

Genocide Profiles

Profile: Slobodan Milošević (1941-2006)

Slobodan Milošević was a Serbian and Yugoslav political leader who served as President of Serbia (1989-1997) and later President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1997-2000). His rise to power coincided with the collapse of Yugoslavia and the wars in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo. His nationalist policies and political actions were widely viewed as major contributors to these conflicts.

In 2001, he was transferred to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and faced charges including genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. He died in detention in 2006 before a verdict was reached in his own trial.

Personality Characteristics

1. Political Opportunism

Many scholars describe Milošević as more of a pragmatic power-seeker than a genuine ideologue. He frequently adapted his rhetoric and policies to strengthen and preserve his authority. Nationalism became a key tool for political mobilization during periods of instability.

2. Strong Desire for Control

Milošević centralized political power, weakened opposition, and exerted significant influence over state institutions and media. This concentration of authority reduced democratic constraints on decision-making.

3. Nationalist Mobilisation

A defining feature of his leadership was the use of Serbian nationalist narratives. He often framed political struggles in ethnic terms, presenting Serbs as threatened by other groups. Such narratives can be important in genocide studies because they may contribute to social polarization and the dehumanization of perceived enemies.

4. Strategic and Calculating Leadership

Observers frequently noted that Milošević was intelligent, patient, and highly strategic. Rather than relying on impulsive behaviour, he often pursued long-term political objectives through negotiation, manipulation of institutions, and alliances with different actors.

5. Limited Empathy Toward Out-Groups

Critics argue that his political conduct demonstrated little concern for the suffering of populations targeted during ethnic conflicts. While historians cannot directly measure personal empathy, the policies associated with his governments and allied forces contributed to large-scale civilian harm across the Balkans.

Milošević is a useful case study because he does **not fit the stereotype of a fanatical or irrational leader**. Instead, researchers often examine how an educated, politically skilled leader can use:

- Ethnic grievance narratives
- Propaganda and media control
- Fear and insecurity
- Authoritarian political structures
- Nationalist mobilization

to facilitate or enable mass violence.

His case highlights an important lesson in genocide studies: perpetrators and enabling leaders are often not driven solely by hatred. Political ambition, power preservation, and strategic calculation can play equally significant roles.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Slobodan Milošević is often analysed less as a uniquely evil individual and more as an example of how **ambition, authoritarian leadership, nationalist mobilisation, and political opportunism can contribute to environments in which mass atrocities become possible**.

Profile: Radovan Karadžić (1945-)

Radovan Karadžić was a Bosnian Serb politician, trained psychiatrist, writer, and co-founder of the Serb Democratic Party. He served as the first President of Republika Srpska during the Bosnian War (1992-1995), becoming one of the most influential political leaders in the conflict.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) indicted him for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In 2016 he was convicted on multiple charges, including genocide in Srebrenica, and in 2019 his sentence was increased to life imprisonment on appeal. He is currently serving that sentence in the United Kingdom.

Personality Characteristics

1. Ideological Nationalism

Unlike some assessments of Slobodan Milošević, who is often described as politically opportunistic, Karadžić is frequently portrayed as a leader with a deep commitment to Serbian nationalist ideology. His speeches and political programme emphasised ethnic separation, territorial control and the protection of Serbian interests within Bosnia.

2. Intellectualised Leadership

As a psychiatrist and published writer, Karadžić projected the image of an educated intellectual rather than a military commander. This makes him particularly significant for genocide studies because he demonstrates that perpetrators and architects of mass violence may emerge from professional and educated backgrounds rather than solely from military or extremist movements.

3. Charismatic Political Communication

Observers noted his ability to articulate fears and grievances within the Bosnian Serb population. He was effective at using speeches, symbolism and nationalist narratives to mobilise support during a period of political uncertainty and ethnic tension.

4. Authoritarian Decision-Making

As President of Republika Srpska and commander of its political structures, Karadžić exercised substantial authority during the war. Tribunal findings concluded that he played a leading role in policies aimed at removing non-Serb populations from areas claimed by Bosnian Serb authorities.

5. Moral Disengagement

One concept often applied by genocide scholars to leaders such as Karadžić is **moral disengagement**. This refers to psychological processes by which individuals justify harmful actions by portraying victims as threats, framing violence as necessary, or transferring responsibility to broader political or military goals. His rhetoric frequently depicted ethnic conflict as unavoidable and existential.

