Constructing identities: the transition of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy in Rwanda

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Constructing identities: The transition of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy in Rwanda

by

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A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Anthropology

Program of Study Committee:
Ann Jones (Major Professor)
Karen Kessel
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This is to certify that the master’s thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

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Abstract

Eleven years ago the world witnessed the violent and systematic attempt by government-sponsored organizations and militias of a small African country to cleanse its lands of an entire section of its populations. Approximately one million people were killed during the hundred-day genocide in Rwanda. Neighbors killed neighbors, as ordinary civilians became both victims and killers. There is much debate surrounding the origins of the Hutu/Tutsi identity. This dichotomy has been constructed, reinforced and contested by those competing for political domination and legitimization. This paper will explore theories relative to identity formation and the origins of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy. Using participant observations and formal and informal interviews, my research was concerned with the processes of reconstructing identities based on class, race and nationalism in Rwanda. It is my hypothesis that the rigid “ethnic” divisions that facilitated the Rwandan genocide were once fluid social categories that became static under colonial rule and were manipulated for political purposes in the post-independence era. [Keywords; Rwanda, genocide, identity, ethnicity, nationalism]
Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Study

Focus of Study

There is no way to clearly understand what happened in Rwanda during the genocide. Scholars can develop and ponder theories and debate amongst themselves; presidents can apologize for their part in it, and survivors can bury their dead. My time in Rwanda has shown me that human experience is a vast spectrum, with no two people occupying the same space. Issues of identity in any particular place will always be complicated. However, the extent of the genocide, the continued violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the influx of returning refugees to Rwanda have created a complex web of identities.

Identities along with their history can and have been manipulated, redefined and rewritten depending on the political, social, and economical context. These identities have never been static. In fact, efforts to make them static opened the gates to the genocide. The goal of this thesis is to discuss the transition as well as the rewriting of the Hutu/Tutsi identity from the precolonial era to the present day. It is my hypothesis that the rigid “ethnic” divisions that facilitated the Rwandan genocide were once fluid social categories that became static under colonial rule and were manipulated for political purposes in the post-independence era. The exploitation of identities laid the foundation for the Rwandan genocide. It is for these reasons issues concerning identity in Rwanda must be critically and holistically examined.

In the context of Rwanda, the path to genocide was paved through the manipulation of identity. A label of “ethnic” or “racial” affiliation did not cause the death of a million
Rwandans. The Hutu/Tutsi labels were constructed within a specific social context and embedded with meaning that was used by those vying for political domination and legitimization. In post-genocide Rwanda, the government and many citizens view these labels as being “too dangerous” and destructive to be used outside discussions of the genocide and ongoing conflicts in neighboring countries. As Malkki (1996) states:

The genocide in Rwanda has already happened; it is not possible to go back and change interventions or omissions of the past. But the dangerous effects of silencing are still all too salient in currently unfolding events in the region (Malkki 1996: 387).

**Rationale for Study**

Rwanda is an important case study because the issues that were at the foundation of the genocide have yet to be resolved. Many Rwandan officials and world leaders believe that peace within Rwanda is a result of the eradication of “ethnic” divisions and the success of reconciliation efforts. The situation however, is much more complex. Whereas, the situation between Hutu and Tutsi has been relatively stable in Rwanda, neighboring countries have experienced a number of violent outbreaks between the two groups. The outbreaks of violence in the region along with the invasion of Rwanda and Uganda in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have its roots in the 1994 genocide.

**Motivation for Studying Rwanda and the Genocide**

Attempts to explain my research focus to people, of how identities are constructed in Rwanda usually results in one of two responses: “You study what! Where?” or “Oh really, like the movie?” Consequently, others view my interest in Rwanda as following a Hollywood fad. However, my interest developed long before Hollywood or even popular media took interest in the subject. Twelve years ago, I clearly remember watching the news
about two “tribal” groups, somewhere in Africa killing each other. The picture I vividly remember were thousands of people walking on a dusty road carrying whatever they could, and women dragging small children, with heavy bundles on top of their heads. Based on my youthful frame of reference, the whole scene seemed to be one of utter chaos. After the segment was over I returned to whatever I was doing and forgot about Hutsis and Tutus.

Seven years later, as an undergraduate, those two names and a little country caught my attention once again. However, this time there was no forgetting about it. I was horrified and outraged the world chose to close its eyes and ears to the screams of innocent victims. I assumed the governments of the world powers, under the command of the United Nations would set aside their political and personal ambitions to stop the blatant violations of human rights. Wasn’t the United Nations established for this exact reason? After World War II, these same powers had come together and decided that “never again” would the world sit by and watch as genocide unfolded. However, no one intervened and a million people were left to die. Rwanda represents the failure of humanity at a global level. As a million people were being slaughtered the world watched from the sidelines. In learning about what took place during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, I had lost my “innocence” and faith in the world powers to protect and uphold even the most basic of human rights.

These issues were further brought to my attention during discussions over the U.S. led invasion of Iraq. Pro-war supporters argued Saddam Hussein was oppressing his own people, had committed acts of genocide, and had weapons of mass destruction. I struggled with this justification, because it was not being equally applied. Around the same time, Somalia did not have a “legitimate” government. Violent warlords were dominant source of political stability and security for the country. There were also outbreaks of violence and
continuous fighting between the countries of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and Rwanda, which left thousands dead and thousands more displaced in refugee camps. Furthermore, one cannot forget to mention the ongoing conflicts in the Sudan, Cote d’Ivoire and Liberia. I pondered, “Why was the U.S. ignoring them?” When I posed this question to a political science professor, he responded “Because, Africa is not located in the Middle East, there’s no strategic interest in it for us (meaning the U.S.).” I came to an understanding that we determine who lives and dies, based on the presence and availability of exploitable resources.

This conversation led me to two conclusions: first that I would never take another political science class. Secondly and perhaps more importantly, I decided to study the political and socio-cultural aspects of African conflicts. Rwanda was particularly interesting to me for several reasons. For one, I am interested in conflict as it applies to populations especially where there has been a history of violence because of perceived ethnic differences. Secondly, the events, which occurred in Rwanda in 1994, represent an extreme illustration of what many African peoples across the continent have endured. Unlike the Holocaust where there were marked religious, cultural, linguistic and ethnic differences, Hutu and Tutsi share all of these features. The racialized formations of these identities took place through the implementation of colonial ideologies. The identities were further manipulated by the power structures in the post-independence era. Furthermore, while the genocide was organized by these power structures, ordinary citizens were forced to bare most of the responsibility, both as perpetrators and as victims.

The genocide has greatly destabilized the already politically frail region, adding fuel to existing conflicts and creating an enormous humanitarian crisis. Directly or indirectly, the
genocide led to the overthrow of long-time Zairian ruler Mobutu Sese Seko and contributed to massive abuses against human rights. Ethnic conflict and state sponsored violence that defined the Rwandan genocide have continued to plague the African continent. Similar to the world’s inaction during the genocide, the conflicts in the Great Lakes region, the Sudan and Somalia are going largely unnoticed by international community.

**Research Methods**

I used standard anthropological methods, including an ethnographic approach in exploring the construction of identity in Rwanda. Emerson et al (1995) states

> Immersion in ethnographic research then, involves both being with people to see how they respond to events as they happen and experiencing for oneself these events and the circumstances that gave rise to them (Emerson et al 1995: 2).

My fieldwork explored how the destructive nature of the genocide reshaped and reconstructed the Hutu/Tutsi identity. Throughout my fieldwork, I became more interested in the idea of “multiple truths” and how the reconstruction of the dichotomy led to the development of a national identity. Such a process cannot fully be accomplished without the “rewriting” of history.

A professor once told me “Ethnography is the bread and butter of anthropology.” It is also more than that; ethnography is a crucial aspect of anthropology, which sets it apart from other disciplines. However, for an anthropologist to have access to the ingredients for a well-developed ethnographic account requires a number of things. First, it takes time and patience to establish a rapport and a sense of trust among potential informants. It also involves a certain amount of willingness among the informants, to openly address questions coming from an “outsider” in a situation where there is the potential for political or social
consequences. However, because of financial constraints and scheduling conflicts, the time I spent in the field was limited. The political climate of Rwanda along with the traumatic experiences people continue to face on a daily basis also presented certain barriers and challenges that had to be taken into consideration.

Qualitative research methods included, participant observation, documentary analysis and formal and informal interviews. This study involved research approaches from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, political science, peace and conflict studies and history. Direct non-reactive observations outlined by Bernard (2002), provided me with a vital instrument in conducting fieldwork in Rwanda. Due to the political climate of the country, the responses to structured questions were often non-responsive or ambiguous. Direct non-reactive observations allowed for the opportunity to examine peoples’ interactions without the effect of playing to an audience. There were two methods of observations I employed. The first involved watching a number of people from the same location, recording individual interactions and responses. Secondly, at memorial sites and museums, observations involved inconspicuously following individuals for longer periods of time from exhibit to exhibit, periodically recording observations. Based on fieldwork methods suggested in Emerson, Fritz, Shaw (1995) and Bernard (2002), I was able to design a methodological approach for data collection. Data collections from observations were recorded in a research journal, later typed and coded. Subjects were chosen at random and not observed for more than ten consecutive minutes. The memorial sites are not only for people to learn about what happened during the genocide, but are the resting place for thousands of survivor’s loved ones. Out of respect for the victims and their families, I intentionally did not record any observations of people while they visited the burials.
In order to gain access to Rwandans who may be willing to discuss Hutu/Tutsi identity, I employed the techniques of disguised field observation and passive deception as outlined by Bernard (2002). Rwanda has redirected a lot of economic and social resources to develop their tourist industry in order to attract a Western cliental. With the increase of tourism, memorial sites have also become popular tourist destinations, so my first day I signed up for the Kigali City Tour. I was the only person on the tour with two personal ‘‘tour guides’’ David and John. Over the course of two and half hours, we visited a number of sites around Kigali including the Memorial Center and the barracks where ten UN Peacekeepers were killed. I had the opportunity to ask various questions relating to the genocide, identity, government initiatives and the continuation of violence (not all were answered). More importantly, John and David shared bits and pieces of their own personal stories with me. Furthermore, I also was able to observe their interaction with other Rwandans.

Informal interviews took place in various locations throughout Rwanda. These interviews were unscheduled and unstructured, most often emerging from casual conversations. One of the best sources and settings for willing informants was through the public transportation system. Many times, these were initiated by the participant and involved commentaries of the genocide. In general, informants were between the ages of 20 and 70, from representing a cross-section of socio-economical, educational and regional backgrounds. Women who were pregnant, people under the age of 15, prisoners and military officials were excluded from the study. In most cases, informants controlled and arranged these casual interviews within a very specific framework. For example, an individual may have explained how his/her family was killed or what he/she thought about the events of the genocide. However, no one ever provided a ‘‘personal’’ first-hand account regarding the
One day, an elder man freely and openly explained how most of his family was killed. When he turned around, I noticed there was a large oval scar on the back of his head, which I believe resulted from being attacked with a wooden club. However, he never mentioned the attack or how he survived. I tried to probe for further information by posing several questions, but the man continued as if he had not heard them.

Within this framework informants never expressed discontent with the current government, nor did anyone use the labels Hutu/Tutsi. I found this particularly interesting during the tour of Kigali. As we drove passed Kigali’s very own golf course, John told me that they had to drop the fees, because no one would go. He went on to explain how the government was trying to build a water park close to the golf course. Moments before, we had passed a small stream of water no wider than a foot. Twenty people were gathered around this water hole attempting to collect water in jerry cans, bathe, and wash clothes. I asked him and David if they believed they needed a water park or if the government could find better ways to spend a couple of million dollars. David simply said he didn’t think they needed a water park, but said nothing about the role of the government (Fieldnotes 07/10/2006).

