



Torn from home

'I didn't feel like I had a home after the genocide because everything was destroyed. I had no home at all. I had nothing.'

Chantal Uwamahoro, survivor of the Genocide in Rwanda

Background

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) chooses the annual theme to provide those preparing Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) events with fresh ideas for interesting and inspiring commemorations. Each theme relates to the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and the subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Introduction

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust offers the theme **Torn from home** to encourage audiences to reflect on how the enforced loss of a safe place to call 'home' is part of the trauma faced by anyone experiencing persecution and genocide. 'Home' usually means a place of safety, comfort and security. On HMD 2019 we will reflect on what happens when individuals, families and communities are driven out of, or wrenched from their homes, because of persecution or the threat of genocide, alongside the continuing difficulties survivors face as they try to find and build new homes when the genocide is over.

HMD 2019 will include marking the 25th anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda, which began in April 1994. HMD activity organisers may particularly want to acknowledge this milestone anniversary, and reflect on how this theme impacts on members of the Rwandan community.

Scope of the theme

Torn from home has resonance, in part, because all HMD participants, children or adults, will have some personal associations with the word 'home'. It relates to the experiences of communities before, during and after their persecution. As a means of escaping certain death, some of those persecuted found alternative places to call home in less than ideal conditions, whilst others have had to make the place they were confined to into a home. After the genocide ended, many survivors did not have a recognisable home to return to.

This theme also allows for reflections on how we can support those escaping persecution today and who may be looking to make a new home in our own communities. It leads to discussions of how the lessons of the past can inform our lives today and ensure that everyone works together to create a safer, better future.

1 - The meaning of home before genocide

a) What makes a home?

'My mother always seemed to be in the kitchen. I remember coming home from school and being greeted by delicious cooking smells.'

Blanche Benedick, survivor of the Holocaust

The word 'home' is familiar to us all. It relates to a place in time and space but it also relates to the people and possessions we find within. Although not always the case, home usually has associations with safety, security, privacy, dignity and peace. In the lead up to the Holocaust, Nazis undermined the notion of 'secure home' by imposing curfews on Jews, and seizing certain possessions such as radios and cameras, before then forcing them to leave their homes.

When reflecting on their lives before their persecution, survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides remembered the familiar sights, and smells, as well as the voices of the friends and family which turn a house into a home. Their homes might have been very different from each other, but the survivors whose testimony we share hold many common reflections about what home meant to them before the genocide.

b) Fleeing from home before genocide

'There was a lake, Lake Kivu, which separates Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, very huge. So we decided to swim.'

Jean Louis Mazimpaka, survivor of the Genocide in Rwanda

During the first years of Nazi rule some Jewish families, as well as others who were experiencing increasing persecution, left their homes and fled Germany. Some fled to neighbouring countries in Europe, whilst others left for countries further away like the USA, Canada and China. Not only did this mean leaving all that was familiar, but it meant trying to make a new home, often somewhere with a different culture and language, and, in some cases, an unwelcoming new society.

In subsequent genocides, communities experiencing persecution have fled their homes, becoming refugees in nearby countries, and in the UK. Sometimes leaving home is physically dangerous, like it was for Jean Louis and those who swam with him across Lake Kivu, to find a place of safety. Leaving home is never an easy decision.

2 - Torn from home during genocide

a) Forced from home

'The Khmer Rouge ordered us to leave the city "for three hours only" and to carry nothing with us... I left my house with my mother, my two daughters, three sisters and two brothers... Five hours passed, one day, two days, three days... We realised by now that this was a trip without return.'

Var Ashe Houston, survivor of the Genocide in Cambodia

A few months before World War Two broke out, Jewish people in Nazi Germany were told that it was now legal for their homes to be taken from them at any time. As the war developed, and Nazi control spread across Europe, Jewish people were forced from their homes into ghettos in cities across Europe. Families had to live in overcrowded, dirty and unsanitary conditions; disease and starvation were rife. Many still attempted to make their cramped accommodation in the ghetto into a semblance of home, by continuing to celebrate Jewish festivals and the sabbath.