Karadžić is particularly important for understanding the connection between ideology and genocidal violence. The courts found him responsible for participating in policies that contributed to ethnic cleansing campaigns and the genocide at Srebrenica, where more than 7,000 Bosniak men and boys were murdered in July 1995.

His case illustrates how genocide can be facilitated through:

- Ethno-nationalist ideology
- Political leadership that frames coexistence as impossible
- Bureaucratic and governmental structures
- Propaganda and fear-based narratives
- Coordination between political and military authorities

Karadžić demonstrates that mass atrocities are often organised and rationalised through political institutions rather than arising simply from spontaneous hatred or mob violence.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Radovan Karadžić provides a striking example of how an educated and politically skilled leader can combine **nationalist ideology, intellectual justification, charismatic communication and state authority** to create conditions in which mass atrocities become possible. His case highlights the importance of examining not only individual personality traits, but also the political narratives and institutions that enable genocidal violence.

Profile: Željko Ražnatović ("Arkan") (1952-2000)

Željko Ražnatović, widely known by his nickname "Arkan", was a Serbian paramilitary leader, organised crime figure and nationalist political activist. During the Yugoslav Wars, he commanded the paramilitary force known as the Serbian Volunteer Guard, more commonly called "Arkan's Tigers". The unit operated in Croatia and Bosnia and became one of the most feared paramilitary organisations in the region.

Before the wars, Ražnatović had an extensive criminal career and appeared on international wanted lists for offences including armed robbery. During the 1990s he emerged as a prominent public figure in Serbia, combining political influence, paramilitary authority and organised crime connections.

The ICTY indicted him in 1997 on charges including murder, rape, cruel treatment and other crimes against humanity and war crimes. He was assassinated in Belgrade in January 2000 before he could stand trial.

Personality Characteristics

1. Charismatic and Dominant Leadership

Ražnatović displayed a highly charismatic leadership style. He cultivated a powerful public image and inspired strong loyalty among followers. His reputation as a feared commander contributed to his authority and influence within both military and criminal circles.

2. Attraction to Power and Status

Unlike political leaders such as Karadžić or Milošević, whose influence came largely through government institutions, Ražnatović's authority stemmed from personal power, violence and reputation. He carefully developed a public persona that combined nationalism, military prestige and criminal notoriety.

3. Instrumental Use of Violence

Genocide scholars often examine Ražnatović as an example of a leader who viewed violence primarily as a tool for achieving military, political or personal objectives. His paramilitary unit gained a reputation for brutality, intimidation and terror against civilian populations.

4. Criminal Entrepreneurialism

A distinctive aspect of Ražnatović's profile is the overlap between organised crime and armed conflict. Historians frequently point to the way he blended criminal networks, financial gain and nationalist mobilisation. His career demonstrates how war can create opportunities for individuals motivated by profit, status and influence.

5. Limited Respect for Legal and Moral Constraints

His long criminal history, involvement in paramilitary operations and eventual indictment by the ICTY suggest a pattern of behaviour characterised by disregard for legal norms. Although he was never convicted because of his assassination, the indictment alleged responsibility for serious violations against civilians.

Ražnatović is especially important because he represents a different type of perpetrator from political architects such as Radovan Karadžić. Whereas political leaders may create policies and ideologies, figures such as Arkan illustrate the role of **paramilitary entrepreneurs** who implement violence on the ground.

His case highlights several important themes in genocide studies:

- The relationship between organised crime and mass violence.
- The role of paramilitary groups in ethnic cleansing campaigns.
- The importance of charismatic commanders in mobilising perpetrators.
- How violence can become normalised through military and nationalist cultures.
- The blurred boundaries between state institutions, armed groups and criminal networks.

Ražnatović demonstrates that mass atrocities are often carried out not only by governments but also by semi-autonomous armed groups whose leaders may be motivated by a combination of ideology, personal ambition, profit and power.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Željko Ražnatović ("Arkan") represents a useful example of the intersection between **criminality, paramilitary leadership, nationalism and mass violence**. His case illustrates how atrocities can be enabled not only by political leaders and ideologues, but also by powerful individuals who exploit conflict for influence, prestige and power while directing violence against civilian populations.

