaganda. The Nazis asserted that only the Aryan race was capable of building and maintaining civilizations and cultures.

Ideas and Opinions

In the 1800s, many people uncritically accepted the notion that humans could be divided into distinct races. Academics in the 1800s identified two Caucasian peoples through a linguistic distinction: the Semites and the Aryans.

According to the Jewish Encyclopedia:

“The term “Anti-Semitism” has its origin in the ethnological theory that the Jews, as Semites, are entirely different from the Aryan, or Indo-European, populations and can never be amalgamated with them. The word implies that the Jews are not opposed on account of their religion, but on account of their racial characteristics. As such are mentioned: greed, a special aptitude for money-making, aversion to hard work, clannishness and obtrusiveness, lack of social tact, and especially lack of patriotism. Finally, the term is used to justify resentment for every crime or objectionable act committed by any individual Jew.”⁶

The Nazi Party focused on finding a *scapegoat*—in this case, especially Jewish people—for the weak German economy and the misery of the people. Anti-Semitism had been a long-standing historical attitude held by some people. People who are blamed for a country’s ills and who become targeted for genocide share some common characteristics: they are often fewer in number than those doing the blaming; are often perceived as having some advantage in the country; and are seen as removable, the idea being that if they were removed from the country, the rest of the country would not be harmed and would in fact be cured of many of its problems.

Once in power as a single-party state, the Nazi Party could implement policies that discriminated against Jewish people in Germany. The Nazi Party saw these policies as essential to pursuing German national interests.

These ideas were articulated in the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which established strict rules for maintaining a “pure” Aryan race and defined the limits of citizenship in the Reich—Jewish people were no longer citizens. These laws led to the exclusion of Jews from education, business ownership, and intermarriage with “true” Germans.



◀ Figure 9-5

As the Nazi Party rose to power, how did ultranationalism have an impact on the international community?

⁶ From: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?letter=A&artid=1603>.

In schools, children were indoctrinated to believe that Jews were *untermenschen* (“subhumans”) and that the Aryan race was the *übermenschen* (“superior”) race. Aryan children were required to become members of the Hitler Youth, where they received training and were later recruited into the *Sturmabteilung*, an adult paramilitary organization.

Hitler in Power

In the aftermath of the German defeat in the First World War, the heavy price imposed on the German people for their participation, and the devastating economic and social impacts of the Depression in the 1930s, Adolf Hitler was able to direct the anger and disillusionment of the German people to his political advantage. Supported by the workers who were promised jobs; the wealthy who were promised an end to communism; the industrialists who were promised stability and a peaceful labour force; and millions of humiliated Germans who were promised the return of a proud, strong, independent nation, Germany became a dictatorship under Hitler.

Often when severe crises hit, a healthy spirit of nationalism can become a dangerous ultranationalism as people grasp at solutions to their problems.

The Nazi dictatorship lasted from 1933 to 1945. It led to a vibrant economy; the militarization of Germany; the elimination of all political opposition; the creation of a propaganda-fed super-patriotism (ultranationalism); the adoption of fascism, in which every citizen’s duty was to unquestioningly serve the country; the scapegoating of the Jews of Germany; and to the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939.

Under the guise of war, the Nazi regime could now act in the name of national security. The aims of the war included the gaining of *Lebensraum* for Aryan Germans. More people, such as Poles and other Slavic peoples, were rounded up and taken to concentration camps in keeping with German ultranationalist philosophy.

The Holocaust

Hitler and the Nazi Party had two main goals. Their first aim was to establish a central European empire. Lands to the east—Poland and areas of Ukraine—would be needed as *Lebensraum* for German expansion. The populations there would be pushed further east and rivers would serve as natural defensible boundaries. War was deemed necessary by the Nazi leadership for the unification of all those of the “master race” under a single German state.



PAUSE AND REFLECT

What evidence is there that nationalism developed into ultranationalism in Germany at this time? Does this explain why many German people would have supported Hitler?

