

Genocide: Causation and Denial in Myanmar

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Genocide in Burma

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Rohingya Asylum Seekers Andaman Sea 2015



Rohingya refugees arrive in Shah Porir Dwip Bangladesh Oct 1 2017



Bangladesh refugee camps

September 2017



Causative Denial

Working backwards

- Humanitarian crisis/refugee crisis
- State Crime
- Genocide

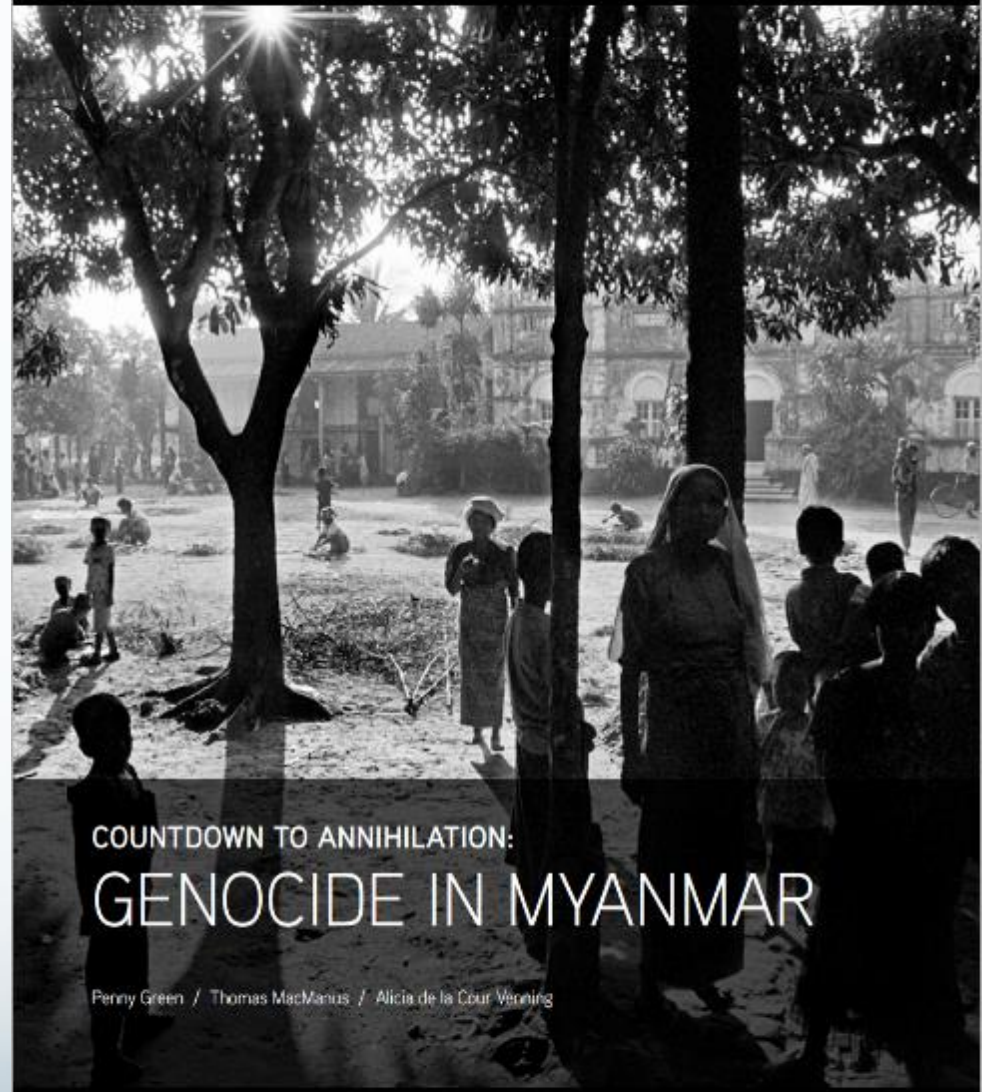
Rohingya refugees watch their homes burn