Profile: Théoneste Bagosora (1941-2021)

Théoneste Bagosora was a Rwandan army colonel and senior official in the Ministry of Defence. During the period leading up to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, he was one of the most powerful figures within the military and political elite associated with the ruling MRND regime.

Following the assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana on 6 April 1994, Bagosora became a central figure in the crisis committee that emerged within the Rwandan military. Numerous scholars and prosecutors have described him as one of the principal organisers of the genocide.

The ICTR later convicted Bagosora of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. He initially received a life sentence, which was reduced to 35 years on appeal in 2011. He died in custody in 2021.

Personality Characteristics

1. Authoritarian Mindset

Historians frequently portray Bagosora as a highly authoritarian figure who valued hierarchy, obedience and military control. He was deeply suspicious of political compromise and opposed arrangements that would dilute the power of the existing regime.

2. Ideological Extremism

Bagosora is often associated with the most hard-line elements of Hutu Power ideology. His political outlook reflected an increasingly rigid worldview that framed politics as an existential struggle between ethnic groups rather than a contest of interests within a shared society.

3. Strategic Organiser

Unlike charismatic public figures who mobilise crowds through speeches, Bagosora's influence derived largely from planning, coordination and organisational authority. Scholars often point to his ability to utilise military structures, command networks and state resources in support of extremist objectives.

4. Bureaucratic Leadership

Bagosora is a useful example of what genocide scholars sometimes describe as a "bureaucratic perpetrator". Rather than carrying out violence personally, his power came from directing institutions and creating conditions in which others committed violence. This illustrates how genocides often depend upon administration, logistics and organisation as much as direct killing.

5. Moral Disengagement and Dehumanisation

The ideology associated with the genocide portrayed Tutsi civilians as threats to the nation and depicted political opponents as enemies. Such thinking reflects processes of moral disengagement, whereby violence is justified through narratives of self-defence, national survival or ethnic struggle.

Bagosora is one of the most important figures for understanding how genocide can be organised through state institutions. Unlike paramilitary leaders who operate outside government structures, Bagosora worked from within the military and defence bureaucracy.

His case demonstrates several key themes in genocide studies:

- The role of military elites in planning and coordinating mass violence.
- The importance of extremist ideology in legitimising attacks on civilians.
- How bureaucratic systems can be used to facilitate genocide.
- The relationship between political crisis and organised mass killing.
- The way senior leaders can mobilise existing institutions to carry out atrocities rapidly and systematically.

Bagosora illustrates that genocide is rarely spontaneous. It often requires planning, organisation, communication networks and leaders capable of coordinating large numbers of people toward a common destructive objective.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Théoneste Bagosora provides a powerful example of the importance of **organisational leadership, ideological commitment, military authority and bureaucratic coordination** in the commission of genocide. His case demonstrates that mass atrocities are often enabled not only by public leaders and propagandists, but also by senior officials who use state institutions to organise, direct and sustain violence against targeted populations.

Profile: Agathe Habyarimana (née Kanziga) (1942-)

Unlike some other figures studied Agathe Habyarimana was not a military commander or elected political leader, making her an important case for examining how influence can be exercised behind the scenes.

Agathe Habyarimana (born Agathe Kanziga) was the wife of President Juvénal Habyarimana, who ruled Rwanda from 1973 until his assassination on 6 April 1994. Numerous scholars, investigators and legal proceedings have described her as one of the most influential individuals within the ruling elite during the years preceding the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

She is frequently associated with the Akazu ("little house"), an informal network of relatives, allies, military officers and political insiders centred around the presidential family. This group has been widely described as a powerful force behind the promotion of extremist Hutu Power ideology during the early 1990s.

Although she was never convicted of genocide, French refugee and administrative courts upheld findings that there were serious grounds for believing she had participated in the planning, organisation and direction of the genocide, resulting in the rejection of her asylum applications.

Personality Characteristics

1. Influence Through Informal Power

Unlike military leaders such as Théoneste Bagosora or political leaders such as Radovan Karadžić, Agathe Habyarimana's influence appears to have stemmed largely from personal networks rather than formal office. Historians often describe her as someone who exercised considerable power through family connections, patronage and elite relationships.