Fast Facts

Most historians consider Nazism to be a form of fascism, which may be defined as a political regime that places nation—and sometimes race—above the individual. The word *fascism* comes from the Latin word *fasces*, which is an axe made from a blade tied to a bundle of rods, symbolizing strength through individuals joined together. The word was coined by Benito Mussolini and philosopher Giovanni Gentile. Fascism originally described the political movement under Mussolini in Italy from 1922 to 1943.

Figure 9-6

The orange line shows the planned area of the German Reich, and represents the extent of *Lebensraum* the Nazi Party intended to provide for the German people.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Hitler developed the belief that Germany required *Lebensraum* in order to survive. Why did Hitler envisage Germany's future living space in the lands to the east of Germany?

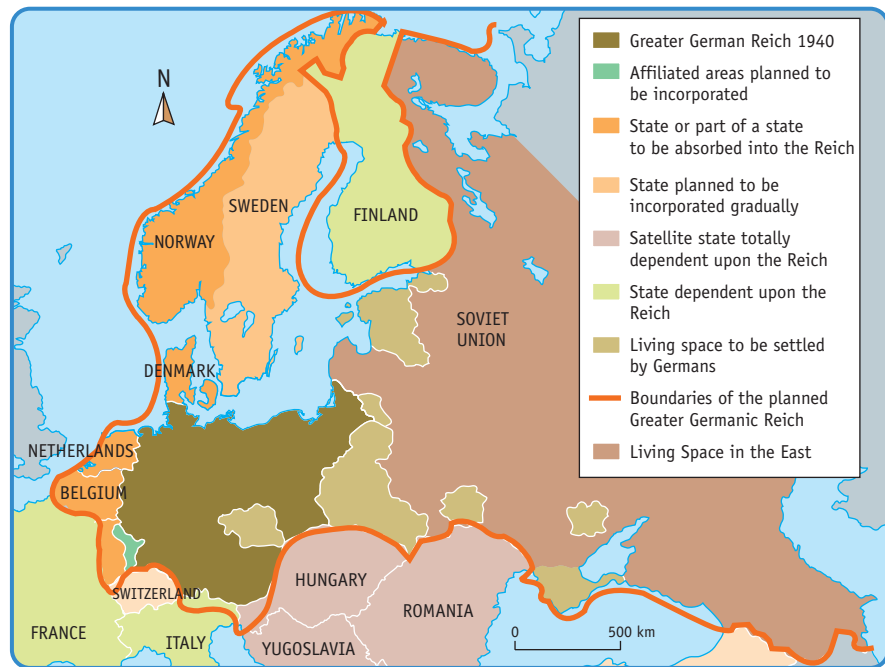
Figure 9-6 shows areas in the East that Hitler would invade in Operation Barbarossa, which was begun in June 1941. Research the Nazi's plans for the conquered territories.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What characteristics of ultranationalism are reflected in the two main Nazi goals?

Fast Facts

The term *ghetto* was first used to describe a place in Venice, Italy where Jews lived. It was then applied to other Jewish areas throughout Europe. The German word *Judengasse* described the Jewish Quarter, also where Jews lived. From 1939 to 1944, the Nazis required Jews to live together in ghettos.



The other main goal of the Nazis was carried out under cover of war—the elimination of Jewish populations from the lands gained by Germany. The methods of elimination were unclear. There were plans to ship the Jewish populations to the East. There were other plans to let them go to other countries in South and North America. One bizarre plan even envisioned a mass shipment of Jewish people to the island of Madagascar using the ships from the defeated British navy.

The Final Solution

Anti-Semitism was not new to Nazi Germany—it was present long before Hitler resolved to act on it. He perceived that anti-Semitism had a long tradition in parts of Europe, but that he alone was going to be the one to act. The Nazi program was openly inhumane in its goal to build a great German nation. It unapologetically rejected a notion

Fast Facts

Lebensraum, a German word meaning “living space,” was a pillar of Hitler’s political plan and justified Germany conquering other nations. As such, expansionism was endorsed by the Nazi Party. With *Lebensraum* as their cause, the Nazis could deport, round up and put in camps, or kill Polish and other peoples occupying lands that the Nazi Party wanted for Germans. Any agricultural products or raw materials were taken from the inhabitants and provided to the German people so that the Nazis could at once starve out the inhabitants and feed their own people.



