

# Handouts for Timelines

## Timeline of Colonialism and Racism

A partial summary of some events generally associated with the history of colonialism and racism:

1760 BCE	In Babylon King Hammurabi draws up the 'Code of Hammurabi'. (Written on a big stone, the code promises to 'make justice reign in the kingdom ... and promote the good of the people'.)
1440 BCE (approx.)	The Torah of Moses gives the tribes of Israel the Ten Commandments, including detailed punishments for contravening the edict, 'Thou shalt not kill'.
528 – 486 BCE	In India, Buddha preaches morality, reverence for life, non-violence and right conduct.
26 – 33 AD	Jesus Christ preaches morality, tolerance, justice, forgiveness and love.
613 – 632	Prophet Mohammed teaches the principles of equality, justice and compassion revealed in The Qur'an.
1215	In England, the Magna Carta Libertatum (Medieval Latin for 'the Great Charter of the Liberties') is signed. Commonly called 'the Magna Carta', this is a charter agreed to by King John of England. First drafted to make peace between the unpopular King and a group of rebel barons, it promised the protection of church rights, protection for the barons from illegal imprisonment, access to swift justice, and limitations on feudal payments to the Crown.
1492	Discovery of America 'The New World' by Christopher Columbus and the beginning of the colonisation by the European imperials 'The Old World'.
1510	Beginning of the Atlantic Slave Trade which was part of the triangular trade (1680 till the beginning of the 19th century). Approximately twelve million people from west, central and south Africa were sold and transported via the Atlantic to North-, Central- and South America by the Europeans.
1532 – 1536	Conquest of the Inca Empire by Francisco Pizarro.
1688	First petition against the Slave Trade and the slavery in North America by German emigrants.
1758	In the frame of the Age of Enlightenment (1650-1800), humans were classified in four categories by Carl von Linné: physical and personal attributes as well as explicit judgement and the creation of hierarchies.
1776	The United States Declaration of Independence is the statement adopted by the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia on July 4th, which announced that the thirteen American colonies, then at war with the Kingdom of Great Britain, regarded themselves as thirteen independent sovereign states, no longer under British rule. These states would found a new nation – the United States of America. 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.'
1787	The opponents of the (Atlantic) slave trade founded the movement 'Society for Effecting the Abolition of Slavery.'
1789	French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The National



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Assembly agrees the declaration, which guarantees the rights to liberty, equality, property, security and resistance to oppression. However, that just applied for the 'white' persons not for Black People and People of Colour. The reason was that the emancipation of the 'white' European workers was only possible because of the repression and exploitation of other world regions and humans.

- 1791 United States of America: Bill of Rights (The United States Congress agrees the Bill of Rights, amending the US Constitution to include rights to trial by jury, freedom of expression, speech, belief and assembly.)
- 1807 British (Slave Trade Act), American (Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves) and Danish anti-slavery laws were passed. Followed by Sweden and the Netherlands.
- 1810 Sara Baartman, a South African Khoikhoi woman, was shifted to Europe and exhibited as a dancer first in Great Britain, later for science reason in France. After her death in 1816, she was anatomised and partial conserved. Her corporeal attributes were the biological basis for the 'race theory' which constructed the legitimization of the colonialism. Only in 1974, her mortal remains were taken away from the exhibition at Musée de l'Homme in Paris. In 2002, her mortal remains were transported to South Africa and ceremonially buried.
- 1815 The Congress of Vienna was happening after the French Revolution (1789- 1799). The Congress agreed on outlawing slavery in Article 118 due to the pressure from Great Britain.
- 1822 The independence of Brazil.
- 1848 Abolishment of slavery in France.
- 1853 The British government paid three million pounds to Portugal and one million pounds to Spain to end the slave trade. However, Brazil did not agree to that. Just after military actions against Brazil's coast by Great Britain and threatening Brazil with a blockade in 1852, Brazil agreed.
- 1863 Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln, which prohibited slavery in the South of the United States of America.
- 1865 The 13th Amendment to the US Constitution declared that 'Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.' Formally abolishing slavery in the United States, the 13th Amendment was passed by the Congress on January 31st.
- 1877–1965 Jim Crow Laws were state and local laws that enforced 'separate, but equal' racial segregation in all public facilities and transportation in the Southern United States. The laws oppressed Black People and People of Colour by institutionalising economic, educational, and social disadvantages.
- 1884–1885 Congo Conference in Berlin regulated European colonisation and trade in Africa.
- 1888 Brazil prohibited slavery as the last country from the western hemisphere.