Subsequent acts of genocide also saw communities forced from their homes. During the Genocide in Cambodia, millions of people like Var were forced from their home towns and cities to live and work on the land in the countryside. Some lost hope that they would ever see their homes again.

b) Finding an alternative home

'Even when I was hiding in someone else's home, there was no security, because at any moment someone could come and knock on the door and find you. At least in the bush there was hope that, if someone came, you would be able to move and keep hiding.'

Chantal Uwamahoro, survivor of the Genocide in Rwanda

Some survivors were only able to survive by hiding under floorboards or in attics, or in forests and bushes, such as Chantal had to do in Rwanda. These hiding places were not home but, in some cases, people remained in their hiding place for several years. In other cases, people moved from place to place, finding a refuge for a few weeks or months at a time.

c) Making a home a refuge

'Mona's mother said, "Don't worry, Blanche, you're going to stay here with us for a few days. We're going to hide you because we've heard that all the Jews are going to be rounded up."'

Blanche Benedick, survivor of the Holocaust

Those who tried to save others by taking them into their homes can be remembered for their acts of rescue during the Holocaust and the genocides which followed. These include those who looked after children who came to the United Kingdom on the *Kindertransport*, and others, like Mona's family in Denmark, who hid Jewish people in their homes during World War Two. Louisa Gould paid the ultimate price for hiding a Russian prisoner of war in her home on the Channel Islands; she was murdered in Ravensbrück concentration camp.

3 - A home after genocide

a) Returning home

'I stayed in Rwanda after the genocide, we tried to go back to work, to find others and make other friends, to find out if you have some family members left. Then we tried to build the country again, to build a family again, to build ourselves again.'

Appolinaire Kageruka, survivor of the Genocide in Rwanda

When the Holocaust ended with the end of World War Two, millions of people across Europe were displaced, often hundreds of miles from home. Some tried to return home – often a difficult and complex journey. Those who were able to return to their neighbourhoods often faced continuing prejudice, and sometimes violence from the communities to which they now returned.

After the Genocide in Rwanda, survivors like Appolinaire who moved back to their homes found themselves living alongside neighbours who had been perpetrators during the genocide. The challenge of rebuilding a life was made more difficult by having to encounter those responsible for their loss of family on a regular basis.

b) No home to return to

'I was numb when I saw there was nothing left... Someone had even planted corn on my land and they were harvesting it.'

Besima, survivor of the Genocide in Bosnia

Many of those who tried to return from concentration camps across Europe after the Holocaust found their houses had been looted, sold, given away or physically destroyed, and the local communities unwilling or unable to help them reclaim their homes.

Similarly, when survivors of the Genocide in Bosnia, like Besima, returned to their homes, many found that they had been taken over by members of the communities involved in killing their loved ones. The continuing trauma of genocide leaves people trying to adapt to a new life alongside some of those responsible for destroying their old one. Finding or building a new home can take a long time in communities still recovering from genocide. Having no permanent home creates further trauma for those who survive.

c) An empty home

'I missed my brothers and sisters, always, to this very day. When the holidays came and people celebrated, or the families sat together, that was when this inner thing, this nervous strain came. That was very hard.'

Otto Rosenberg, Sinti survivor of Nazi Persecution

For many people, family and loved ones are essential to feeling 'at home.' Having lost friends and family during genocide, those who survived the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution or other genocides had to face the trauma of making a home without those who had been murdered. Otto describes his continuing sense of loss, particularly at times when Sinti families traditionally gather in the home and spend time together.

d) Making others feel at home

'Britain is now my second home. It is good to have a new life, but it was really tough to have no contact with my family for so long.'

Abdul Aziz Mustafa, survivor of the Genocide in Darfur

After persecution, 'home' can become a country offering a place of safety and belonging. The continuing refugee crisis highlights that there are millions of people across the world who are still seeking a safe place to call home. The ongoing Genocide in Darfur highlights that acts of persecution, violence and genocide continue to force millions of people from their homes today.

Further reading

The survivors whose words appear above have all shared their testimonies with HMDT. Their stories, along with others of victims and survivors of the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and subsequent genocides, can be found at hmd.org.uk/lifestories.