Figure 9-7

Locations of extermination camps in Germany and German-occupied territory.

like sympathy as a weak, Christian sentiment and saw nothing wrong with treating people as disposable objects. It worshipped only “the will to power.”

Hitler’s early plans to eliminate the Jewish people did not work fast enough to satisfy the Nazi Party’s objectives. A systematic, official program of genocide named the *final solution* was undertaken in 1941 to gather all Jewish people and quickly dispose of the population by transporting them to extermination camps; this process was made easier by the earlier segregation of Jews in ghettos. Six million Jewish people and millions of other “undesirables”—such as Soviets, Slavic people, homosexuals, religious and political dissidents, and disabled people—were exterminated in this final solution.

From 1933 to 1939, the extreme acts of the Nazi Party continued unabated; people who spoke out against the acts were quickly silenced with threats, imprisonment, and even murder. Most people outside Germany looked the other way, reflecting the belief that as long as the acts were confined to within Germany, they were nobody else’s business.

Fast Facts

Extermination camps, or death camps, were places of confinement to which people were sent for the purposes of slave labour and eventual genocide. Prisoners were systematically killed and then either cremated or placed in mass graves at the camps.



Who Is Responsible for Opposing Ultrationalism?

During the reign of the Nazi Party in Germany, it was dangerous to speak out against Hitler or his policies.

Yet many people knew about the death camps and the genocide. The following quotations offer responses to the genocide—some voices were raised during the genocide, while others were silenced for years.

The first quotation is attributed to Martin Niemöller, a German Protestant pastor and founder of the anti-Nazi German Confessing Church.

Pastor Niemöller was imprisoned by the Nazis from 1937 to 1945. He survived the Dachau extermination camp.

*In Germany, they came first for the Communists, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist; And then they came for the trade unionists, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist; And then they came for the Jews, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew; And then . . . they came for me . . . And by that time there was no one left to speak up.*⁷

Some people, like members of the White Rose, a secret group of university students who defied the Nazis through acts such as distributing anti-Hitler leaflets, had a different view on how to respond to extreme acts:

*Everyone is in a position to contribute to the overthrow of this system. It is not possible through solitary withdrawal . . . to prepare the ground for the overturn of this "government" . . . No, it can be done only by the cooperation of many convinced, energetic people—people who are agreed as to the means they must use to attain their goal . . . The only one available is passive resistance.*⁸

Ervin Staub, a psychologist at the University of Massachusetts, was a child living in Hungary during the Second World War, and witnessed Nazi atrocities. Staub said that these experiences gave him a lifelong mission to get people to respond to those in need.

*Nations and the community of nations—as well as nongovernmental organizations and individuals—need to respond, as active bystanders, to early signs of victimization. They can inhibit, by early actions, the evolution of extreme violence.*⁹

Elie Wiesel survived the concentration camp he and his family were sent to; he was 16 years old when he was freed. For ten years he vowed never to speak of his experiences. He said:

*So heavy was my anguish that I made a vow: not to speak, not to touch upon the essential for at least ten years. Long enough to see clearly. Long enough to learn to listen to the voices crying inside my own. Long enough to regain possession of my memory. Long enough to unite the language of man with the silence of the dead.*¹⁰

After the ten years had passed, Wiesel began to write—and continued to write until he had over 800 pages of what would become a remarkable book called *Night*. Elie Wiesel is the author of more than 20 books about the death camps and has educated the world about the atrocities that went on during the Nazi regime.

- 1 The quotation by Pastor Martin Niemöller is a commentary on the lack of action by German intellectuals during the rise of Nazism. Who is responsible for taking action if national interests result in widespread suffering?
- 2 Passive resistance has been used to oppose questionable actions of a group of people. Do you think that passive resistance is an effective response to extreme acts? Why or why not?
- 3 How should people respond to ultranationalism and acts of genocide?

7 Martin Niemöller, as quoted in Richard John Neuhaus, "September 11—Before and After," *First Things*, November 2001. http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=2252.

8 "Leaflets of the White Rose: The Third Leaflet." <http://www.jlrweb.com/whiterose/leafthreeeng.html>.