Mary the fifteen-year-old daughter of an American woman living in the country informed me that according to her Rwandan friends it was not only extremely rude but also vulgar to ask someone’s “ethnic” identity.

During formal interviews, participants were assured confidentiality; they were asked to sign the Human Subject Research form approved by Iowa State University, which was printed in English and French (see Appendix 8 for further details). The interviews were conducted over the course of an hour, often at the participant’s home or at a local café. The
questions that were posed during the interview process focused on establishing a pattern, which could be used to track the transition and constructions of Hutu, Tutsi and Rwandan over time. It was particularly important to understand individual perceptions about the identities during precolonialism, Belgian colonialism, before and after the genocide. How participants viewed the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy in precolonialism was essential in establishing patterns related to post-genocide identities. Additional questions included the importance of other social categories in shaping individual identity, what it meant to be a “Rwandan” during the pre and post-genocide era, and the context were Hutu/Tutsi labels were used (see Appendix 7). Although, all names have been changed, informants were guaranteed complete confidentiality.

Document analysis and archival research included court transcripts, daily newspapers, reports from the United Nations, Human Rights Watch and African Rights. The court transcripts were primarily from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Located in Arusha Tanzania, the ICTR was established in November 1994 with the purpose of helping to bring about national reconciliation and peace to the region. It is mandated to prosecute high government and military officials, and others responsible for genocide and other violations against human rights between January 1st and December 31st 1994. These documents provided a primary source for detailed accounts of the historical events leading up to and during the genocide as well as transcriptions of the hate propaganda from news magazines and radio. Daily newspapers provided an invaluable resource for information regarding the activities of the government, local events including events commemorating the
“liberation” of Rwanda from the genocidal regime\(^1\) in early July. Archival research of UN documents allowed a wide range of access to information of the UN’s role in Rwanda before and after the genocide, as well as statistics on the status of refugees. Some of the first organizations that were able to document the horrific accounts of the genocide included Human Rights Watch (Alison Des Forges) and African Rights. These publications were important sources of information, by providing a forum where survivors were able to voice their experiences.

**Location of Fieldwork**

Research was carried out in a number of different regions in Rwanda, including Kigali, Butare, Gikongoro, Ntarama, Kibuye, Gisenyi as well as Goma DRC. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic and the political climate of the country, I choose to collect information from a number of different genocide memorial sites around the country. The memorial sites offered a context where questions regarding issues of identity, history, and the genocide could be more openly addressed. The primary sites involved in this study include: the Kigali Memorial Center in the Gisozi district of Kigali and Murambi in the town of Gikongoro. Information was also collected from the church at Ntarama in the Kigali Ngali providence and from the National Museum in Butare.

The Kigali Memorial Center offers a final resting place to some 250 thousand victims of the 1994 genocide. It includes informational exhibits on the political, cultural, and historical context of Rwanda before, during, and after the genocide. There is also an exhibit on genocides throughout the world as well as a children’s memorial. In addition to the

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1. The genocidal regime refers to those people who were in power between April 6\(^{th}\) and July of 1994. At this time the president was Theodore Sinkiubwabo, Jean Kambanda was the prime minister. The genocidal regime also includes chief figures such as Theoneste Bagosora, leaders of the militias and members of the Juvenal Habyarimana’s wife’s family.
museum and memorials, it serves as a learning center and as a center for support groups. I selected the memorial site of Murambi in the town of Gikongoro for several reasons. For one, many of the bodies have been preserved and put on display as a vivid reminder of the consequences of genocide. For another, it is also the home of the first genocide research center in Africa.

**Doing Socio-Cultural Anthropology in Rwanda**

As a budding anthropologist and Africanist and also out of the sheer desire to get out of the cornfields of Iowa, I have spent time in various African countries. I have come to love this continent for its resilience and for its hope. Despite slavery, colonialism, war, poverty, famine and AIDS, African peoples continue to thrive even in the face of an endless struggle. Africa and its people are as diverse as any other place on earth and it is reflected within the diversity of languages and cultures found across the continent. As far as traveling and spending time within this vast continent, I adhere to the philosophy of anything goes. Each country takes sometime to adjust to and to understand.

For example, being considered white anywhere comes with socially constructed ideologies, but being white in South Africa meant something totally different than being a *mazungu*² in Kenya. In South Africa, I found it irritating that somehow my white skin was thought of as an ideological indicator to my views on race. That somehow I was like the racist Afrikaner woman I met staying at a lodge in the Amatola mountains, simply because we shared the same skin color. This connection was both because of my own insecurities as well as based on my personal experiences while in South Africa. In Mali, I had to be sure to carry my passport on me at all times and to be cautious of corrupt police officers waiting

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² In Kiswahili and Kinyarwanda *mazungu* means white person.
close to my hotel. We, as so-called “rich” Americans, were easy targets for police officers wanting to make a little extra money. My trip to Kenya was my second trip out of the country and my first trip to Africa. There were challenges of wanting to venture away from the rigid schedule set by the study abroad program along with “terrorist” warnings and a subsequent travel ban.

I knew Rwanda would present itself with its own sets of challenges and adventures. I have seen poverty within Africa and also coming from a working-class background I have experienced aspects of it. Those things I could handle. However, it’s one thing to read about genocide, it’s quite another to walk pass a woman with no legs and one hand, which she uses to beg for money. Or to ride on a taxi bus and notice that almost every single person over the age of fifteen has scars from machetes or clubs imprinted on their bodies. Rwanda does not make for an “easy” site for fieldwork and genocide is not exactly a “happy” subject to say the least. For me, there was and still continues to be a continuous negotiation and struggle between the “objective” anthropologist and the side that’s more human. My first attempt at being the brave anthropologist illustrates the inner turmoil that at times can be overwhelming.

I left Kigali on a Friday morning to go to the town of Gikongoro, where “Africa’s first genocide research center” was located at a place called Murambi. On the taxi bus, a man sat ahead of me and asked if I spoke English or French, which I responded “English and a little French”. He asked me where I was going. I told him that I was going to Gikongoro. He asked if I was a student, what I was studying and than preceded to tell me his story as time allowed. “My family was a family of ten at the start of the genocide, but now there are only three.” He lost his mother, father and brothers. Along with him, his sister also survived
and was married to an anthropologist at the university. I asked him what it means to be a survivor and he replied that it means he still has a future and a life. He turned around to face the front of the taxi; I noticed the large pinkish oval shaped scar he had on the back of head from being clubbed (Fieldnotes 07/18/2005).

Later that day, I checked into the guesthouse where I had arrangements to stay. With the help of a woman who worked there, I found a motorcycle taxi to take me to Murambi. When I reached the gate, I attempted to negotiate a time for the motorcycle taxi to return for me. I succeeded when a woman named Grace came to my rescue and led me down the long gravel driveway towards the genocide research center. The research center is a magnificent building from the outside with large glass windows and marble floors that were still under construction during my visit. She took me to the side of the building where there were six mass graves holding some of the victims. We went around the building and down a path towards several rows of buildings. Murambi was an unfinished governmental technical school, which now serves as a cemetery for some 50 thousand people. When the genocide, started many people were told to seek shelter there; however, over the course of four days the Interahamwe (militias)\(^3\) slaughtered almost all of the people.

As Grace opened the first door and showed me the room, I was completely overwhelmed. I have read endless amounts of material, viewed pictures and documentaries about the Rwandan genocide. However, there was nothing, no articles, no pictures, and no amount of information that could have prepared me for what I saw and smelled at Murambi. I tried to be the unbiased “researcher”, that brave anthropologist to make Boas and Geertz proud, I attempted to ask Grace if she could tell me what happened at Murambi; who did this

\(^3\) The Interahamwe was a prominent militia group made up of primarily of unemployed Hutu youth.
and why? She started to explain, however, as the tears formed in her eyes, she could not continue. I offered my apologies and followed her into the next room. She went on to demonstrate how the *Interahamwe* came in and attempted to explain how each wound was inflicted on certain individuals (Fieldnotes 07/18/2005).

According to many Rwandans (including Grace), after the massacres ended, when there was no one left to kill, French soldiers joined the *Interahamwe*. Together they dug a mass grave and helped to fill the pit with the dead and later joined in leisure activities. According to Grace, the *Interahamwe* poured a substance over the bodies before covering them. This story was also recanted in the documentary of Paul Rusesabagina’s trip back to Rwanda, who paid a special visit to Murambi. Rusesabagina is best known for providing refuge for hundreds of people in a hotel in Kigali (Return to Rwanda 2005).

Lime has preserved over a thousand of Murambi’s victims, some with their hair, teeth, rosaries, and clothing still intact. On almost all, of the victims, the machete cuts that broke through their bones, the impact of clubs shattered their skulls, and broke their necks are clearly visible. I could see the look of horror on the faces of the victims’ the bodies of babies that had been trampled on or thrown up against walls. There are no ropes or glass cases around the tables to separate the living from the dead. If desired, one can even touch the victims. We continued on through each room containing the bodies of men, women and children, until finally reaching the former mass grave that is now a massive hole. As we walked back to the unopened research center, Grace told me why this place was especially difficult for her. In a mixture of broken English and French she said, “My family is here, this is where they died” (Fieldnotes 07/18/2005).
It was now four o’clock p.m. and to avoid traveling at night, I decided to leave first thing in the morning. I went to back my room in the guesthouse and stared blankly at the wall for twenty minutes, before emotionally breaking down wanting nothing more than to see my family. I cried myself into a state of unconsciousness, awaking at six p.m. I watched the sunset from my window, fearing the time when this place would turn to darkness (lights did not work until seven p.m.). The sunset faded the beautiful deforested hills into blue before they disappeared into the darkness. The lights came on and I feared the time when they would go out again and I would have to try to sleep. I went downstairs for company, even to say “bon soir” to whoever walked passed. All that matter was that there were people, lights and even a TV. I watched something on diamonds from sitting outside on a chair, until I began a conversation with another guest. A young woman in her late teens or early twenties called me to dinner. I was isolated from the others and served a huge meal, none of which I was physically capable of eating. I returned to my chair, loosing my friend and watching the news in Kinyarwanda and French. The only other family staying there were the relatives of the guest I had talked with, whose brother was being ordained as a priest the next day. I talked with the other guest again for a little while before being summoned to bed.

At ten everyone began to get ready for bed. Fearing the lights going out on me, I decided to try to get some sleep. A half-hour later the lights shut off and I clung to my flashlight and my Discman playing Sade’s Lovers Rock. I closed my eyes and tried to get lost in the music and not think about the faces or the smells of the victims of the genocide. I woke up every time my CD player shut off, going back to sleep when it was halfway through playing. I gave up trying to sleep at five a.m., washed my hair the best I could in the little sink and I was ready to leave almost immediately.
There is a quote from Stephen Smith of Aegis Trust in the Kigali Memorial Center, the institution primarily responsible for funding the centers in Kigali and Murambi, which states:

If you must remember, remember this...The Nazis did not kill six million Jews nor the Interahamwe kill a million Tutsi, they killed one and then another then another. Genocide is not a single act of murder it is millions acts of murder (Kigali Memorial Center 2005).