Find out more...

Learn about Holocaust Memorial Day and explore our free resources: hmd.org.uk



Rhwygo o'u cartref

'Doeddwn i ddim yn teimlo bod gen i gartref ar ôl yr hil-laddiad achos bod popeth wedi'i ddiarhysio. Doedd gen i ddim cartref o gwbl. Doedd gen i ddim byd.'

Chantal Uwamahoro, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda

Cefndir

Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust yn dewis thema flynyddol fel bod y rhai sy'n paratoi digwyddiadau Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust yn gallu meddwl am syniadau newydd er mwyn cofio'r Holocaust mewn ffordd ddiddorol ac ysbrydoledig. Mae pob thema'n ymwneud â'r Holocaust, Erledigaeth y Natsïaid a'r achosion o hil-laddiad yn Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia a Darfur.

Cyflwyniad

Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust yn cynnig y thema **Rhwygo o'u cartref** er mwyn annog cynulleidfaoedd i ystyried sut mae colli lle diogel i'w alw'n 'gartref' yn rhan o'r trawma sy'n wynebu unrhyw un sy'n dioddef erledigaeth a hil-laddiad. Fel arfer, mae 'cartref' yn golygu lle saff, cyfforddus a diogel. Ar Ddiwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust 2019 byddwn yn meddwl am yr hyn sy'n digwydd pan fydd unigolion, teuluoedd a chymunedau'n cael eu gyrru neu eu rhwygo o'u cartrefi oherwydd erledigaeth neu'r bygythiad o hil-laddiad, ynghyd â'r anawsterau cyson sy'n wynebu goroeswyr wrth iddynt geisio canfod ac adeiladu cartrefi newydd pan ddaw'r hil-laddiad i ben.

Fel rhan o Ddiwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust 2019 byddwn ni'n cofio'r ffaith ei bod yn 25 mlynedd ers yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda, a ddechreuodd ym mis Ebrill 1994. Mae'n bosibl y bydd trefnwyr gweithgareddau Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust eisiau cydnabod y garreg filltir hon, gan fyfyrion ar sut mae'r thema yn effeithio ar aelodau o'r gymuned yn Rwanda.

Cwmpas y thema

Mae'r thema '**Rhwygo o'u cartref**' yn taro tant yn rhannol oherwydd y bydd gan bawb sy'n cymryd rhan yn Niwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust, yn blant neu'n oedolion, gysylltiadau personol â'r gair 'cartref'. Mae'n ymwneud â phrofiadau cymunedau cyn, yn ystod ac ar ôl eu herledigaeth. Er mwyn osgoi marwolaeth sicr, aeth rhai pobl a oedd yn cael eu herlid ati i greu cartrefi newydd o dan amodau anodd iawn, tra bod eraill wedi gorfod ymgartrefu yn y man lle'r oeddent yn cael eu caethiwo. Wedi i'r hil-laddiad ddod i ben, nid oedd gan lawer o'r

goroeswyr gartref yng ngwir ystyr y gair i ddychwelyd iddo.

Hefyd, mae'r thema hon yn gyfle i ni feddwl am sut y gallwn helpu pobl sy'n ffoi rhag erledigaeth heddiw, ac a all fod am greu cartref newydd yn ein cymunedau ni. Mae'n arwain at drafodaethau ynglŷn â sut mae gwersi'r gorffennol yn gallu dylanwadu ar ein bywydau heddiw, gan sicrhau bod pawb yn cydweithio i greu dyfodol gwell a mwy diogel.

1 - Ystyr cartref cyn hil-laddiad

a) Beth sy'n gwneud 'cartref'?

'Roedd mam fel pe bai yn y gegin drwy'r amser. Rwy'n cofio dod adref o'r ysgol a'r t'n llawn aroglau coginio bendigedig.'