9 Ervin Staub, "Preventing Genocide: Activating Bystanders, Helping Victims and the Creation of Caring," *Other Voices* 2, no. 1 (February 2000). <http://www.othervoices.org/2.1/staub/preventing.html>.

10 Elie Wiesel, *A Jew Today* (New York: Vintage, 1979), p. 15.

Genocide-Famine in Ukraine: 1932–1933

Following the Communist Revolution in 1917, the Soviet Union was formed. Joseph Stalin assumed the role of supreme leader of the Soviet Union from 1927 to 1953. His aim was to build a militarily powerful and industrially strong country. He instituted large-scale rapid industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, and great purges to clean the land of ‘undesirable’ people. During these purges, an estimated 30 million people were killed or sent to forced-labour camps. The collectivization of agriculture resulted in many hardships, including famine, for those living and working on the land. Stalin’s emphasis on nation-building included the slogan “Socialism in One State” which aimed to create a single, uniform Soviet citizen—the “New Soviet Man”—regardless of linguistic, ethnic, cultural, or religious distinctions. This form of Russian ultranationalism led to extreme acts, including the **Holodomor** of 1932-1933.

In 1917, during the First World War, Ukrainians tried to assert independence; however most of Ukraine came under Soviet rule. At first, the Soviet authorities allowed a policy of “Ukrainization”, which promoted Ukrainian language and culture. This, however, led to Ukrainian desire for greater national self-determination, threatening Stalin’s goal to centralize power in Moscow. To counter this, he began a wide-sweeping policy of “**Russification**”. This centralization of power was part of a larger plan to “Russify” the republics of the Soviet Union.

Massive arrests of Ukraine’s intellectual, political, and religious leaders followed. Collectivization was forced on the peasants, as land owned by small farmers was confiscated and state-controlled farms were created. This meant that all the land and produce belonged to the Soviet state.

Greater control of the Ukrainian republic, the “breadbasket of Europe” with its fertile farmland and abundant agriculture, was crucial to Stalin’s plan. The grain produced would be sold abroad (often in the form of alcohol) to finance the rapid industrialization.

Many landowning farmers, labelled *kulaks*, opposed Stalin’s collectivization and acted in resistance. In response, Stalin condemned most of them to death or exiled them to forced labour in Siberia. Persons caught taking even a handful of grain from a collective farm were guilty of crimes against the state and faced severe punishment.

At the same time, Stalin increased grain quotas, making it impossible for farmers to meet these demands. In response, Soviet armed troops confiscated all of Ukraine’s food sources and sealed its borders, preventing people from obtaining food that was readily available in Russia. This created a man-made famine that is now

Fast Facts

Stalin’s goal was to unite the Soviet Union, made up of hundreds of nations living within the 15 republics of the Soviet Union, under a common culture. This is now known as *Russification*, which was to be accomplished through Soviet control of education and use of a common language: Russian. In Ukraine, massive arrests and executions of Ukrainian political and intellectual leaders, along with persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, all attempted to bring an end to Ukrainian national consciousness.

Fast Facts

The Holodomor (literally “death by hunger”) is derived from two Ukrainian words: *holod*, meaning “famine”, and *moryty*, meaning “to kill or torture”.



Figure 9-8

Passersby walk past victims of the Holodomor in Kharkiv, 1933.

Fast Facts

At the height of the Holodomor, Ukrainian villagers were dying at the rate of 25 000 per day, or 1000 per hour, or 17 per minute.

known as the Holodomor. Stalin would not allow anyone to refer to this famine. He also refused to accept any international response to the crisis in the form of aid for the starving.

Soviet ultranationalism caused the Holodomor and the destruction of Ukraine's national leadership. The development of Ukrainian nationhood was violently and drastically set back. Ukraine lost over 25 per cent of its population, about 7 million people, during this genocide-famine, one third of them children. Despite these ultranationalist extreme acts, Ukraine became an independent nation in 1991 with a renewed sense of national self-determination.

Ideas and Opinions

“ People were dying on the street, and my mother eventually forbade me to look out the window because it was so horrible. I carried those memories with me all my life. I've tried to erase them but I just can't.