The moment I stepped into that first room at Murambi, I knew what this truly meant. The faces of the victims and survivors of the genocide have remained with me. In the days immediately following my visit, I could not bring myself to eat or to sleep. I was afraid of the moment when I would see the faces of the victims again. Months after returning to the U.S., I continue to have nightmares about Murambi. What had these children done to be stomped on like annoying bugs? What has anyone done to deserve to have his/her head bashed in with a club made out of wood and iron nails? The faces of the victims and their pain, the looks of terror, the bodies of infants and the indescribable smell forced me to realize that this was not about me being a brave anthropologist or an objective researcher, but essentially what it means to be human.

Le Pays d’Mille Collines

Slightly smaller than Belgium and Maryland, Rwanda lies just below the equator, sharing the oftentimes bloody borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania (see map 1 in Appendix). Traveling west from the capital city of Kigali to the border of Lake Kivu, one realizes that the travel agents were not exactly truthful. To call Rwanda “the land of a thousand hills” is an underestimate of the country’s terrain, especially if one is susceptible to carsickness. The hills have played an important
role in the organization of Rwandan society, which are dotted with family compounds, agricultural lands, and banana groves. Along with the hills, there is also the Virunga volcano range, famous for the mountain gorillas once studied by Dian Fossey. Rwanda is landlocked, thus the primary sources of water are Lake Kivu along the DRC border and the Nyabarongo River, which eventually flows into the Nile. The temperature is typically mild year round, between 64-77 degrees Fahrenheit with two rainy seasons from March to May and from September to December (CIA World Factbook 2005).

In 1993, there were seven and half million people living in Rwanda, with the highest population density in all of sub-Saharan Africa. According to the UN Human Development Report (1999) there were over four hundred people per square kilometer. After the genocide and the mass exodus of people to surrounding countries, there were roughly five million people living in Rwanda, equaling a decrease of about thirty percent. Currently, the population is around eight and half million, an increase of three percent. Rwanda’s enormous and growing population has put extreme pressure on the already overly exploited land, resulting in further deforestation and depletion of wildlife outside natural parks. Over ninety percent of Rwandans are involved in agricultural production. After 1998, over seventy percent of Rwanda’s land was utilized for agricultural production. The return of refugees has severally limited the amount of land available to individuals. The genocide also caused a decrease in the amount of livestock, which were often looted or killed (Human Development Report 1999). Rwanda’s main cash crops consist of coffee and tea, while bananas, sorghum, legumes, and passion fruits are sold in local markets.

In 2005, the impact of the genocide, malaria and HIV has resulted in the decline in life expectancy for the average Rwandan to be around forty years of age. In 1992, the infant
mortality rate was 85 per one thousand live births. In 1996, infant mortality had a horrific increase to 125 per one thousand live births. Within the same timeframe the mortality rate for children under the age of five followed a similar trend, from 150 per one thousand live births to 185 (Human Development Report 1999). According to the CIA World Factbook (2005), infant mortality has declined to the pre-genocide levels of 90 per one thousand births. However, the World Bank places infant mortality rate in Rwanda to be approximately 118/1000 (World Bank 2005). Sixty percent of all Rwandans live at or under the national poverty line, while seventy percent of all Rwandans can read and write in their native language (CIA World Factbook 2005).

The genocide has led to two major trends in the reorganization of Rwandan households. In 1999, 34 percent of households were headed by women; within this demographic 61 percent of women managing their households were widows. Rwandan households. The genocide, imprisonment of family members, migration and separation of adults from their children has created a new trend of child-headed household. In 1997, 85 thousand households were headed by children, with an average of four to five children per household. According to a survey conducted by Save the Children in 1995, 77 percent of the child-headed homes consisted of siblings, 70 percent were headed by girls, 91 percent were orphans with 22 percent having no family members left, and only 15 percent had any form of regular income. However, the number of child-headed homes continues to increase due to the spread of HIV (Human Development Report 1999).

Since the arrival of Europeans and missionaries, Rwanda has been overwhelmingly Christian (roughly 90 percent), the majority of which are Roman Catholics and Protestants.
Rwanda has always maintained a small Muslim population. Since, the involvement of the Christian church in the genocide, many Rwandans have converted to Islam.

Unlike many African countries, where there are hundreds of ethnic groups each with their own native language, there is no separate language for Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Rwandans regardless of “ethnicity” share the same native language of Kinyarwanda. Rwanda holds French as an official language, since it was the language of the Belgian colonizers. The return of Rwandan refugees who were forced to leave in the sixties and seventies often went to Uganda and Tanzania where English was the dominant language of education and governance. Many of these refugees including the current president Paul Kagame, returned to Rwanda after the genocide, speaking little to no French. Under the new government, English, French and Kinyarwanda are all considered official languages. The news programs and newspapers are conducted and printed in all three languages. Linguistically similar to Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili is also spoken in the border regions of Kibuye, Gisenyi, and Kibungo and within commercial centers.

Chapter Summaries

I have intentionally left out any discussion on the “ethnic” background of Rwanda in this section. There is no singular definition of Hutu or Tutsi; they have changed according to the social, political, and economical contexts. In order to understand how issues of “ethnic” or “racial” differences can develop into genocide, it is necessary to understand how these labels are embedded with social meaning. Chapter two covers the history of Rwanda from precolonial until the genocide of 1994. There are certain historical events that have led to a change in the meanings of Hutu and Tutsi. It is important to understand the connections the past has to the construction of identity. For it is within the manipulatization of past that has
contributed to the legitimization of the social meaning behind the construction of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy. It does nothing to analyze the formation of identities without having an appreciation for the magnitude and the horrific nature of the genocide. Chapter three will outline the one hundred days of genocide from April to August 1994. I will focus on the implementation of the genocide, paying specific attention to violence against women and the role of religious organizations.

Chapter four tackles the issue at the heart of this thesis, which is how the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy has been constructed, reinforced and contested by those competing for political domination and legitimization. I will explore creation myths that seek to explain the origins of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa in regards to precolonial worldviews. Additionally, I will further concentrate on the racialization of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy, which was the direct result of European colonial ideologies and practices. This chapter will focus particularly on the incorporation of the Hamitic myth into the already existing social hierarchy. In post-independent Rwanda, I will explore how the rights of national citizenship were defined along “racial/ethnic” identities that were maintained from the colonial administration. In an attempt to remain in power, the genocidal regime used hate propaganda to construct and define the Tutsi as enemy. Lastly, this chapter will focus on post-genocide identities associated with a national identity of “Rwandan”. The concluding, chapter five will examine the implications of this study as well as areas for further research.
Chapter Two: A Historical Overview

Introduction

In order to understand how the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy was constructed we must understand the processes and the context in which they emerged. The genocidal regime used "history" as a way in which to mobilize ordinary civilians to commit horrific atrocities. The post-genocide government has attempted to remove and reconstruct aspects of Rwanda’s past as a way of uniting the country and its people. Using Liisa Malkki’s (1995), idea of mythico-history as a conceptualized framework, I wish to demonstrate how history has served as a tool for manipulation and even as the handmaiden to genocide in Rwanda. Mythico-history is not just a historical account or false narratives. It essentially refers to the “invention” and explanation of displaced peoples’ past based upon common beliefs and knowledge in their current space and time (Palmer 2004). I have chosen to expand on the concept by making it more inclusive. In this context, mythico-history refers not only to how displaced peoples invent and create their past, but how those vying for political power engage in such processes.

This section will outline the historical events beginning roughly in the 15th century and ending with the genocide of 1994. It will particularly focus on two key events European colonialism and the genocide. No other events in the history and prehistory of this country have contributed more to the construction of identity. The genocide also serves as a sort of climax to the epic of the Hutu/Tutsi identity as a racialized dichotomy.
Precolonial Rwanda

Political Organization

Prior to the 15\textsuperscript{th} century the political structure of Rwanda consisted of small chieftaincies structured around family lineages. Through conquest and peaceful integration the small autonomous chieftaincies were incorporated into a centralized kingdom. The royal court was located in Nyanza near Kigali and was under the direct rule of a mwami (king) and his royal lineage. The great expansion period took place beginning in the 15\textsuperscript{th} century continuing up to the twentieth century. There remained several autonomous chieftaincies in the northwest and southwest parts of the country. The prefects of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri remained independent and ruled by autonomous Hutu chiefs until the 1920s, when Mwami Rwabugiri with the help of the Germans through military force were able to annex the region (Lemarchand 1970).

The mwami was considered absolute with both political and religious power. He was not only the ruler of Rwanda, but also the embodiment of it. When one of the first European explorers met the mwami, he shook his hand. It was believed that in shaking the mwami’s hand the European created a risk for earthquakes, since his arms were representation of Rwanda’s hills (Prunier 1995). The mwami reached beyond the mere physical world of everyday life, extending into the sacred and divine realm as the incarnation of Imana (God). “Even though the king stood apart from Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, the theme of the kingship was inextricably bound up with the themes of Tutsi supremacy” (Lemarchand 1970: 33). To disobey, question or revolt against the mwami and his establishment was sacrilegious.

The king’s rule was carried out with the help of the local level administration. There were separate sub-chiefs for recruiting solders, collecting taxes and relegating agricultural
and pastoral lands. They could be Hutu, Tutsi or Twa, but the land holding chief was typically Hutu, while the chief of pastures was usually Tutsi. The separation of the landholding and pastures was a built-in mechanism for maintaining social harmony, in that it allowed local people to play each chief against the other. Local authority was further broken down by hills, where each had its own chief (Mamdani 2001).

The precolonial centralized kingdom was one of conquest and authoritarianism. However, war, conflict and violence in the precolonial era were not “racially” or “ethnically” motivated. The mwami waged war to extend the kingdom, by incorporating independent chiefdoms into the centralized kingdom. War was also used in self-defense and as a method for obtaining cattle from non-Rwandan groups (Prunier 1995). Under the rule of Mwami Rujugira (1756-1765), Rwanda faced military threats from its neighbors. The pressure from external enemies culminated in the reorganization of the military. While there is some disagreement about when the Hutu were incorporated into the army, by the 19th century the army had assimilated all male members of society into its ranks (Prunier 1995, Mamdani 2001). According to Mamdani, (2001) it was in the context of the battle that the state was able to merge Twa, Hutu and Tutsi.

**Ubuhake and Ubureetwa**

In precolonial Rwanda, there existed a ritualized system of negotiated reciprocal exchange called *ubuhake*. These exchanges involved the transfer of commodities or labor between client and patron or an individual of lower and higher status. Under *ubuhake*, a client approached a particular individual and asked for some form of commodity, such as cattle or land. If the patron agreed, the client was granted certain privileges, but was not granted ownership. In return, the client consented to fulfill the social and economic

Nevertheless, participation in this ritual involved more than exchanging economic resources. Essentially, the *ubuhake* established networks and created bonds between the client and the patron. It was similar to feudalism, in that *ubuhake* linked the *mwami* to chiefs, chiefs to sub-chiefs, and sub-chiefs to local people through the exchange of resources, loyalty and protection. The client was expected to perform labor or exchange commodities for the patron, and to show unconditional loyalty. In exchange for their loyalty, patrons offered their protection to the client (Lemarchand 1970, Newbury 1988, Prunier 1995). If the conditions of the agreement were unsatisfactory it was possible for either the clients or the patrons to break the contract at any time. There was a hierarchy, which theoretically connected everyone to each other. A person could have a patron relationship to certain individuals and at the same time be a client to a chief. Everyone within the kingdom was a client to the king. The king was in fact the only member of precolonial Rwandan society who had no obligations as a client (Newbury 1988).