Blanche Benedick, goroeswr yr Holocost

Mae'r gair 'cartref' yn gyfarwydd i ni gyd. Mae'n ymwneud ag amser a gofod penodol, ond mae hefyd yn cynnwys pobl ac eiddo sydd yn y cartref. Fel arfer, rydym yn cysylltu 'cartref' â diogelwch, preifatrwydd, urddas a heddwch, er nad yw hynny'n wir bob amser. Yn y cyfnod yn arwain at yr Holocost, fe aeth y Natsïaid ati i danseilio'r cysyniad o 'gartref diogel' trwy orfodi cyrffiw ar yr Iddewon a dwyn eu heiddo personol fel radios a chamerau, cyn eu gorfodi i adael eu cartrefi.

Wrth feddwl am eu bywydau cyn iddynt gael eu herlid, roedd goroeswyr yr Holocost a goroeswyr hil-laddiad mewn gwledydd eraill yn cofio'r eitemau a'r arogleuon cyfarwydd, ynghyd â lleisiau ffrindiau a theulu, sy'n troi tŷ yn gartref. Efallai bod eu cartrefi'n wahanol iawn i'w gilydd, ond mae tystiolaeth y goroeswyr yr ydym yn ei rhannu'n cynnwys llawer o atgofion cyffredin am beth oedd cartref yn ei olygu iddynt cyn yr hil-laddiad.

b) Ffoi o'u cartref cyn yr hil-laddiad

'Mae llyn enfawr yn gwahanu Rwanda a Gweriniaeth Ddemocrataidd Congo, sef Llyn Kivu. Fe wnaethom benderfynu nofio ar draws y llyn.'

Jean Louis Mazimpaka, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda

Yn ystod y blynyddoedd cyntaf o dan reolaeth y Natsïaid, penderfynodd rhai teuluoedd Iddewig, ac eraill a oedd yn dioddef erledigaeth gynyddol, adael eu cartrefi a ffoi o'r Almaen. Fe wnaeth rhai ffoi i wledydd cyfagos yn Ewrop, tra symudodd eraill i wledydd pell fel UDA, Canada a Tsieina. O ganlyniad, bu'n rhaid i'r bobl hyn adael popeth a oedd yn gyfarwydd iddynt a cheisio greu cartref newydd, yn aml mewn gwlad â diwylliant ac iaith wahanol, ac mewn rhai achosion, mewn cymdeithas newydd lle nad oedd llawer o groeso iddynt.

Mewn achosion eraill o hil-laddiad ers hynny, mae cymunedau sydd wedi dioddef erledigaeth wedi ffoi o'u cartrefi, gan ddod yn ffoaduriaid mewn gwledydd cyfagos, ac yn cynnwys y DU. Weithiau mae gadael cartref yn beryglus yn gorfforol, ac roedd hynny'n wir i Jean Louis a'r rhai a nofiodd gydag ef ar draws Llyn Kivu i chwilio am rywle diogel. Nid yw gadael cartref byth yn benderfyniad hawdd.

2 - Rhwygo o'u cartref yn ystod hil-laddiad

a) Eu gorfodi o'u cartrefi

'Fe gawsom orchymyn i adael y ddinas "am dair awr yn unig" gan y Khmer Rouge, a mynd â dim byd gyda ni... Fe adewais fy nh gyda fy mam, fy nwy ferch, tair chwaer a dau frawd... Fe aeth pum awr heibio, wedyn diwrnod, dau ddiwrnod, tri diwrnod... Erbyn hynny fe wnaethom sylweddoli na fyddem yn dychwelyd adref.'

Var Ashe Houston, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Cambodia

Ychydig fisoedd cyn dechrau'r Ail Ryfel Byd, dywedodd y Natsïaid wrth yr Iddewon yn yr Almaen ei bod bellach yn gyfreithiol iddynt eu gorfodi i adael eu cartrefi unrhyw bryd. Wrth i'r rhyfel fynd rhagddo ac wrth i reolaeth y Natsïaid ehangu ar draws Ewrop, gorfodwyd yr Iddewon i adael eu cartrefi a byw mewn getoau mewn dinasoedd ar hyd a lled Ewrop. Bu'n rhaid i deuluoedd fyw mewn amodau cyfyng a llawn, budr ac aflan; roedd clefydau a newyn yn gyffredin iawn. Ymdrechodd llawer ohonynt i greu rhyw fath o gartref yn eu llety gorlawn yn y geto trwy barhau i ddathlu gwyliau Iddewig a'r Sabath.

