

THE MOST CRUEL DICTATORS OF XX CENTURY



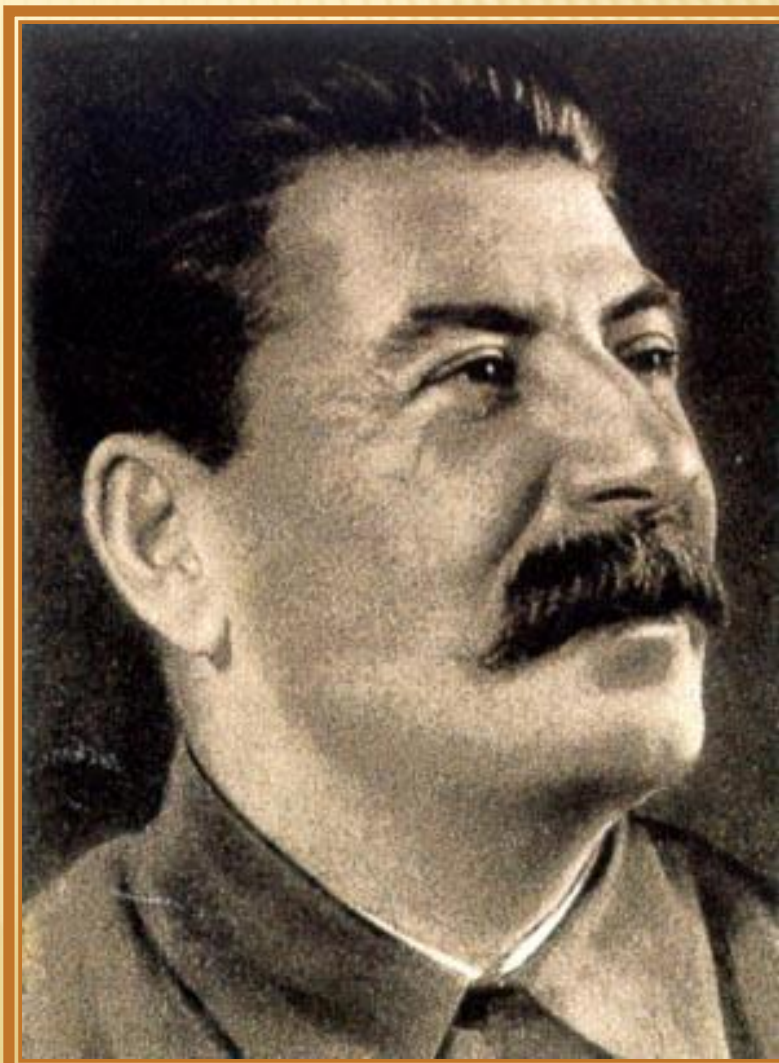
DICTATORSHIP

- The concept of dictatorship as well as the use of force and systemic persecution of political opponents to stay in power dates back to the ancient Roman civilization, however, it was the modern history dictators who made it virtually a synonym for gross human rights violations and brutality. Sadly, some of the most brutal dictators in modern history held power not so long ago.



JOSEPH STALIN (1878 – 1953)

The Georgian-born Soviet leader rose to power after Lenin's death in 1924. The future ally of the United States and Britain against the Nazi Germany was a paranoid man who brutally suppressed his political enemies as well as suspected opponents. The number of casualties of the Stalinist regime vary but about 14 to 20 million of people are estimated to have died in the penalty labor camps known as the gulags or were executed during the Great Purge in the 1930s, while millions were deported and exiled.



ADOLF HITLER (1889 – 1945)

This evil man who rose to power in the 1930s was responsible for the greatest ferocities in human history. He ordered systematic racially based murder of about 11 million of people of which 6 million were Jews, while his foreign policy provoked World War II which claimed 50 to 70 million lives. Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945, to avoid being captured by the Soviet Red Army that was advancing in Berlin.



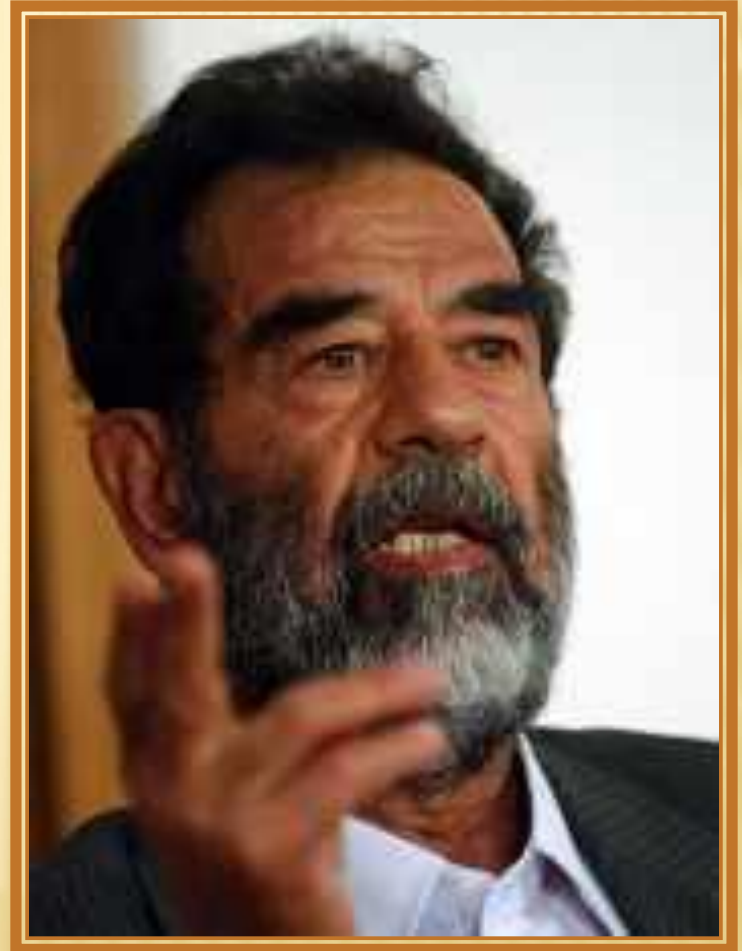
FRANCISCO FRANCO (1892 – 1975)

The Spanish dictator held power from 1939 when he emerged as the winner of the Spanish Civil War until his death in 1975. His regime was marked by severe repression and systematic suppression of dissidents who were either sent to concentration camps, sentenced to prison which often includes forced labor or executed. Francoist regime became more liberal in the 1960s and 1970s but Spain became a democratic country only after Franco's death.



SADDAM HUSSEIN (1937 – 2006)

- The Iraqi dictator who came to power in 1979 is estimated to be responsible for about 500,000 to 1 million deaths of which the Kurds account for about 70,000 to 300,000. Hussein was ousted after the invasion of the US and UK led coalition in 2003. In 2006, he was found guilty for 148 Shi'ite deaths in the early 1980 and sentenced to death. He was executed by hanging on December 30, 2006.



IDI AMIN (1925 – 2003)

The 3rd President of Uganda was responsible for about 250,000 deaths which were a result of his regime of terror marked by torture, extra-judicial executions, corruption and ethnic persecution. He held power from 1972 to 1979 when he fled the country due to the defeat against Tanzania which he attacked one year earlier. He found refuge in Libya and then in Saudi Arabia where he died in 2003.



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