The hierarchical nature of Rwandan society allowed for the risk of *ubuhake* to be unequal and oppressive. In precolonial Rwanda, wealth and prestige was determined by cattle ownership (Lemarchand 1970). Since Tutsi (although not all Tutsi) formed the majority of the ruling class whose status was defined in relation to the number of cattle they possessed, they also tended to act as patrons. If an individual had ten or more heads of cattle, they were defined as Tutsi, whereas less than ten they were considered Hutu. The exchange of cattle from a wealthy Tutsi was a source of social mobility for Hutu clients. Hutu could also acquire cattle through their participation in battles (Prunier 1995).
Lemarchand (1970) contends the definition of Tutsi was defined as ownership of cattle and class, which further relegated Hutu to a sphere of permanent inferiority. In the social hierarchy of precolonial Rwanda, there was little room for the identity of a rich Hutu. If a Hutu gained a significant amount of cattle, they became “petite” Tutsi⁴. This represents the fluidity of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy prior to colonialism. Within the hierarchy there was room for upward or downward social mobility. Classification as either a Hutu or Tutsi was seen as something that was achieved based on accumulation of wealth rather than an ascribed identity given at birth. However, these identities would become ascribed “races” under colonialism. They would also maintain the class hierarchy prevalent in precolonial Rwanda, which subjugated the Hutu to the Tutsi elite who controlled the wealth and power. Together this would fixate the Hutu into an economically and racially inferior status.

The practice of ubuhake varied in the different regions throughout the kingdom. It was not widely practiced in regions of Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, and Cyangugu until their incorporation into the centralized kingdom in the 19th century (Newbury 1988). In predominantly Hutu areas of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, a different form of client-patron relationship existed. These relationships were based around the leasing of land, rather than the accumulation of cattle. The system of exchange, called ubukonde, created a landlord/tenant relationship, which was typically between powerful Hutu lineages and less wealthy Hutu and Twa (Lemarchand 1970).

Ubureetwa was a system of mandatory labor that was developed by Tutsi chiefs in the 19th century under the rule of Mwami Rwabugiri. Under Belgian colonialism it became a

⁴ A “petite” Tutsi is defined as a Tutsi who was not a member of the ruling elite and not as economically well off.
system of forced labor and taxation. Unlike ubuhake, there was no reciprocal exchange, special status, or escape from it. Furthermore, ubureetwa was placed solely on the shoulders of Hutu men, especially those who did not have high status. Hutu were expected to collect water, firewood, serve as guards and cultivate the chief’s fields without reimbursement for their services (Newbury 1988, Prunier 1995, Mamdani 2001).

Colonialism

The Berlin Conference

In 1885, in the midst of the rush to annex new lands to their expanding empires, European powers convened in Berlin to logistically divide up Africa. Britain was awarded chunks of territories expanding throughout West, East and Southern Africa, while France held on to the Sahel region, North Africa, and much of west-central Africa, including Congo (Brazzaville). Even minor countries were handsomely rewarded. Portugal received oil and diamond enriched Angola and Mozambique, whereas, Italy colonized much of Africa’s horn and maintained a presence in Ethiopia. Perhaps, the biggest winner of them all was King Leopold of Belgium. Leopold had won the colonial jackpot with his claim to the Congo Free State. His own personal empire was more than seventy-six times larger than his home country and filled with valuable and exploitable resources. At the end of the conference, no piece of African land had been left unclaimed. Europe claimed ownership to lands they had never stepped foot in. After fending off both Britain and Leopold, Germany was awarded the great prize of Tanganyika and two tiny unexplored territories of Ruanda and Urundi. These territories remained hidden from the colonial masterminds for nearly nine years after Berlin (Lemarchand 1970).
Shortly after the German explorers made it into their interior empires, there was a period of political instability in Rwanda. Mwami Kigeli IV Rwabugiri, who had been responsible for conquering and integrating the northwestern areas into the centralized kingdom, died a year after the arrival of the Germans. He left behind a number of wives with their sons vying for political power. In the end, with the help of a European presence and a coup d'état, King Yuhi V Musinga was named the mwami (Lemarchand 1970, Prunier 1995).

According to Prunier (1995), the German colonizers walked into the situation uninformed and easily vulnerable. Germany chose to rule Ruanda-Urundi through a system of indirect rule, with few Europeans in the country to carry out or enforce colonial laws. The colonial government found it was easy to establish indirect rule, due to the highly centralized nature of the traditional socio-political system. For the ruling monarchy and the colonial government it seemed to be a match made in heaven. Both parties used the other to further their political and social objectives over larger and larger territories. This relationship led to the dual strengthening of the king's power in terms of traditional roles as well as newly created roles within the colonial government. Lemarchand argues “In Rwanda the very success of indirect rule reinforced the absolutism of the monarchy, and hence the hegemony of the ruling caste” (Lemarchand 1970: 63).

This relationship would not last long. In face of defeat in World War I and through a League of Nations mandate, Germany was forced to hand over its colonial claims to Belgium and Britain. Belgium discovered the administration Ruanda-Urundi was more difficult than the Congo. The highly centralized cultural and political systems in Ruanda-Urundi bore no resemblance to the Congo. As a result, it was not until 1925-1926 that Belgium began to implement its own colonial policies. The Belgian administration continued with Germany's
system of indirect rule. Missionaries began to offer advice to the new colonial government, arguing the “noble” Tutsi were the only group capable of ruling. Many of the local Hutu chiefs were removed and replaced by Tutsi. There was more to the political reconstructing than replacing Hutu leaders with Tutsi; it also involved the consolidation of the local level chiefdoms. Whereas in the precolonial era the three major chief positions of cattle, land and recruitment of soldiers could be held by either group, after colonialism, these positions were now under a single Tutsi chief (Louis 1963, Lemarchand 1970, Prunier 1995).

In 1931, the colonial administration began to have its doubts about the often-problematic Mwami Musinga. The Belgian colonial government had never been very pleased about the presence of Musinga. To the colonial powers he was openly bisexual, adulterous and had fought alongside the Germans against the Belgians during the First World War. He refused to convert to Christianity. Subsequently, the colonial government backed by the Catholic Church replaced Musinga with his son Mutara III Rudahigwa (Prunier 1995), who converted to Christianity, gave up polygamy, and became infatuated with Western materialism. The king did not undergo the traditional court rituals and thus was always seen as the white man’s king.

The Hamitic Myth

When European explorers ventured out of Europe into uncharted territories, they brought with them their own beliefs and perceptions about the world. They needed a way to categorize and explain the unfamiliar lands, peoples and practices they encountered. These explorers did not try to keep their ethnocentrism in balance and objectively study native peoples. Instead, they viewed the “unknown” as “primitive savages.” Europeans revealed in their Eurocentric discourses a lack of respect for and understanding of the life ways of
indigenous peoples. This continued well into the twentieth-century. During European colonialism, these beliefs were institutionalized through colonial administrative policies such as direct and indirect rule, change agents that included Christian missionaries, and by colonized peoples themselves. In Africa and in particular Rwanda, one clear example of this is the *Hamitic myth*.

In Rwanda, the *Hamitic myth* represented the processes in which the *other* was created, reified and racialized through European beliefs and institutions. No other ideology or practice in the history of Rwanda has produced the destructive and devastating effects as the *Hamitic myth*.

It is important to begin with a discussion of the origins of the Hamitic ideology. I have chosen purposefully to refer to it as the *Hamitic myth* rather than the *Hamitic hypothesis* (Sanders 1969) based on several definitions of myth. Regarding this specific belief, it is a myth in the sense that it is based on traditional stories derived from Christianity. Secondly, the *Hamitic myth* is based on a number of fallacies resulting from faulty science and distorted interpretations regarding other peoples and their customs (Prunier 1995, Mamdani 2001, Twagilimana 2003). This is not to say that there is no basis for European observations. Gerard Prunier argues, "...Our feeling is that the Tutsi have come from outside the Great Lakes area and that it is possible they were initially of a distinct racial stock" (1995; 16). Ashley Montagu, a physical anthropologist who spent most of his life attacking the concept of biological races, acknowledges that while there is genetic diversity between populations, this does not justify racial superiority of one group over another (Montagu 1997). Physical differences do not imply an innate hierarchy. In order to achieve a stratified society, value

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5 Italics added for emphasis. Prunier's use of racial stock should be questioned.
and meaning had to be incorporated into a preexisting system of identity. Europeans managed to succeed in this process by systematically measuring physical traits and attributed value based on the perceived “Europeanness” of those traits.

I begin with a brief explanation of the story of Ham, which has its origins in the Bible in Genesis. According to the story, Noah was drunk and lying naked on the ground; his youngest son Ham discovered him and laughed but did not turn away. When Noah’s other sons Japhet and Shem found their father, they covered him. After Noah awoke from his drunken state, he blessed the descendants of Japhet and Shem and cursed those of Ham—in particular Canaan (Mamdani 2001, Twagilimana 2003). The Biblical scriptures reveal how Noah allegedly responded to these two events:

Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren...blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. God enlarge Japhet, and let him dwell in the tent of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant (Sanders 1969; 521).

There is no mention of the physical descriptions of Canaan or references to his “race.” It wasn’t until the sixth-century A.D., based on the oral traditions of the Babylonian Talmud, that Ham’s descendants are cursed as being “black” and “degenerates.” Furthermore, the Talmud promoted the idea that Canaan would be enslaved and his children would be “ugly, black, with hair twisted into kinks, red eyes and swollen lips.” They would walk around naked and the men would have enlarged genitalia (Mamdani 2001, Twagilimana 2003). In the twelfth-century, the association of Ham was further embedded as Africans with descriptions of travelers who suggested that Black Africans ran around naked, lacked the intelligence of “ordinary men” and had indiscriminate sexual relationships (Sanders 1969).
By the 1600s, the enslavement of Ham’s kin was generally accepted to refer to Black Africans; the clergy kept this ideology alive in face of polygenist theory.

The discoveries and the encouragement of archaeologists in Egypt by Napoleon Bonaparte created an enormous problem for the sub-human status of African peoples. It came at a point in time where African peoples’ status was crucial to the increasing wealth of Europe that was being generated by slavery. The question that arose was how could “people” who were supposedly cursed and/or not-fully human have the advanced knowledge to create the pyramids? It was “remembered” that Egyptians were not descendants of Canaan, but of Mizraim. Since Noah’s curse was only placed on Canaan, it was his descendants alone that bore the weight of the curse (Sanders 1969). Furthermore, Ethiopians were considered to be non-Black Africans, whose origins were believed not to be of “African” descent. The Hamites were no longer considered the enslaved descendants of Ham, but the force that brought civilization to the rest of Africa (Zachernuk 1994).

There was no single characteristic that defined membership to the Hamitic families. They were usually considered a branch of the white race or “whites under black skin.” The Hamites ranged from the Berbers and Egyptians of North Africa, and Ethiopians of Eastern Africa (Chatelain 1894). It is at this point that the myth of Ham becomes the Hamitic myth, which at the basic level argues that nothing of value could have developed in Africa. Evidence of advanced knowledge, “civilization” or non-primitive characteristics was explained as resulting from the assumed superior Hamites. Since the Hamites originated somewhere outside of Africa, non-Hamitic Africans were considered “primitive savages” who needed not only the paternal guidance from Hamites but also from Europeans (Zachernuk 1994). Sanders (1969) suggest this was presumed to be the duty of more
advanced races to civilize those subordinate to them. As a result, a vicious cycle of European paternalism and inequality emerges. Europeans assumed it was their responsibility to civilize the Hamites, who in turn were responsible for civilizing other Africans.