Gorfodwyd cymunedau i adael eu cartrefi mewn achosion diweddarach o hil-laddiad. Yn ystod yr hil-laddiad yn Cambodia, gorfodwyd miliynau o bobl fel Var i adael eu trefi a'u dinasoedd er mwyn byw a gweithio ar y tir yng nghefn gwlad. Collodd rhai pobl bob gobaith o dychwelyd i'w cartrefi eto.

b) Dod o hyd i gartref arall

'Hyd yn oed pan oeddwn i'n cuddio yng nghartref rhywun arall doeddwn i ddim yn ddiogel gan fy mod i'n poeni y gallai rhywun ddod o hyd i mi unrhyw bryd. O leiaf yn y gwyltir roedd gobaith o allu symud ymlaen a pharhau i guddio os oedd rhywun yn dod.'

Chantal Uwamahoro, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda

Llwyddodd rhai pobl i oroesi trwy guddio o dan yr estyll neu yn yr atig, neu mewn coedwigoedd ac yn y gwyltir, fel y gwnaeth Chantal yn Rwanda. Nid cartrefi oedd y cuddfannau hyn, ond mewn rhai achosion, bu'n rhaid i bobl aros yn eu cuddfan am sawl blwyddyn. Mewn achosion eraill, symudodd pobl o le i le, gan ddod o hyd i loches am ychydig wythnosau neu fisoedd ar y tro.

c) Troi cartref yn lloches

'Dywedodd mam Mona: "Paid poeni, Blanche, rwyf ti'n mynd i aros yma gyda ni am ychydig ddyddiau. Rydym ni'n mynd i dy guddio di achos ein bod wedi clywed bod y Natsïaid am gipio'r holl Iddewon.'"

Blanche Benedick, goroeswr yr Holocost

Gellir cofio am weithredoedd dewr y rhai a geisiodd achub eraill trwy roi lloches iddynt yn eu cartrefi yn ystod yr Holocost ac yn yr achosion o hil-laddiad a ddilynodd. Mae pobl o'r fath yn cynnwys y rhai a ofalodd am y plant a ddaeth i'r Deyrnas Unedig ar y Kindertransport, ac eraill, fel teulu Mona yn Denmarc, a guddiodd Iddewon yn eu cartrefi yn ystod yr Ail Ryfel Byd. Talodd Louisa Gould y pris eithaf am guddio carcharor rhyfel o Rwsia yn ei chartref ar Ynysoedd y Sianel; fe'i llofruddiwyd yng ngwersyll crynhoi Ravensbrück.

3 - Cartref ar ôl hil-laddiad

a) Dychwelyd adref

'Fe arhosais i yn Rwanda ar ôl yr hil-laddiad; fe wnaethom ni geisio dychwelyd i'r gwaith, dod o hyd i eraill a gwneud ffrindiau newydd, a chanfod os oedd aelodau eraill o'r teulu yn fyw o hyd. Wedyn fe aethom ati i geisio codi'r wlad eto, creu teulu o'r newydd a chodi ein hunain eto.'

Appolinaire Kageruka, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda

Pan ddaeth yr Holocost i ben ar ddiwedd yr Ail Ryfel Byd, roedd miliynau o bobl ledled Ewrop wedi'u dadleoli, gannoedd o filltiroedd o'u cartrefi yn aml. Ceisiodd rhai ohonynt dychwelyd adref, ond gallai'r daith fod yn anodd ac yn gymhleth. Yn aml, roedd y rhai a lwyddodd i dychwelyd adref yn gorfod wynebu rhagfarn barhaus, a thrais ar adegau, gan y cymunedau roeddent yn dychwelyd iddynt.

Ar ôl yr hil-laddiad yn Rwanda, bu'n rhaid i oroeswyr fel Appolinaire a lwyddodd i dychwelyd adref fyw wrth ymyl cymdogion a gyfrannodd at yr hil-laddiad. Roedd yr her o geisio creu bywyd newydd yn fwy anodd wrth orfod byw ymysg y rhai a fu'n gyfrifol am farwolaeth aelodau o'r teulu.

b) Dim cartref i dychwelyd iddo

'Fe ges i sioc enfawr pan welais nad oedd dim byd ar ôl... Roedd rhywun wedi plannu d ar fy nhir hyd yn oed, ac roedd wrthi'n ei fedi.'