2. Commitment to Elite Preservation

Scholars frequently argue that the Akazu sought to preserve its political and economic dominance during a period of democratisation and civil war. In this interpretation, maintaining power became closely linked to increasingly exclusionary and extremist political positions.

3. Strong In-Group Loyalty

The network surrounding Agathe Habyarimana was characterised by close family ties and regional loyalties. Genocide researchers often view such highly exclusive power structures as important because they can reinforce groupthink, reduce internal criticism and strengthen commitment to shared goals.

4. Ideological Rigidity

The Akazu has been closely associated with the development and promotion of extremist anti-Tutsi narratives. Researchers have argued that the group's worldview increasingly framed political compromise as dangerous and portrayed ethnic coexistence as a threat to the survival of the regime.

5. Indirect Exercise of Authority

One of the most significant aspects of Agathe Habyarimana's profile is that she demonstrates how individuals can influence major political events without occupying formal leadership roles. Her case highlights the importance of examining informal authority alongside official governmental structures.

Agathe Habyarimana is important because she represents a type of actor that is sometimes overlooked in genocide studies: the influential insider who helps shape the political environment in which violence becomes possible.

Her case raises important questions about:

- The role of elite family networks in sustaining authoritarian systems.
- How informal power can influence state decision-making.
- The relationship between patronage networks and extremist politics.
- The role of ideological circles in fostering genocide-enabling attitudes.
- Questions of responsibility for those who influence events without directly commanding violence.

Her profile illustrates that genocide is not only shaped by soldiers, politicians and propagandists. It can also be facilitated by influential figures operating through networks of loyalty, patronage and ideological commitment.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Agathe Habyarimana is a valuable case study in the importance of **informal power, elite networks, ideological influence and political patronage**. Her case illustrates that genocide is often enabled not only by visible leaders and military commanders, but also by influential insiders who help shape the political and ideological conditions in which mass violence becomes possible.

Profile: Interahamwe

This profile is designed to help students consider how ordinary citizens can become perpetrators of mass violence through processes of radicalisation, group identity, propaganda and militia mobilisation. Unlike the previous profiles, this focuses on an organisation rather than an individual. The Interahamwe provides an important case study in the social and psychological dynamics of genocide.

What Was the Interahamwe?

The Interahamwe was a Hutu militia organisation in Rwanda that emerged from the youth wing of the ruling MRND (National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development) during the early 1990s. The name is commonly translated as "those who attack together" or "those who work together".

Initially a political youth movement, the organisation became increasingly militarised during the Rwandan Civil War. By 1994 it had become one of the principal instruments of the Genocide against the Tutsi, participating in the systematic mass murder of Tutsi civilians and moderate Hutu opponents.

Alongside the Impuzamugambi militia, the Interahamwe played a central role in carrying out killings during the approximately 100 days of genocide that followed the assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana on 6 April 1994.

Characteristics of the Organisation

1. Strong Collective Identity

The Interahamwe fostered an intense sense of belonging and group loyalty. Members were encouraged to see themselves as defenders of the nation and protectors of the Hutu community. Such identities can increase conformity and reduce individual moral judgement.

2. Radicalisation Through Propaganda

The militia was heavily influenced by extremist propaganda. Radio broadcasts, particularly those from RTLM (Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines), repeatedly portrayed Tutsi people as dangerous enemies and existential threats. This propaganda helped normalise hatred and violence.

3. Obedience and Conformity

Many genocide scholars emphasise that not all perpetrators were driven by deep ideological conviction. Some members joined because of peer pressure, fear, opportunities for advancement, or obedience to authority. The Interahamwe therefore

provides an important example of how group dynamics can encourage participation in atrocities.

4. Dehumanisation of Victims

A crucial aspect of the genocide was the systematic portrayal of Tutsi civilians as less than human. Propaganda often referred to Tutsis as "cockroaches", making violence easier to justify psychologically. Dehumanisation is regarded by many scholars as a key warning sign of genocidal processes.

5. Recruitment of Marginalised Youth

Research suggests that many recruits were young men with limited economic opportunities. The militia offered status, power, belonging and material rewards. This highlights how social and economic vulnerabilities can be exploited by extremist movements.

Relevance to Genocide Studies

The Interahamwe is one of the most important examples of how genocide is implemented through the participation of large numbers of ordinary people rather than a small number of leaders alone.