The Ultimate Betrayal and the Development of Hutu Elite

Prunier sums up the feelings Belgium had for their newly acquired colony “Rwanda and Belgium were the same size, and the Belgians were fascinated with their new toy” (Prunier 1970: 35). Rwanda was centrally located next to the vast and profitable Congolese empire. King Leopold turned over the Congo Free State to Belgium in 1908, after inquiries led to massive and horrific charges of human rights violations (Hochshild 1998). However, like Leopold, Belgium never figured out how to play nicely with their colonial “toys.” Belgian had brought about reforms in the traditional practice of *ubuhake* and *ubureetwa*, which were transformed into brutal systems of forced mandatory labor. It was Belgian colonial policies and practices that played a defining role in the racialized dichotomy of the Hutu/Tutsi identities. This racialized construct along with the differential access to avenues of power and resources were the initial steps on the path to genocide.

World War II initiated sweeping changes for European colonialism in Africa. Africans fought and died in battles in Africa and Europe. However, within their own countries Africans remained oppressed and exploited. Europe went to war against Hitler for invading surrounding countries, yet Europe had invaded all of Africa. All across the continent African peoples began to organize themselves demanding rights to independence and self-determination. These nationalist movements were primarily the brainchild of the Western educated elite African men, who sought to organize and unite the masses (Shillington 1995).
The threat of independence hit Belgium particularly hard. For years, they firmly believed it was their duty to bring these "child-like" African "savages" into the light of civilization and Christianity. The colonial policy was embedded with ideological paternalism. Africans were perceived and treated as unruly children, who needed their father figure to be the voice of reason and discipline. In many ways Belgium believed the brutality of the rubber trade and the forced *ubuhake* system were efficient agencies of control and rule, for the betterment of Africans. However, not all African peoples were considered equally inferior. In Rwanda and Burundi, Tutsi held a special status in the colonial paradigm. They were not perceived as pure "savages" like Bantu groups, but as being closer to the white race. Tutsi were believed to be born rulers, whose origins came from biblical myths (Lemarchand 1970, Prunier 1995, and Twagilimana 2003).

During colonialism, it did not take long for the ruling Tutsi elite to realize that European colonial policy benefited them; therefore, they began to accept their status and the European notions of superiority. Non-ruling Tutsi or "petite" Tutsi also benefited from the colonial paradigm, especially since their identity as Tutsi meant they were not forced to participate in the system of forced labor (Lemarchand 1970). Under colonialism, the Hutu were exploited on two levels, first by the ruling Tutsi elite and later by Europeans. Hutu were denied access to education, had no political voice, and faced heavy forms of taxation. They also had to endure the *ubuhake/ubureetwa* systems. This form of institutionalized discrimination instated during colonial rule contributed to the social and economic marginalization of Hutu (Prunier 1995).

Prior to the war, the Catholic Church was predominantly made up of Walloon clergy. The end of World War II brought about overarching changes to the hegemonic socio-political
order. These changes would reshape the social system of Rwanda forever. Starting in the late 1930s and continuing until after 1945, the preexisting clergy was gradually replaced with Flemish priests from working-class backgrounds. These new priests found it relatively easy to identify with the oppressed and heavily exploited Hutu. The significance of this change cannot be underestimated. With the new European clergy, the Hutu found opportunities in the church to challenge and change the Tutsi hegemony (Twagilimana 2003). Under colonialism, Hutu had been excluded from receiving an education in French mission schools, which was reserved for the sons of Tutsi chiefs. The church was one of the only viable options for an educated Hutu, who had previously been excluded from employment opportunities in the civil and private sectors. The church also provided the Hutu elite with an outlet for them to express their grievances against the Tutsi hegemony (Mamdani 2001).

The composition of the European clergy was not the only thing changing. The established Tutsi clergy and the ruling elite were beginning to realize that independence was a foreseeable reality. Thus, they began to demand the right of self-rule. The colonial government felt betrayed. In pursuing Rwanda’s independence, their protégés had bit the hand that had fed them. The Belgians now viewed the Tutsi elite, not as the superior hence special race. Instead, they were perceived to be a dangerous sect of communists and traditionalists (Prunier 1995). Ruanda-Urundi was awarded to Belgium as a trust territory through a League of Nations mandate. In 1949, Belgium was under increasing pressure from the international community to decolonize its territories. The decolonization process began slowly with local elections in 1953 (Mamdani 2001).
In 1957, in light of the trip from the UN trusteeship agency, a group of Hutu intellectuals published what has become known as the Bahutu Manifesto. In it, the authors called attention to the plight of the Hutu, arguing that the fundamental issue was

...Basically that of the political monopoly of one race, the Mututsi. In the present circumstances, this political monopoly is turned into an economic and social monopoly. [...] And give the de facto selection in schools, the political, economic and social monopolies turn into a cultural monopoly, which condemns the desperate Bahutu to be forever subaltern workers...The ubuhake has been legislated away, but these monopolies have replaced it with even stronger oppression (Prunier 1995:).

The Bahutu Manifesto argued against the removal of the “ethnic” divisions. In doing this, the Hutu elite was playing to the colonial government, who had spent years developing the system and was not eager to see its demise. The Hutu elite campaigned for a political system based on democracy, where the majority rules. In this context, majority rule was a system in which the only group who had a legitimate claim to power was the “ethnic/racial” majority. In the search for social, economic and political justice, the Bahutu Manifesto and its authors did not address the role of European colonialism in establishing the social structure. In addition, while it clearly addressed the plight of Hutu, it ignored those of the “petite” Tutsi. The “petite” Tutsi for the most part were no better off economically or politically than Hutu peasants and lived side by side in similar surroundings (Twagilimana 2003).

The Tutsi elite responded to the charges by appealing to their own people arguing for the legitimacy of Hutu servitude. According to the mwami’s officials:
The situation being as it is one, can ask how the Bahutu are now asking their rights to share the common patrimony. Those who should ask for sharing of the common patrimony are those who have fraternal ties. But the relationship between us (Batutsi) and them (Bahutu) have always been based on servitude; there is thus between them and us no fraternal bond (Twagilimana 2003: 65).

The Bahutu Manifesto and the response of the Tutsi elite illustrates the success of the racial classification system established by the colonial government and later entrenched into the hearts and minds of all Rwandans (Prunier 1995). It was in this context the Hutu Revolution of 1959 emerged. Tutsi and Hutu elites were both demanding independence. However, the Hutu Revolution was directed not at the colonial administration, but at Tutsi hegemony and the monarchy. It was not considered a “Rwandan” revolution, since the revolution was only concerned with the rights of Hutu. Those leading the movement viewed the injustice and oppression of Hutu as originating from Tutsi hegemony. In the struggle for political survival, the Tutsi elite became disjointed, with one faction wishing to maintain the traditional monarchy, and the other becoming more communistic. In line with the socialist ideologies of the time, many Tutsi nationalists were calling for an end to Rwanda’s monarchy and wishing to establish alliances with socialist nations. Throughout this era, Belgium feared the communist Tutsi elite would join the Congo’s Patrice Lumumba in calling for the end to Western economic, social and political colonial imperialism (Taylor 1999). If Tutsi were allowed to remain in power, Belgium feared it would result in the loss of their economic and religious investments. As a result, Belgium made no move to suppress the Hutu revolution; rather, they nurtured it by eliminating or neutralizing any source of opposition. Lemarchand (1970) argues, the very success of the movement rested on the participation of the colonial government. He further contends it was the presence and support of the colonial government
that guaranteed the success of the Hutu counter-elite. Essentially, the Hutu revolution drew its support from the very sources that attributed to their oppressed, exploited and inferior status. In a historical reversal, Hutu sub-chiefs began to gradually replace Tutsi sub-chiefs (Twagilimana 2003).

In July of 1959, while visiting Usumbura, Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa mysteriously died. His death was surrounded by speculations of poisoning and assassination. Leaving no heirs, the King’s death created a power vacuum in the midst of turmoil. The Hutu elite believed the time had arrived for the installation of a republic. Political parties began to form, including the Mouvement Democratique Republicain/Parti du Mouvement de l’Emancipation des Bahutu (PARMEHUTU) led by Gregoire Kayibanda. PAREMHUTU’s political platform was based on the ideologies first outlined in the Bahutu Manifesto. The party also believed the power of the king should be transformed from an absolute to a constitutional monarch. Unlike the Congolese independence movement and the Tutsi elite, PARMEHUTU did not demand immediate independence from Belgium. Rather, it demanded Hutu independence from the tyranny of the Tutsi (Twagilimana 2003).

Political tension reached a turning point in November of 1959, when members of the Tutsi-dominated political party UNAR (Union Nationale Rwandaise) attacked a Hutu sub-chief. A member of the anti-Tutsi political party APROSOMA (Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse) was assassinated under the orders of a Tutsi conservative. In retaliation for the violence against political Hutu, the homes of Tutsi were looted and burned. In the north, the lootings led to the massacres of thirty-eight people. The Belgian government was indifferent and made no effort to intervene or prevent the destruction of

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6 Usumbura is the former name of what is today Bujumbura, Burundi.
property and deaths. In the course of several weeks, more than three hundred people were killed and a thousand more (mainly Tutsi) were arrested by the colonial government (Prunier 1995).

The independence movement in Rwanda was not a movement under one unified elite group, but was more like a tug-a-war between two elites. Each of these elite groups was at some point in time a product of the church and colonial favoritism. Furthermore, they drew on the same cultural myths established by Europeans to justify their claim to authority. Between November 1959 and January 1961, the goals of the revolution shifted away from merely gaining political representation. It sought to change the social structure. Belgium had lost control over the situation, violence spread throughout the country, becoming more precise. From 1959 until 1994 violence was being carried out along “ethnic” or “racial” divisions of Hutu and Tutsi (Lemarchand 1970). In the northwest region of the country, Tutsi were mercilessly hunted down, creating a mass exodus of refugees into neighboring countries. Despite the political instability, elections took place between June and July 1960, with PAREMHUTU taking most of the local level positions (Prunier 1995). The general elections held in September of 1961, naming Kayibanda as the first president of independent Rwanda. PAREMHUTU had claimed seventy-seven percent of the vote, while Tutsi-dominated UNAR maintained less than seventeen percent (Mamdani 2001). Rwanda gained its formal independence from Belgium on July 1st 1962.

**Hutu Republics 1962-1990**

**Kayibanda: The First Republic**

Kayibanda was born in the prefecture of Gitarama in southern Rwanda, in 1924. He received his education like most of the Hutu elite from within the confines of the seminaries.
Educated at the Nyakibanda Seminar, he went on to become a schoolteacher from 1948 to 1952. As chief editor of the Catholic publication L’Ami and of Kinyamateka, he was able to articulate the plight of the Hutu to a wider audience (Prunier 1995). Kayibanda was not like many African post-independence leaders, who personally lived well beyond the financial means of their country. While many of his other African counterparts were driving BMWs, taking extravagant trips around the world, and adorned in expensive clothes and jewelry, Kayibanda rarely left Rwanda. He drove a Volkswagen, wore tattered clothing and shoes, and overall lived life rather thriftily (Mamdani 2001).

The basic principals of the racialized dichotomy established by colonialism were still maintained throughout the course of the First Republic. Particularly after 1964, post-colonial Rwanda developed into what was essentially a Hutu state. The Hutu Revolution, PAREMHUTU’s subsequent rise to power, and attacks against Tutsi from 1950 to 1960, caused many Tutsi to flee into surrounding countries, specifically Uganda and Burundi. In 1963, exiled Tutsi seeking a return to power launched a surprise attack from Burundi into the southern region of Bugesera. Despite lacking adequate planning and military equipment, the guerilla fighters were almost able to reach Kigali, before the governmental armies pushed the back. These attacks provided the legitimization for Kayibanda’s government to target Tutsi civilians and the few remaining Tutsi politicians. Based on these attacks by guerilla fighters, the word iyenzi or cockroach became a popular euphuism for the guerillas and their alleged supporters. There is no definitive estimate as to how many people were killed in the waves of violence that preceded the postcolonial era. The lowest estimate provided by the Rwandan government puts the number around seven hundred and fifty. Mamdani estimates that
approximately two hundred of Tutsi killed during this timeframe (Twagilimana 2003, Mamdani 2001, Prunier 1995).