Young women would come to our door and ask for a piece of bread for their dying babies. My mother would give them a little when she could, but eventually she had to say no because we didn't have enough for ourselves.

I still never throw out even the smallest piece of bread.”

— Edmonton resident Natalia Talanchuk,
as quoted in David Finlayson, “Ukrainian famine memorial:
Survivors recall Soviet genocide”,
The Edmonton Journal, 26 November 2006.

“ I remain convinced that for Stalin to have complete centralized power in his hands, he found it necessary to physically destroy the second-largest Soviet republic, meaning the annihilation of the Ukrainian peasantry, Ukrainian intelligentsia, Ukrainian language, and history as understood by the people; to do away with Ukraine and things Ukrainian as such. The calculation was very simple, very primitive: no people, therefore, no separate country, and thus no problem. Such a policy is GENOCIDE in the classic sense of the word.¹¹”

— Professor James Mace, “‘I was chosen by your dead’
Legacy of the Famine: Ukraine as a Post-Genocidal Society”,
The Day, Kyiv, Ukraine, 18 February 2003

To what extent was Soviet ultranationalism responsible for the extreme act of genocide-famine in Ukraine?

¹¹ From: <http://www.ukemonde.com/genocide/jmace.htm>.

Genocide in Rwanda

Something to Think About: Why does genocide happen and when does killing become genocide?

One of the world's more recent genocides occurred in Rwanda. Within a period of 100 days in 1994, as many as 800 000 Tutsis—and Hutus who sympathized with them—were killed. In this Investigation you will see some of the statements and actions taken in the years and months before the genocide began. Look for signs that show how an ultranationalist government can set the stage for genocide.

Background: Rwanda is a small country in the heart of Africa, and was originally a Belgian colony until it gained independence in 1962. At this time, most of the Rwandan population belonged to the Hutu nation, whose primary means of livelihood had been growing crops. For centuries, Rwanda attracted members of the Tutsi nation, who were traditionally herdsman from northern Africa. The Tutsis were fewer than the Hutus, but they were the ruling nobility. The two groups farmed side by side over many centuries. Tutsis tended to be landowners, and the Hutus worked the land. They shared their language and their culture. Over time, people from these two nations intermarried.

Belgian colonizers favoured the Tutsis—who they felt had a more “European” appearance—for privileged status and education. This created conflicts between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Prior to 1962, when Rwanda became independent, the majority Hutus began to assert their power through violence over the Tutsis, whom they believed to be their oppressors. Many Tutsis retreated to neighbouring countries, where they formed the political movement called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

The inexperienced Hutu government began to face internal conflicts. Repressive measures against the Tutsis led to greater resistance, which resulted in a civil war from 1990 to 1993.

The UN intervened to help create a new constitution, but many Hutu leaders violently opposed any Tutsi involvement in government. On 6 April 1994, when the Hutu president's plane was shot down, the Tutsis were immediately held responsible for the killing. Propaganda began by radio and word of mouth, encouraging Hutus to begin exterminating the Tutsis and those Hutus who did not support the massacre.

The story of Paul Rusesabagina, son of a Hutu father and a Tutsi mother, was the basis for the film *Hotel Rwanda*. In *An Ordinary Man: An Autobiography*, he wrote:

INVESTIGATION

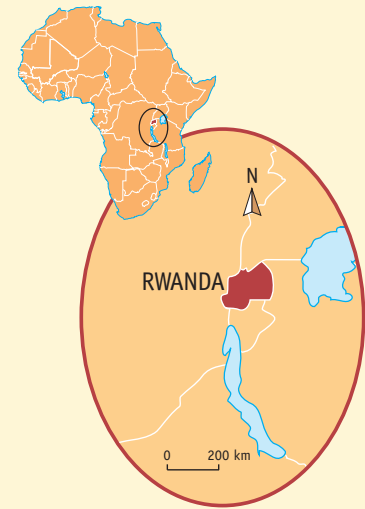


Figure 9-9

Rwanda, a country of approximately 9 million people



Figure 9-10

The government of Rwanda imported \$750 000 worth of machetes—enough for one machete for every third male—in preparation for the genocide.