The organisation demonstrates several key themes in genocide studies:

- The power of propaganda and hate speech.
- The role of peer pressure and group conformity.
- The mobilisation of civilian populations for violence.
- The use of militias alongside state institutions.
- The process of dehumanisation and moral disengagement.

For many scholars, the Interahamwe demonstrates that genocide is not simply the product of a few evil leaders. It often requires the active participation or support of thousands of individuals who become convinced that violence is legitimate, necessary or unavoidable.

Social-Psychological Themes for Analysis

When examining the Interahamwe, students may find the following concepts useful:

- **Social Identity Theory:** How group membership shapes behaviour.
- **Conformity and Obedience:** The influence of authority figures and peer groups.

- **Moral Disengagement:** How perpetrators justify harmful actions.
- **Dehumanisation:** The portrayal of victims as outside the moral community.
- **Group Polarisation:** How extremist views become amplified within like-minded groups.

These concepts help explain how individuals who may not have been predisposed to violence can become participants in mass atrocities.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, the Interahamwe illustrates how **group identity, propaganda, dehumanisation, conformity and organised mobilisation** can transform ordinary citizens into perpetrators of extraordinary violence. The organisation's role in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi demonstrates that genocide is not only directed from above by leaders such as Théoneste Bagosora or figures associated with the Akazu, but also depends upon the active participation of mass organisations capable of carrying out violence on a large scale.

Škorpioni (The Scorpions)

Who Were the Škorpioni?

The Škorpioni ("Scorpions") were a Serbian paramilitary unit active during the wars in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo during the 1990s. They operated under the command of Slobodan Medić and became notorious for their involvement in war crimes against civilians.

The unit attracted international attention after the public release in 2005 of video footage showing the execution of six Bosniak prisoners from Srebrenica near Trnovo in July 1995. The footage became one of the most powerful visual pieces of evidence associated with the Srebrenica genocide.

Members of the unit were subsequently prosecuted in Serbian courts for their involvement in the killings.

Characteristics of the Organisation

1. Militarised Group Identity

Like many paramilitary organisations, the Škorpioni cultivated a strong in-group identity based on loyalty, discipline and shared purpose. Such groups often develop powerful bonds that encourage obedience and suppress dissent.

2. Normalisation of Violence

The unit operated in environments where violence against civilians was increasingly portrayed as legitimate or necessary. Repeated exposure to conflict and extremist narratives can lead members to view actions that would otherwise be morally unacceptable as routine aspects of warfare.

3. Obedience to Authority

The execution footage associated with the unit provides an opportunity to examine the role of authority structures in mass violence. Members appeared to act within a command framework in which obedience was expected and moral responsibility was often diffused across the group.

4. Dehumanisation of Victims

As with many perpetrators of atrocity crimes, violence was facilitated by narratives that portrayed targeted populations as enemies rather than fellow human beings. Dehumanisation reduces empathy and lowers the psychological barriers to killing civilians.

5. Visibility of Perpetration

Unlike many atrocities that rely largely on witness testimony, the Škorpioni became infamous because members recorded their own crimes. This provides researchers with rare evidence of perpetrator behaviour, attitudes and interactions during the commission of atrocity crimes.

Relevance to Genocide and Atrocity Studies

The Škorpioni are particularly important because they help bridge the gap between high-level political decision-makers and actual perpetrators on the ground. They illustrate how genocidal and ethnic cleansing policies are translated into direct violence against civilians.

Their case highlights several important themes:

- The role of paramilitary organisations in ethnic cleansing campaigns.
- The implementation of mass violence at the local level.
- The relationship between state structures and irregular armed groups.
- The psychological impact of group loyalty and obedience.
- The evidential value of perpetrator-generated recordings in documenting atrocities.

For genocide scholars, the Škorpioni demonstrate that atrocities are rarely committed solely by political leaders. They depend on the willingness of smaller groups and individuals to carry out orders, enforce terror and participate directly in violence.

Social-Psychological Themes for Analysis

When studying the Škorpioni, students may find the following concepts useful:

- **Obedience to Authority:** Why individuals comply with orders, even when those orders involve harming others.
- **Moral Disengagement:** How perpetrators justify violent actions.
- **Dehumanisation:** The portrayal of victims as outside the normal moral community.
- **Group Cohesion:** The influence of loyalty and belonging on behaviour.
- **Diffusion of Responsibility:** The tendency for individuals to feel less personally accountable when acting as part of a group.