From the beginning, Kayibanda was a staunch supporter not only of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy. He further institutionalized the social framework by establishing a strict quota system to regulate the number of Tutsi allowed into schools, civic and business sectors. Many Hutu argued the government had not done enough to include more Hutu into the education and employment sectors. In 1972-1973, the law known as “equilibre ethnique” was implemented. This law was designed to restrict Tutsi admission and positions in high school and universities. As soon as it went into effect, new admission of Tutsi was prohibited (Twagilimana 2003). Hutu began to organize to force the remaining Tutsi from their jobs and out of the educational system. The lack of employment and educational opportunities led more Tutsi to seek refuge and opportunities in other countries (Prunier 1995).

The political position of presidents Kayibanda and his successor Juvenal Habyarimana were similar to the mwami. The president had the authority to appoint every member of the government, from local level positions to his top aides. The mwami and the president shared similar styles of leadership, remoteness, secretiveness, and authoritarianism. The president’s rule was absolute rather than democratic. Additionally, the rule of the president and the king was not subject to question or discussion. “When the ruler gives an order, he must be obeyed, not because his order falls into the sphere over which he has authority, but simply because he is the ruler” (Maquet, Prunier 1995: 57). According to Lemarchand (1970), any challenge to his authority was done at the individuals’ own risk. This particular institutionalized ideology would wreck havoc during the genocide.
**Habyarimana: The Second Republic**

Eleven years after leading the successful Hutu Revolution to power, Kayibanda’s regime was in trouble. After 1969, the attacks by Tutsi guerillas had ceased, however, there were rising “ethnic” problems in neighboring Burundi. After independence, the Tutsi elite in Burundi managed to maintain control of power. In 1972, after a failed attack by Hutu rebels, under the watchful eye of President Micombero, 150 thousand mainly educated Hutu were killed. This established a pattern of quid pro quo of violence that would continue until the 1994 genocide. Tutsi in Burundi began to carry out attacks against Burundian Hutu, the Hutu in Rwanda responded by attacking Rwandan Tutsi (Twagilimana 2003). President Kayibanda had a tendency to appoint and favor Hutu from his own province in southern Rwanda, while excluding Hutu from Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. The tension between regions eventually led to a bloodless coup d’etat on July 5th 1973, when General Major Juvenal Habyarimana replaced Kayibanda as president (Twagilimana 2003, Prunier 1995).

Habyarimana had been the most senior officer under Kayibanda’s army. With the overthrow of Kayibanda also came the downfall of PAREMHUTU. The new and only political party in the country was Mouvement Revolutionnaire National pour le Developpement (MRND). All Rwandans, from small infants to the very old, regardless of “racial” identity, were automatically enlisted as members of MRND. Most of Habyarimana’s strength did not come from the support of the civilian Rwandan population, but from a group of elites from his home region in northwest Rwanda. This tight knitted elite inner circle was known as the Akazu, which literally translates into “little house.” Members of the Akazu were Hutu-hardliners, who largely consisted of family members and close friends of Habyarimana’s wife (Des Forges 1999). It is often believed that President Habyarimana was
a mere puppet of the Akazu, with power concentrated in the hands of his wife Agathe Kaziga and her lineage. Habyarimana was born in the Karago commune in the prefecture of Gisenyi in 1937. Habyarimana came from a relatively unknown family. Without strong family lineages, connections and networks, no one owed him unconditional support and loyalty. His wife came from a well-respected lineage, which ruled parts of the independent northwest area until the 19th century (Prunier 1995). He had a bond of loyalty from the government of France, who was very fond of the president. Habyarimana received his education within the French religious system and was an eloquent French speaker (Prunier 1995, Des Forges 1999).

The first decade of Habyarimana’s reign was nothing like how it ended. There is no doubt that since the revolution, Tutsi were discriminated against based on perceived racial or ethnic differences. During the Second Republic under Habyarimana, quota policies were reconstructed to give Tutsi nine percent of the positions in educational and civil sectors, while Twa were given one percent. As long as Tutsi stayed away from the sphere of politics, they “enjoyed” relative peace and security on a day-to-day basis. Identity cards still stated “racial/ethnic” affiliation, along with place of residence, which essentially established the system of discrimination based on “race” or “ethnicity” and regionalism (Mamdani 2001).

In the 1970s and early 1980s, Habyarimana’s rule was exceedingly different from much of Africa at the time. While, many African countries were engulfed in violent civil wars and suffering from various humanitarian crises, Rwanda was a “model” of development. Social indicators of mortality rate, access to medical care, and education were all improving and stable. However, Rwanda was growingly heavily dependent on foreign
aid, which rose from less than five percent in 1973 to twenty-two percent by 1991 (Prunier 1995).

**Facing Economic and Political Crisis**

The success of Habyarimana’s regime began to fade in the 1980s. In 1984, facing economic crisis most developing countries were forced to undergo a wide-range of economical and social reforms initiated by the World Bank. In 1988, the World Bank traveled to Rwanda to review the country’s public expenditure programs and to discuss the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs). In order to obtain additional loans, Rwanda was forced to liberalization trade, devaluate their currency, remove all agricultural subsidies, eliminate jobs in the civil service, slash of social service programs, health and education, and the privatization of state owned enterprises (Chossudovsky 1997).

Rwanda is over ninety percent rural, with agricultural being the main form of subsistence. In 1987, world prices of coffee crashed, pushing the country further into an economic crisis. Out of desperation, Rwandan framers uprooted 300,000 coffee trees in an attempt to produce other foods. People had nothing else to fall back on, over-cropping and degradation of land made switching to other food sources difficult. Rwandans did not even have enough money from coffee to buy food. Local markets were further destabilized when the liberalization of trade was introduced. The World Bank through SAPs dismembered the little protection local farmers had by removing the government regulations on food imports. Cheap food imports and food aid from rich countries were now entering the Rwandan markets. Small farmers were no longer protected as they had been in the past and could not compete with the cheap imports (Chossudovsky 1997).
By 1992, Rwanda had an external debit of 804.3 million dollars (Anderson 1999). As a result of all this, the state enterprises were pushed into bankruptcy and public services completely collapsed. Despite attempts to salvage some of social programs and services there was an enormous increase in severe child malnutrition and malaria. Public schools imposed school fees, which caused a massive decline in enrollment. The economic crisis hit its peak in 1992.

A number of quick disbursing loans were granted to Habyarimana’s regime, which were used to obtain military hardware. A total of $260 million dollars had been approved for disbursement alongside bilateral loans from France, Germany, Belgium, and the U.S. This money was intended for famine relief and poverty alleviation; instead it was used to buy arms.

**Transitional Era**

*The Refugee Problem and the Invasion of the Inyenzi*

Between 1959 to the late 1980s, waves of approximately 600 thousand Rwandans fled into neighboring countries. In most cases, refugees lived in concentrated areas, unable to fully participate in the social, political and economic sectors of their host countries. Habyarimana and Kayibanda both chose to ignore the issue of displaced peoples. In 1982, under the reign of Milton Obote, thousands Rwandan refugees were expelled from Uganda. Claiming Rwanda was already “overpopulated”, Habyarimana refused to allow the refugees to return to Rwanda (Des Forges 1999). The Tutsi diaspora may have been geographically spread-out, ranging from Uganda to Europe and the U.S., but they remained very much united and connected. In their respected locations, they published newspapers and magazines as a means to address their concerns. In the minds of the diaspora community, Rwanda
became a mythical homeland. The reality of political turmoil, overly exploited land, and over population were perceived as an excuse of Habyarimana’s regime to prevent them from returning home (Prunier 1995).

The situation of the Tutsi refugees in Uganda grew particularly problematic in light of the election of Milton Obote in 1980. During his years in power in the 1960s, Obote had never been fond of the Rwandan refugees. Ankole and Bairu populations strongly supported Obote, along with his Uganda’s People Congress (UPC) had strong ethnic ties to one another. Obote’s political adversary was Yoweri Museveni a Bahima, who was backed by a number of Rwandan refugees (predominantly Tutsi). A branch of Obote’s UPC party and a unit from the government’s special forces attacked several Rwandan refugee communities in October of 1982. They looted property and cattle, with small-scale killings and rapes. The attacks resulted in thousands of people attempting to return to Rwanda. The tension between Tutsi-Hutu in Rwanda resembled the situation between the Bahima-Ankole in Uganda. The relationship between the Bahima and the Bairu had a similar divide to that of the Tutsi and Hutu. Ankole and Bairu more readily identified with Hutu. The pastoral Bahima were considered the higher social status, which formed the ruling class (Prunier 1995).

After members of his own army overthrew Obote in 1985, Museveni took control of Uganda in January 1986. Showing his appreciation for the Rwandan refugees, who had helped bring him to power, Museveni loosened the qualifications for Ugandan citizenship. The new law would allow Rwandans who had lived in Uganda for more than ten years to be entitled to citizenship. This was a significant timeframe because it included people who had fled during the revolution. However, the honeymoon would not last long; by 1989 there were reports of atrocities committed by Rwandan members of the Ugandan national army
Furthermore, where promotions within the army used to be based on residence, they now became dependent of national affiliation leading to the exclusion of Rwandans (Mamdani 2001). In December of 1987, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was formed as an “offensive political organization dedicated to the return of exiles to Rwanda, by force if necessary” (Prunier 1995: 73). It was simply not enough for the refugees to have the right to return home. The RPF also wanted to remove Habyarimana from a position of power.

On October 1st 1990, members of the RPF crossed into Rwanda from Uganda. The RPF was well trained, well organized and extremely disciplined. Although Forces Armees Rwandaises (FAR) had a larger army and more weapons, they were poorly trained, lacked organization and disciplined. Within three days, the RPF had advanced within in forty-five miles of Kigali. On October 4th, a well-organized attack was carried out within the capital. The next day the government informed the public that they had been attacked by the RPF. In response to the attack, the government stated it had driven the RPF back. Rwandans and international observers quickly bought into the government’s recollection of events, despite the fact that they were untrue.

Habyarimana and his regime saw opportunity in the midst of the conflict. Most Tutsi and Hutu political oppositions were favoring the government over the rebel army, creating a golden opportunity for the regime to exploit. Habyarimana used the attacks by the RPF to arrest and detain thousands of people. These prisoners were held without ever being charged, were tortured and many died while in detention. The government could justify the imprisonment of these individuals by labeling them as ibyitso (accomplices). Hutu extremists would later take the label of ibyitso and apply it to all Tutsi. The fake attack also allowed for
the government to seek help from its allies especially France, Belgium and Zaire, claiming the government need for self-defense (Des Forges 1999).

**The Arusha Accords**

The political situation in Rwanda beginning in 1990 had three major actors vying for political representation and power. First there was Habyarimana backed by MRND-CDR and the Akazu, who were fighting to hold on to their oligarchy. Secondly, there were oppositional political parties within Rwanda, which predominantly consisted of Southern, and "moderate" Hutu and Tutsi. Lastly, there was the Tutsi-led RPF. They agreed to meet in July of 1992 for political negotiations with mediators from Tanzania.