September 9th 2017



Genocide in Burma/Myanmar and Bangladesh

- Is the persecution of the Rohingya genocide?
- Research in 2 parts – Myanmar (2014/15) and Bangladesh (Oct/Nov 2017)
- 176 interviews (Rakhine, Rohingya, Civil society, local government, monks, international community)
- Bangladesh, 70 interviews (45 in-depth)



A State Crime Genocide Paradigm

Green and Ward State Crime: *'Human Rights violations perpetrated by state agents in pursuit of state organisational goals'*

Feierstein: Genocide as social practice- a process which can take place over many years

Lemkin: *...aimed at the the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves*

Card: Genocide as social death

Who are the Rohingya?

- Burmese self identified Muslim ethnic minority
- Language – Rohingya
- Location – Rakhine State Western Burma
- Population up until 2016 = 1.2 -1.4 million
- 35% of Rakhine State's population Muslim Rohingya (Buddhist Rakhine (58%))
- An established historical presence for over 300 years

MYANMAR (BURMA)
 0 km 70 140 210 km
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■ National Capital (4,100,000 in 1991)
 ○ over 100,000
 ○ over 200,000
 ○ over 300,000
 ○ other main city
 ● other city
 ■ Capital of state or division



DIVISIONS

- SAGAYING DIVISION
- MAGWAY DIVISION
- MANDALAY DIVISION
- BAGO DIVISION
- IRRAWADDY DIVISION
- RANGOON DIVISION
- TENASSERIM DIVISION

STATES

- KACHIN STATE
- CHIN STATE
- ARAKAN STATE
- SHAN STATE
- KAYAH STATE
- KAYAN STATE
- MON STATE









Stages of Genocide (Feierstein 2014)

- Stage 1: Stigmatisation
- Stage 2: Harassment
- Stage 3: Isolation
- Stage 4: Systematic Weakening
- Stage 5: Annihilation
- Stage 6: Symbolic Enactment

Official Stigmatisation

- 1982 citizenship Law and statelessness
- Since 1994 state refusal to issue Rohingya babies with birth certificates
- Denial of identity (removed from the lexicon)
- Racist stereotypes: ‘illegal Bengalis’, ‘Kalar’
- Excluded from 2014 census unless they registered as ‘Bengali’

"people who believe in Islam in
Rakhine state"



Racist Monks

- Ashin Wirathu
- Mobilising Rakhine fears
- 969 campaign
- Hate crimes with impunity
- Ma Ba Tha 'Protection of Race and Religion' laws (Bamar/Buddhism)





Harassment of the Rohingya

- Planned mass violence June and October 2012 with destruction of homes, businesses, mosques
- 200 murders – impunity
- Denial of citizenship
- Policy of disenfranchisement
- Restrictions on all civil rights

Rakhine extremists

“When the international community give them [Rohingya] a lot of food and a lot of donations, they grow fat and become stronger ... they will become more violent.” Arakan National Party Spokesperson (January 2015)

IDP Camps to Detention Camps to Concentration Camps ?

“According to 1982 law, the people that don’t have citizenship should be kept in the prison, but in reality there are so many people, so the government can’t keep the people in the prisons. So, as an idea, they should have concentration camps to keep those people who doesn’t have citizenship. Oh, sorry, not concentration camp, detention centre.”