Fast Facts

When the 1993 ceasefire and subsequent UN-mediated peace treaty gave the Tutsi-led RPF a share of political power in Rwanda, the Hutu government set up a magazine, and later, a radio station called RTLM. These media were used to promote ethnic hatred of the Tutsis. The magazine was called *Kangura*, which means “wake others up.” Some of the terms used by the magazine, and later on radio broadcasts, were designed to “wake the Hutus up” to their hatred of the Tutsis. Some of the terms used by these media were: *pacification*—controlled killing *inyenzi*—cockroaches (Hutu term used to describe Tutsis) *work*—killing Tutsis

Why would the Hutu media use euphemistic terminology to promote genocide?

*There was an emotional reason for people to hate and fear the Tutsi, and that nonsense about traitors in the villages was a set of “facts” grafted into place to justify the violence. And as I have said, the ethnic violence was only a tool for a set of cynical men to hold on to their power—which is perhaps man’s ultimate emotional craving.*¹²

Radio RTLM played a major role in instigating, maintaining, and driving forward the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis and sympathetic Hutus in the 100 days of the genocide. Its broadcasts promoted hatred and fear, and intensified the killing by naming targeted people, identifying places where people were hiding, and directing *Interahamwe* (Hutu paramilitary) squads to likely gathering places. Radio RTLM announcer Bemmerki urged all Hutus to rise up against the Tutsi “spies.”

- 1 Consider the period leading up to the genocide. What signs of ultranationalism do you notice?
- 2 How can a people, a community that lives and grows together, come to perpetrate such horrific acts as genocide? Explain. Provide evidence to support your answer.
- 3 To what extent did ultranationalism contribute to genocide in Rwanda?

Explore the Issues

- 1 The Holocaust was an extreme act of Nazi German ultranationalism. More important than to associate ultranationalism with the Nazi dictatorship, however, is to understand the conditions that made ultranationalism possible in Germany in the first place. Based on the information in this chapter and any other information you may have, draw an organizational diagram that shows how conditions such as a spirit of nationalism, historical events, and leaders led to the possibility of ultranationalism in Germany at that time. Consider ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, spiritual, geographic, economic, political, and social factors in your answer.
- 2 Millions of Ukrainians died in 1933 as a direct result of Stalin’s efforts to meet the national interest of the Soviet Union. Use the steps from the Skill Path to decide how this event can be classified as genocide. **SKILLS**
- 3 Research and create a timeline that shows acts of extreme nationalism or ultranationalism. On the timeline, state when and where the act took place, and how many people died as a result. Use this information to answer the following question: What contemporary conflicts reflect characteristics of ultranationalism?

¹² Paul Rusesabagina, *An Ordinary Man: An Autobiography* (Toronto: Penguin, 2006), p. 122.



Reflect and Analyze

In earlier chapters you examined the pursuit of national interests as having both negative and positive consequences. You explored how this pursuit can create both conflict and the growth of ultranationalism. In this chapter you examined the relationship between ultranationalism and genocide. You also investigated why ultranationalism can result in genocide. By reflecting on the viewpoints and examples in this chapter and in previous chapters, you should be able to provide alternative insights into the Main Issue for Part 2: *To what extent should national interests be pursued?*

Respond to Ideas

- 1 Many extreme events are closely tied to the names of individuals—usually, leaders of the nation at the time of the extreme act. Names such as Stalin, Hitler, Amin, Bagosora, Milosevic, and so on, become entwined with the promotion of ultranationalism and the extreme acts, even if the leaders themselves did not physically commit the acts. To what degree are leaders accountable for acts of ultranationalism?

Respond to Issues

- 2 Use the steps from the Skill Path to investigate the relationship between having a sense of extreme nationalism and acting on this ultranationalistic feeling. Are there consistencies? If so, what are they? If not, what can you conclude about the relationship? **SKILLS**

Recognize Relationships between Concepts, Issues, and Citizenship

- 3 Are the risks to people so great that national interests should not be pursued? Weigh the risks of pursuing national interests and determine the extent to which national interests should be pursued.