According to Jones (1999) the “Arusha peace process was an extraordinary story of a sophisticated conflict resolution process which went disastrously wrong” (Jones 1999: 136). The negotiation process in itself was drawn out of the course of thirteen months with the final agreement being signed on August 4th 1993 (Jones 1999). Essentially, the Arusha Accords were working towards a peace agreement with the RPF, as well as working to resolve the tensions among the Hutu political parties. In a nutshell, the Arusha Accords established a cease-fire agreement, power-sharing protocols, the creation of transitional government and parliament, the reintegration of refugees, and the creation of a nationally unified and integrated army.

For the RPF, it was crucial that the president’s power be reduced to nothing but a mere symbolic figurehead. According to the agreements, the role of the MRND (the political party of Habyarimana) in the transitional government and the new government was greatly

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7 The Akazu was never an official political party, however, they would play the largest role in planning, implementing and carrying out the genocide.
reduced. Consequently, the RPF demanded and stalled the negotiations over the role that CDR (Coalition pour la Defense de la Republique) would be allowed to play in government. Due to the extremist nature of members of CDR, the RPF wanted to completely exclude them from positions of power. The RPF eventually prevailed and the CDR was left out in the cold. The new national army would be structured around an even split between Rwandan government and RPF in terms of command and leaders. In the army, the government was given sixty percent and RPF forty percent of make up of the troops. In cutting fifty percent of the leadership along with a forty percent cut in troops, meant many young Hutu men were facing a massive unemployment problem (Stettenhiem 2002). This would play a major role in the recruitment of ordinary people into the militias and into committing acts of genocide.

It was a common rhetoric that in order to prevent the implementation of the Arusha Accords, all Tutsi had to be killed. All Tutsi were considered as supporters and spies for the RPF, in turn it was argued that Tutsi were going to take all the jobs away from Hutu.

During the peace negotiations, Rwanda was anything but “peaceful.” After the distributions of the parliamentary seats were agreed upon, there were violent demonstrations within Hutu extremist stronghold areas of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi. The massacres of three hundred Tutsi civilians led to a renewal of fighting between the RPF and FAR (Jones 1999). The need for the peace negotiation was not taking place within a vacuum; it was taking place within the context of a “limited-scale civil war” (Prunier 1995). The first attempts to establish a cease-fire agreement were practically useless and further attempts did not meet with any more success. The government forces with the unconditional support of France were able to keep the RPF into a limited range of territory. The RPF was able to maintain a steady flow of attacks against the FAR. The continuous fighting created a large number of
displaced peoples within northeast Rwanda. While, the RPF believed they were “liberating” Hutu peasants, in fact, thousands of Hutu were fleeing to displacement camps in the south (Prunier 1995).

Habyarimana, trying to stay in his position of power, used the ongoing attacks to push back the implementation of the Arusha Accords. The Arusha Accords are an important component to Rwanda’s history and the subsequent genocide. It was the threat of losing power through power-sharing and the formation of a transitional government, which Hutu extremists were largely excluded from, that led them to search for a final solution. From January until the beginning of the genocide, the peace process and the implication of the accords were constantly being stalled and postponed (UN Independent Inquiry 1999). As April approached, Habyarimana’s regime was finding it harder to stall the peace process and democracy. The next chapter will explore the events and implications of the genocide.
Chapter Three: Genocide: Rwanda as a Case Study

Introduction

In December of 1948 the United Nations as part of the Geneva Convention, the UN held the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which officially outlined the definition of genocide as a crime under international law as well as the duty of its members to prevent and to punish. The convention defined genocide as acts “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a nation, ethnical, racial or religious group” (United Nations 1948: Article 2). This involves “a) killing of group members, b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group” (United Nations 1948: Article 2). Under the convention punishable acts include genocide, planning or attempting to commit genocide, publicly inciting acts of genocide, and complicity in genocide. The participation by any political figure, public official or any individual will result in punishment.

Two months into the Rwandan genocide, during a U.S. State Department briefing, spokesperson Christine Shelley was asked by a journalist “How many acts of genocide does it take to make a genocide?” Shelly replied, “That’s just not a question that I’m in the position to answer” (Frontline 2004). However, for 100 days the events taking place in Rwanda met every single criteria of genocide. It was also more than genocide. As Tutsi were specifically targeted, the genocidal regime also systematically slaughtered Southern Hutu and Hutu political opposition. This raises a limitation of the Geneva Convention’s
definition of genocide in that it does not take into account persecution of political or regional
groups (Eltringham 2004). Gerard Prunier (1995) writes:

For most people living in OECD countries and too
young to have lived through the Second World War, the
verb ‘to kill’ remains an abstraction. Some Third World
readers will be painfully familiar with the material
presented here. But for anyone wishing to understand the
depths of the Rwandese genocide, some elements of
raw experience have to be provided (Prunier 1995: 255).

This section will focus on the development and accounts of the genocide, which represented
the most destructive nature of the Hutu and Tutsi dichotomy. Through the
institutionalization of the Hutu/Tutsi identities, colonialism set the stage for such a racial
division. This continued on and was further embedded into the minds of Rwandans during
the first and second republics. In order to understand post-genocide Rwanda, we must try to
understand the genocide in itself.

Walking the streets of downtown Kigali, watching Rwandans working, shopping in
local markets, laughing and talking, it is sometimes hard to imagine twelve years ago, the
entire country was covered in blood. Outsiders, who were not there to experience the horror
of 1994 drive over a bridge and it has no meaning to them. However, during the genocide
people were told that their only hope of survival rested just on the other side of that same
bridge. When they began to cross, militias armed with machetes and clubs trapped them.
Many were simply dangled off the side by their ankles, so when they were dropped, they
would fall head first into the ground below. The ground became so congested with bodies
that the impact from the fall would not immediately kill the person. It became necessary for
the militias to finish off those still alive. The Nyabarongo River surrounds Kigali and cuts
through most of the country eventually flowing into the Nile. During the genocide, the river
was seen as a way to “send the Tutsi back to Egypt.” Thousands of bodies floated downstream into Uganda where they were retrieved. This same river supplies the water that people collect everyday to wash themselves, their children, and to cook with (Des Forges 1999).

**Genocide**

*The Month that Didn’t End*

The hatred that fueled the genocide did not happen overnight nor did the planning the massacres. Weapons were purchased and distributed to ordinary civilians, hate propaganda filled the airwaves, and government officials discussed the coming of the apocalypse. What finally caused the levee to finally break? At 8:27 pm, on April 6th 1994, president Habyarimana and Burundian president Cyprien Ntaryamira along with ministers from both countries were approaching Gregoire Kayibanda Airport in Kigali when several surface-to-air missiles hit their plane killing all on board (Eltringham 2003). The presidents were returning from a summit of East African countries in Dar-es-Salaam, in which it became clear to the Rwandan regime that the Arusha Accords and democracy could no longer be pushed back. Within hours of the attack, the *Interahamwe* was already mobilized, setting up roadblocks and began the assassination of individuals recognized as political opponents to the genocidal regime (African Rights 1994).

The debate over the responsibility for the president’s assassination has not been resolved. According to the genocidal regime the RPF were responsible, while officials of the RPF blame members of the president’s own party and the *Akazu*. It also remains unclear as to whether or not this issue falls under the jurisdiction of the International Tribunal Court for Rwanda and whether it will be taken up during the hearings (Eltringham 2003). The first
targets of the genocide were members of oppositional parties, the interim government and "known" RPF sympathizers. Agate Uwiringiyimana an anti-ethnicist from the south, who as a member of an oppositional party frequently, voiced her criticisms of Habyarimana's regime. This along with her new political power, she stood as a major barrier to the Hutu extremists. From the perspective of the genocidal regime, the new Prime Minister was a necessary target. On April 7th only hours after becoming Rwanda and Africa's first woman Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana along with ten UN Belgian Peacekeepers were taken and later killed by government soldiers (Taylor 1999).

The loss of ten Belgian soldiers brought back vivid memories of the deaths of white Peacekeepers at the hands of Africans. The death of U.S. soldiers in Somalia in 1992 resulted in a U.S. policy of noninvolvement in African conflicts. On April 21st, under pressure from the U.S. and Belgium, the UN reduced the number of peacekeepers to that of a symbolic force (Melvin 2000). On April 10th, French paratroopers arrived in Rwanda in order to help in the evacuation of the expatriates, under no circumstances were they allowed to assist Rwandans. Almost immediately the RPF and government forces had broken the cease-fire agreement and refueled the civil war (Des Forges 1999).

Five days after the death of President Habyarimana an estimated 20,000 people were dead. As the genocide spread out from Kigali into other areas of the country, the killings became less focused on specific individuals and more directed towards large groups of Tutsi. The genocide did not hit every region equally or at the same time. The most intense killing took place between the second week of April and the third week of May. The prefecture of Butare, for instance, remained relatively calm and peaceful until April 20th. One reason for
the calmness in Butare was due to the prefect Jean-Baptiste Habyarimana, the only Tutsi prefect in Rwanda. However, because of his resistance and his “ethnicity”, the extremist government replaced him. Upon his replacement and inevitable death, Butare was engulfed in the violence that had already plagued the entire country. In contrast, the mass killings in the regions of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri had slowed down drastically by late April, as there was few Tutsi left to be killed (Prunier 1995).

Being classified as a Hutu did not guarantee survival. In fact, those who were viewed as a threat to the power of the newly established government and those who refused to participate were not spared. Furthermore, the tall, thin, and narrow facial featured Hutu often did not make it through the roadblocks for “looking Tutsi”. Hutu from the South were also purposefully targeted since they were also fighting for political representation in the new government. The weapons of choice during the genocide were machetes, wooden clubs embedded with nails (a masu), garden hoes, and spears. It was not an uncommon practice for people to pay to be shot rather than to die from a machete or masu. These weapons were not chosen because of the “innate barbarity or primitiveness of African peoples”. Eltringham (2003) argues the weapons of choice were used to intentionally express “symbolically the agency of the ‘Hutu peasant republic’” (Eltringham 2003: 67). During the course of the genocide RTLM (Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines) often recited hate propaganda that encouraged Hutu to “go to work” and “clear the bushes”. These euphuisms normalized the slaughtering of Tutsi by relating it everyday tasks carried out with ordinary household tools.

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8 Jean-Baptiste Habyarimana is of no relation to President Habyarimana.
The extermination of the Tutsi was relatively easy to execute. A person’s identity was written on their identity cards. Many Tutsi claimed to have lost their card or attempted to have it altered. However, the fate of not having an identity card was the same as if the card said Tutsi, almost certain death. It was too time consuming to check people’s cards; as a result many were killed or spared based on their physical features, such as height and nose width. The genocide was easy to execute, especially in rural areas because Rwandans both Hutu and Tutsi “lived together side by side on the same hilly slopes, in neighboring ingo⁹ for better or for worse, for intermarriage or for massacre” (Prunier 1995: 5).

Through the forced participation of civilians in the extermination of Tutsi, the genocidal regime was striving to unite all Hutu in a new Rwanda. This Rwanda would be emptied of the “cockroaches” and formed around the collective action of all its’ Hutu citizens. Blood had to be on everyone’s hands. It simultaneously created an atmosphere of fear, hate and dehumanization. As a result the massacres seemed a natural response. Morality was reconstructed from the highest levels of government, encouraging the masses that it was not only right to kill Tutsi, but it was a Hutu’s obligation. There were many who refused to participate in the killings. In order to incorporate those who resisted into the new vision of Rwanda, coercion and violence were used as motivation. Frequently, people had to decide between becoming a killer and becoming a victim (African Rights 1994).