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- 1899 The first Hague Convention is signed. Together with the Geneva Conventions, it forms the basis for International Humanitarian Law.
- 1907 German federal election: For the first time, colonial policy was a central topic during the election campaigns.
- 1910 The independence of South Africa
- 1931 The Paris Colonial Exhibition was a six-month colonial exhibition held in Paris, France that attempted to display the diverse cultures and immense resources of France's colonial possessions. Politically, France hoped the exposition would paint its colonial empire in a beneficial light, showing the mutual exchange of cultures and the benefit of France's efforts overseas. It downplayed French efforts to spread its own language and culture abroad, thus advancing the notion that France was associating with colonised societies, not assimilating them. This would thus negate German criticisms that France was 'the exploiter of colonial societies [and] the agent of miscegenation and decadence'.
- 1935 The Nuremberg Laws (German: Nürnberger Gesetze) were anti-Semitic laws in Nazi Germany. They were introduced on September 15th by the Reichstag at a special meeting convened at the annual Nuremberg Rally of the Nazi Party (NSDAP). The two laws were the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour. They forbade marriages and extramarital intercourse between Jews and Germans and the employment of German females under 45 in Jewish households. The Reich Citizenship Law declared that only those of German or related blood were eligible to be Reich citizens; the remainder were classed as statesubjects, without citizenship rights.
- 1945 The United Nations (UN) is created. ('To reaffirm faith in human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person ...')
- 1947 The Independence of India.
- 1948 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a historic document that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, consists of 30 articles affirming an individual's rights, which, although not legally binding in themselves, have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, economic transfers, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions, and other laws.
- 1948 The Apartheid system of institutionalised racial segregation was passed in South Africa. Apartheid was characterised by an authoritarian political culture based on 'white' supremacy, which encouraged state repression of Black Africans, Black People and People of Colour, and Asian South Africans for the benefit of the nation's minority 'white' population.
- 1950 The European Convention on Human Rights is adopted by the Council of Europe.
- 1955 By refusing to give up her seat to a 'white' man on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus, the Black Woman, Rosa Parks helped initiate the civil rights movement in the United States. She became an iconic figure in the civil rights movement in the USA and worldwide.
- 1960 'Year of Africa': 17 African countries became independent; but at the same



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time, the continent was beginning to face the realities of postcolonial violence.

- 1960 The Sharpeville massacre occurred on the 21st of March, at the police station in the South African township of Sharpeville in Transvaal (today part of Gauteng). The UN declared this day to be the international Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, urging the abolishment of the Apartheid System.
- 1961 Amnesty International is created, as a result of a campaign to free two Portuguese students imprisoned for seven years for making a toast to freedom.
- 1961 The end of the 500 years history of colonisation of Portugal in Africa. The independence of all Portuguese colonies in Africa.
- 1963 During the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, the civil rights activist Martin Luther King hold the public speech 'I Have a Dream' in Washington D.C. in which he called for civil and economic rights and an end to racism in the United States. King underlined that even one hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation that Black People and People of Colour are still not free in the USA.
- 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. (Entered into force in 1969).
- 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (Entered into force in 1976).
- 1969 American Convention on Human Rights for the Americas, in force since 1978.
- 1976 Soweto uprising, the turning point in the liberation struggle in South Africa. 1979 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Entered into force in 1981).
- 1980 The independence of Zimbabwe.
- 1981 The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. (Adopted by the Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union).
- 1984 The Convention Against Torture (Entered into force in 1987).
- 1990 International Roma Day: The day was officially declared in Serock, Poland, the site of the fourth World Romani Congress of the International Romani Union (IRU), in honour of the first major international meeting of Romani representatives, 7th to 12th of April 1971 in Chelsfield near London.
- 1990 International Convention on the protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW) (Entered into force in 2003).
- 1992 Rostock-Lichtenhagen riots, 22nd till 26th of August: The worst mob attacks against migrants in post-war Germany. Stones and petrol bombs were thrown at an apartment block where asylum seekers lived. Several hundred militant right-wing extremists were involved, and about 3,000 neighbourhood onlookers stood by, applauding them.



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- 1994 Nelson Mandela won as the first Black Man the presidential elections in South Africa, which underlined the ending of the Apartheid system by law.
- 1995 Srebrenica massacre: the army of Republika Srpska killed 8000 Bosniaks (mostly boys and men between 13 and 78 years). Everything was systematically planned. The mass murder was the worst crime on European soil since the Second World War. The 'Dutch Battalion', the Dutch Peacekeeper by the United Nations, were present and knew about the massacre but did not intervene.
- 2009 Barack Hussein Obama was the first African American to be elected to the presidency of the USA.
- 2011 Anders Behring Breivik, a Norwegian far-right terrorist, commits the Norway attacks in Oslo and Utoya killing more than 70 people.
- 2011 Discover of the far-right German neo-Nazi terrorist group 'National Socialist Underground' via a video in which the three leaders claimed to be responsible for killing nine migrants and one police officer, attempted murder 43 times, three bomb attacks and 15 robberies between 2000 and 2007. The police investigators had largely excluded right-wing extremist backgrounds of the crimes and searched for perpetrators in the victims' surroundings, which stigmatised many of their relatives.
- 2017 'Muslim ban': Executive Order 13769P 'Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States' an executive order by US president Donald Trump from January to March. The entry into the USA was banned for Citizen from seven majoritarian Muslim states (Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Sudan) for 90 days, for refugees for 120 days and for refugees from Syria permanently.
- 2017 The Unite the Right rally was a 'white' supremacist rally that occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia, from 11th to 12th of August. Protesters were members of the far right and included self-identified members of the alt-right, neo-Confederates, neo-fascists, 'white' nationalists, neo-Nazis, Klansmen, and various militias. The organisers' stated goals included unifying the American 'white' nationalist movement. At the time, a counter-demonstration was happening. A self-identified 'white' supremacist deliberately rammed his car into a crowd of counter-protesters about 800m away from the rally site, killing one person and injuring nearly 40 other people.
- 2018 Windrush scandal: People were transported from the former colonised Caribbean to Great Britain between 1948 and 1971 due to labour shortage and to support the reconstruction after the damage of the Second World War. They never applied for the British citizenship or became formal naturalised citizens. They received an unlimited exceptional leave to remain but never got documents to proof that de facto they have had an illegal status. Therefore, the British government under Theresa May decided to deport those people back to their home countries, or they lost their homes and jobs or lost access to health care.
- 2019 A 'white' Australian man assassinated two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. The assassin published a right winged manifest at a social network and streamed a 17 minutes long video live about the assassination on his social network account.