These concepts help explain how ordinary individuals can become participants in extraordinary acts of violence.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, the Škorpioni provide a powerful example of how **group conformity, obedience, dehumanisation and paramilitary organisation** can facilitate mass violence. Their involvement in crimes associated with the Srebrenica genocide highlights the crucial role played by local perpetrators in translating broader political and military objectives into direct violence against civilians.

Profile: Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM)

Unlike military organisations or political leaders, RTLM demonstrates how communication systems can become powerful instruments for mobilising ordinary people to participate in mass violence. It is one of the most frequently studied examples of media involvement in genocide.

What Was RTLM?

Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) was a Rwandan radio station that broadcast between July 1993 and July 1994. It became one of the most influential media outlets in Rwanda during the period immediately preceding and during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Scholars have frequently described it as a central vehicle for extremist Hutu Power propaganda.

RTLM reached a wide audience because radio was the most accessible form of mass communication in Rwanda. The station mixed popular music, humour, gossip, news and political commentary with increasingly extreme anti-Tutsi messaging. This made its broadcasts appealing, particularly to younger listeners.

The station has often been referred to as "Radio Genocide" because of its role in encouraging ethnic hatred and helping mobilise participation in the genocide.

Characteristics of the Organisation

1. Propaganda Disguised as Entertainment

One of RTLM's most distinctive features was its informal and entertaining style. Unlike traditional state radio, it used popular music, conversational presenters and humour to attract listeners. This format helped extremist messages appear normal and credible rather than overtly political.

2. Dehumanisation of Targeted Groups

RTLM repeatedly portrayed Tutsi people as dangerous enemies and often referred to them using dehumanising language. Such rhetoric reduced empathy towards victims and helped create psychological conditions that made violence against civilians easier to justify.

3. Fear-Based Messaging

Many broadcasts framed the conflict as a struggle for survival, suggesting that the Hutu population faced an existential threat. Genocide researchers frequently note that fear is one of the most powerful tools used by extremist movements to justify violence.

4. Direct Mobilisation

RTLM went beyond spreading prejudice. Numerous studies and tribunal findings concluded that broadcasts helped mobilise people to participate in killings by identifying enemies, encouraging action and helping coordinate violence.

5. Social Influence and Norm Formation

Because RTLM reached large audiences daily, it played a significant role in shaping perceptions of what was socially acceptable. Repeated messages created the impression that hostility towards Tutsis was normal, popular and justified.

RTLM is one of the clearest examples of how media can contribute to genocide. Unlike military units such as the Interahamwe or Arkan's Tigers, RTLM did not physically kill people. Instead, its significance lies in how it influenced beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.

Its case illustrates several key themes:

- The power of propaganda in preparing populations for violence.
- The role of hate speech in encouraging participation in mass atrocities.
- The process of dehumanising targeted groups.
- The use of media to normalise extremist beliefs.
- The relationship between communication, mobilisation and collective violence.

For genocide scholars, RTLM demonstrates that words can play a critical role in creating conditions in which violence becomes possible. Genocide often begins not with weapons, but with narratives that redefine victims as threats and legitimise their exclusion from the moral community.

Social-Psychological Themes for Analysis

When studying RTLM, students may find the following concepts useful:

- **Persuasion and Social Influence:** How media can shape attitudes and behaviour.
- **Dehumanisation:** The portrayal of groups as less than human.
- **Moral Disengagement:** How people come to justify violence against civilians.

- **Fear Appeals:** The use of perceived threats to encourage extreme behaviour.
- **Normative Influence:** How repeated messaging shapes perceptions of what is socially acceptable.

These concepts help explain how media can contribute to genocidal processes without directly engaging in physical violence.

Key Takeaway

For genocide scholars, Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) represents one of the most important examples of how **propaganda, hate speech, fear-based messaging, dehumanisation and mass communication** can contribute to genocide. The station's role during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi demonstrates that media organisations can become powerful enablers of mass violence by shaping beliefs, legitimising hatred and mobilising ordinary people to participate in atrocities.