Arakan National Party Spokesperson (January 2015)

Rakhine Extremists



Stage 3: Isolation/Segregation

- Camps (120,000 -140,000 Rohingya confined to camps)
- Ghetto (Aung Mingalar, Sittwe 4,500 inhabitants)
- Prison Villages



Rohingya camp



Rohingya camp



Inside Aung Mingalar Ghetto



Ghetto



Systematic Weakening



Systematic weakening

- stateless, denied all civil rights
- Stripped of agency and human dignity.
- Overcrowding squalid conditions of life,
- No freedom of movement
- No access to health care (MSF expulsion February 2014); education; adequate food
- Depression pervasive

Genocide accomplished August 2017



Charred remains of Sein Nyein Pya Market



Stage 5: Mass Annihilation

- Curfews and movement restrictions in months before
- Over 354 Rohingya villages in Northern Rakhine state destroyed;
- an estimated 25,000 killed since 25th August 2017;
- 800,000 forced by deadly violence to flee since 2017;
- systematic and widespread gang rape of Rohingya women by uniformed Myanmar security forces;
- 1 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh displaced person camps
- 140,000 Rohingya in concentration camps, prison villages and ghettos in central Rakhine State





Satellite imagery 3 burnt Rohingya villages



Burnt village Maungdaw







Kutupalong Refugee Camp, Bangladesh









Mantaz Begum















Open sewers





‘Don’t quarrel, Live peacefully, We will look after you’





Stage 6: Symbolic Enactment

- Destruction of old society: mosques, madrassas, houses, villages, fields, food-stocks, crops, livestock and trees
- Appropriation of Rohingya property
- Establishment of new military, residential and economic infrastructure
- Burnt lands revert to state ownership
- Demographic restructuring - creation of the *new* society – in the **absence** of the destroyed group,

The denial paradigm

- State Discourse of Denial
- ‘it didn’t happen’
- ‘victims were responsible’
- ‘it was self defence’
- outright lies

Impunity and denial

- Security forces stood by as June and Oct 2012 violence took place
- Journalists threatened and imprisoned
- No prosecutions for the 200 murders and arson attacks in Sittwe in 2012
- Rakhine State Attorney general to us: 'it happened at night – difficult to see'
- ASSK's September 5th speech –outright lies
- Counter-terrorism discourse

Denial and Cover-ups

2 NATIONAL

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

9 November 2015

Government and people of Myanmar do not recognize the term “Rohingya” as it is an invented terminology

1. Recently, Fortify Rights and International State Crime Initiative released papers containing genocide of so called “Rohingyas” in Rakhine State and other various unfounded allegations. Such accusations were orchestrated internationally at a time the Human Rights Council is reviewing the national report of Myanmar under the Universal Periodic Review, and when the country is at an important juncture of holding the multiparty General Elections. At the same time, Al Jazeera News Agency broadcast a similar fabricated news.
2. Such news and papers were prepared on baseless, deceptive and false allegations. The Government and people of Myanmar do not recognize the term “Rohingya” as it is an invented terminology. In this respect, the Government of Myanmar categorically rejects the unfounded allegations mentioned in the said papers and news broadcast.
3. Such unfounded allegations are interfering in the internal affairs of Myanmar and disturbing the peace and tranquility of the country, as well as causing distrust towards the peace loving people of Myanmar. Therefore, Myanmar strongly rejects such malicious acts.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Nay Pyi Taw

8 November 2015

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INFORMATION COMMITTEE REFUTES RUMOURS OF RAPES

Submitted by cwmsco3 on Mon, 12/26/2016 - 13:45

Breaking News Off

FAKE

RAPE

Fake

Rape

The Tatmadaw True News Information Team

- “Rohingya burning down their own villages”
- “Violence a conspiracy by International human rights groups”
- ‘...security forces did not commit shooting at innocent villagers and sexual violence and rape cases against women. They did not arrest, beat and kill the villagers. They did not totally destroy, rob and take property, gold and silverwares, vehicles and animals...’

Planned Genocide

- *‘The Bengali problem was a long-standing one which has become an unfinished job despite the efforts of the previous governments to solve it. The government in office is taking great care in solving the problem.’*
- General Min Aung Hlaing
Commander in Chief Myanmar
Armed Forces



Genocidaires

General Min Aung Hlaing and Aung San Suu Kyi



' I only want to go where I can be Rohingya'
(Zura Khatu from Rathedaung NRS, Thankali camp, Bangladesh)