Besima, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad ym Mosnia

Pan geisiodd pobl dychwelyd o wersylloedd crynhoi ledled Ewrop ar ôl yr Holocost, gwelodd llawer ohonynt fod eu cartrefi wedi'u hysbeilio, eu gwerthu, eu rhoi i eraill neu eu dinistrio, a bod y cymunedau lleol yn amharod i'w helpu i gael eu cartrefi'n ôl, neu eu bod yn methu gwneud hynny.

Yn yr un modd, pan dychwelodd goroeswyr yr hil-laddiad ym Mosnia, fel Besima, i'w cartrefi, gwelodd llawer ohonynt fod eu cartrefi wedi'u meddiannu gan aelodau o'r cymunedau a oedd wedi lladd eu hanwyliaid. Mae trawma parhaus hil-laddiad yn gorfodi pobl i geisio addasu i fywyd newydd ochr yn ochr â rhai o'r bobl a fu'n gyfrifol am ddinistrio eu bywyd blaenorol. Mae canfod neu adeiladu cartref newydd yn gallu cymryd cryn amser mewn cymunedau sy'n dal i fod yn ceisio adfer eu hunain ar ôl hil-laddiad. Mae diffyg cartref parhaol yn creu rhagor o drawma i'r rhai sy'n goroesi.

c) Cartref gwag

'Rwy'n gweld eisiau fy mrodyr a'm chwiorydd yn gyson hyd heddiw. Adeg y gysylltu wrth i bobl ddathlu neu wrth i deuluoedd ddod ynghyd, byddwn i'n teimlo o dan straen enfawr. Roedd hynny'n anodd iawn.'

Otto Rosenberg, goroeswr Sinti o erledigaeth y Natsïaid

Mae teulu ac anwyliaid yn hanfodol i deimlo'n gartrefol. Ar ôl colli ffrindiau a theulu yn ystod hil-laddiad, bu'n rhaid i'r rhai a oroesodd yr Holocaust, erledigaeth y Natsïaid neu hil-laddiad mewn gwledydd eraill wynebu'r trawma o greu cartref heb y rhai a lofruddiwyd. Mae Otto'n disgrifio ei ymdeimlad cyson o golled, yn enwedig ar yr adegau pan fydd teuluoedd Sinti yn ymgasglu yn y cartref i dreulio amser gyda'i gilydd.

d) Helpu eraill i deimlo'n gartrefol

'Prydain yw fy ail gartref bellach. Da o beth yw cael bynyd newydd, ond roedd yn anodd iawn colli cysylltiad â'm teulu am gymaint o amser.'

Abdul Aziz Mustafa, goroeswr yr hil-laddiad yn Darfur

Ar ôl dioddef erledigaeth, gall 'cartref' fod yn wlad sy'n cynnig diogelwch ac ymdeimlad o berthyn. Mae argyfwng ffoaduriaid sy'n parhau heddiw yn dangos bod miliynau o bobl ledled y byd yn parhau i chwilio am le diogel i'w alw'n gartref. Mae'r hil-laddiad sy'n parhau yn Darfur yn dangos bod erledigaeth, trais a hil-laddiad yn parhau i orfodi miliynau o bobl o'u cartrefi.

Darllen pellach

Mae'r goroeswyr a ddyfynnir uchod wedi rhannu eu hanesion ag Ymddiriedolaeth Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust. Mae eu hanesion, ynghyd â hanesion dioddefwyr a goroeswyr eraill o'r Holocaust, erledigaeth y Natsïaid a hil-laddiad mewn gwledydd eraill, ar gael ar wefan hmd.org.uk/lifestories.

Mwy o wybodaeth... Dysgwch am Ddiwrnod Cofio'r Holocaust ac edrychwch ar ein hadnoddau am ddim: hmd.org.uk