People sought shelter and protection in churches, schools, hospitals, banana groves, latrines, swamps, and ceilings of houses—wherever they felt secure. Women, children, and the elderly were targeted and killed. Neighbors killed neighbors, teachers killed their students, mothers and fathers killed their “mixed” children, husbands killed their wives and

⁹ Family enclosures or compound around which is at the center of all Rwandan life.
wives killed their husbands. The *Interahamwe* also forced members of Tutsi families to kill each other. In one such case, a young man Veuste was forced to kill his brother Theoneste, who was believed to be a RPF sympathizer. The *Interahamwe* argued that in order to prove that their entire family was not loyal to the RPF, they had to kill to him.

The whole family was threatened with death unless we killed Theoneste. He begged us to kill him, saying that the only alternative was death for the whole family and a very cruel death for him. By then, we had all heard stories of people still alive being thrown down toilets etc...

But of course none of could bring ourselves to accept the reality of killing my brother. For four days, I struggled with the terrible thought of how the family could cope with responsibility for the death of Theoneste.

After these four days, about twenty *Interahamwe*, armed with machetes, hoes, spears and bows and arrows, came to the house. They stood over me and said: ‘Kill him.’ Theoneste got up and spoke to me. ‘I fear being killed by a machete; so please go ahead and kill me but sue a small hoe’. He himself brought the hoe and handed it to me. I hit him on the head. I kept hitting him on the head but he would not die. It was agonizing. Finally, I took the machete he dreaded in order to finish him off quickly. The *Interahamwe* were there during the whole time, supervising what they called ‘work’. When Theoneste was dead, they left (African Rights 1994: 345).

*Violence against Women and Children*

Rape in times of conflict is a systematic weapon waged against women. As in the case of any conflict, women are often victimized on many fronts. According to Taylor (1999) in precolonial Rwanda, for a Hutu man to marry a Tutsi woman was seen as a sign of social mobility. Colonialism and the favoritism of Tutsi over Hutu was not limited to political administration, but also in terms of beauty. Europeans often spoke of the beauty of Tutsi women over their Hutu counterparts. The imagery of Tutsi women as being exceptionally beautiful, who often used trickery to obtain a Hutu man, became part of the everyday hate propaganda spread by RTLM and Kangura. Four of the ten Hutu commandments focused specifically on Tutsi women. They emphasized the belief that a Tutsi woman would always
remain loyal to her ethnic group and not to her Hutu husband. Furthermore, no Hutu male in the Rwandan army was allowed to have a Tutsi wife. The other commandments emphasized the worthiness of Hutu women over Tutsi women, as well as calling for Hutu women to make their male relatives and husband see “the path of reason” (Taylor 1999).

The use of rape in the Rwandan genocide was not used exclusively to humiliate and dishonor Tutsi women. It was also to guarantee the genocide would continue for years to come. It was a common practice for men infected with HIV to rape as many women as possible with the purpose of infecting them with the disease. In turn, the men would not slaughter these women but allow them to live infected with HIV (Kigali Memorial Center). Prior to the genocide, HIV rates were roughly estimated at slightly more than one percent in rural areas, and twenty-seven percent in urban areas. After the genocide, HIV rates in rural areas rose to between 10-11 percent and thirty percent in urban areas (Human Development Report 1999).

Women and young girls were raped and abducted by soldiers, militias, government officials and ordinary civilians. Women could be raped anywhere and were raped everywhere. Some of the assailants cut off the breasts, used objects such as spears, arrows and pointed sticks, to rape women (Des Forges 1999). According to African Rights (1994), rape victims were not always spared, frequently they would be raped and severally beaten, only to be thrown half dead into pits full of corpses. Others were taken as “wives” by their abusers and became sexual slaves. “Fearful of death, many young women saw surrender as the only way to survive” (African Rights 1994: 410).

It was common for the Interahamwe to pick women out at roadblocks and rape them. One incident, which is reported in the African Rights publication, Rwanda: Death, Despair
and Defiance, is the story of Louise a seventeen-year-old girl. Louise lived in the greater Kigali region of Nyamata with her mother. After spending two weeks hiding in various bushes with her grandmother and mother, she was discovered by an Interahamwe. The man let her go, after which she went to hide with two of her aunts nearby. The following is an account of her ordeal.

We continued to hide. Next day, the Interahamwe came. We tried to escape, but a woman who was cultivating in the fields shouted out to identify us to them. The attackers came. A group of the grabbed on of my aunts and threw her into a pit. One of them tried to rape my second aunt but she resisted. He beat her up badly and she too was thrown into the pit. I remained behind; when they were doing my aunts, I assumed I too would be killed. They would throw people alive into the pit, head first. The pit was very deep, but so many dead bodies had been thrown in that gap was now about twenty meters deep. The chances of not dying immediately seemed very slim.

They came back for me. They were three delinquents. As they came towards me, they were discussing how they were going to kill me. But then one of the thugs recognized me, saying ‘But she is the daughter of so and so. He is a rich man.’ They said I should give them money since my father is well off. I confessed that I had no money. They continued to discuss the ways of killing me.

Then one of them suggested that they should rape me instead. The three of them raped me in turns. Each having finished, he walked away. As the last one finished, a new group of Interahamwe arrived. They ordered the man who raped me last to rape me again. He refused. Then they threatened to burn both of us alive unless he raped me again. So he raped me again.

When he was through, the new group of Interahamwe beat me up. Then they said ‘Okay, let’s go. We want to show you where you are going to go.’ They threw me into a pit. The man who pushed me pushed me so hard that instead of falling in, I fell across. He dragged me back by the legs and I fell in upright, on top of my aunt (African Rights 1994: 425).

Afterwards, Using children as messengers, Louise managed to send a message to a solider she knew guarded the pit. She was unconscious when she was removed from the pit. When she awoke, Louise found herself next to a solider. However, she “didn’t worry because I felt that even if he wanted to kill me, at least as a solider, he would use a bullet.
That would be better than dying in the pit” (African Rights 1994: 425). The soldier took her to a Hutu woman in a wheelbarrow, where she was given a traditional hot-water massage.

The next day Louise was discovered by the woman’s husband, who demanded that the woman throw her out of the house or he would call the Interahamwe to take her to the swamp. Through an employee of the family she was able to contact her brother-in-law. In order for her brother-in-law to get Louise passed the Interahamwe, she was taken in a wheelbarrow disguised as a corpse.

When we go to his home, my private parts, stomach and head were so swollen that my sister went to look for a doctor. She found one, but he told her he would not treat a female Tutsi. My sister became desperate about me. She is a teacher and knows nothing about medicine, but she got hold of some penicillin injections and injected me herself for four consecutive days. After that she couldn’t find anywhere to obtain more penicillin. So she resorted to simple traditional hot-water treatments.

After some days, rumors about an RPF approach began to circulate in Nyamata. Now, it was the turn of my brother-in-law and his family to go into hiding during the night. As a Tutsi, my sister had to pretend to be even more terrified at the prospect of the RPF coming. For the first two nights, they locked me in the house. There were a lot of an Interahamwe shouting during the night, which made me very scared. I asked my relatives to move me somewhere else. Finally, my brother-in-law forced his father to accept that I could at least be moved to the kitchen annex. But that same day, there was an exchange of fire between the Interahamwe and the RPF; people started fleeing. I was found in the kitchen annex by an RPF soldier. (African Rights 1994: 426).

Louise later discovered that two of her three brothers had been killed, along with her mother and grandmother. Her father managed to survive, but was wounded in Kigali. At the time Louise was interviewed by African Rights, she was hospitalized suffering from a ruptured uterus and paralysis resulting from the events of the genocide.

The trauma of being raped and beaten was only the tip of the iceberg. Many of the women who were raped now have to deal with pregnancies in a strongly Catholic country where abortions are illegal. Pelagie lived in the commune of Nyamabuye in the prefecture of
Gitarama. She was attacked on April 14th by a group of Interahamwe. As Pelagie and her cousin sought shelter in a bush, her parents and brother were killed in the attack. The Interahamwe found the girls ten days later and attacked them with machetes. The younger Hutu brother of her sister’s husband discovered them and took the girls to the home of Pelagie’s sister. However, her cousin did not survive. At the age of sixteen Pelagie was asked by twenty-five year old man who rescued her to marry him.

He then told me that he wanted to make me his wife. My sister advice me to submit, saying ‘Our parents have been killed; all our uncles have been killed. If you refuse where will you go? It might be our only chance of survival.’ My brother-in-law tried to talk his brother, pointing out my serious injuries. But when the younger man insisted, he felt there was nothing he could do.

...He lived in a room at my sister’s house. That is where he took me even though I was so ill. It was extremely painful; afterwards, I could not get out of bed. He used to buy medicines for my wounds. But he continued to take me as a wife even though this sharpened the general pain I felt.

After sometime, he, my sister and brother-in-law fled when they heard that the Inkotanyi had arrived at Kinazi. I was left alone in the house for two weeks.... I managed to go outside the house and found three Inkotanyi soldiers. They said they would bring transport for me the next day to take me to their doctor. By coincidence, the young man who had kept me came to the house that evening in search of food. He had been hiding in the bush. I told him what the soldiers said. He called out his friends and they decided to take me to the doctor themselves instead of waiting for the next day...

There was nothing I could do about getting pregnant. He didn’t mind making me pregnant and I could not do or say anything. I knew he could kill me. I only learned a few hours ago that I am pregnant. I don’t know what I can do about that.

I can’t say what he thought, but I don’t think he saw what he was doing to me as rape (African Rights 1994: 435-436).

I have focused attention on violence against women during the genocide because of the long-term and wide ranging consequences it continues to have on the victims and citizens of Rwanda. Many of the women who were raped were raped by members from their own
community, adding an unneeded barrier to the process of reconciliation. The situation for these women is exacerbated by the stigmatization of having been raped. Rape victims also face blame directed at them from remaining family members of the rapists and even the rapists themselves. Furthermore, the children produced from these acts of violence must bear the stigma of being both born outside the context of marriage and also from the fact that their fathers’ were responsible for the genocide (African Rights 1994).

Women were both victims and perpetrators of violence. Like a majority of those who participated in the massacres, they often had no other option. Devota was from the commune of Nsida in the Kibungo region along the Tanzania border, after gathering with people from surrounding communities in nearby Irundu, people decided to return home. On their way back, they were stopped by a group of Interahamwe.

There were nine of us in our group when they stopped us, four women and five men. One of the women was my godmother. We had no idea why they had stopped us. They took us back to our places of origin. The soldiers instructed us to loot; we had to pack the goods onto the back of lorries belonging to the soldiers. After that they said that women were cowards and were only god enough to finish off the ones who did not die straightaway. They gave me a big masu¹⁰ and told me to clean up a man who had been shot in Nsinda. I knew the man because he was from Nsinda. I had to hit him three times before he died.

We left the place and walked on. Some of the local people then turned against me and my godmother. They said that my godmother was a Tutsi and therefore I was also a Tutsi agent. They said I must kill my godmother. They began to insist and started beating me up. When I felt that the beatings was too much, I gave in and hit my godmother with the machete. When I started, the others also joined in and began hitting her with their machetes. She did not die immediately. While this was happening, a young man jumped out of his hiding place. The whole group of attackers began to chase him. I decided to chase him as well instead of killing my godmother. But three of the Interahamwe brought me back to make sure that I completed the job. They gave me a masu to finish her off and I did (African Rights 1994: 571).

¹⁰ Masu is a club, which is embedded with nails.
Children as the saying goes are the hope of the future. In Rwanda, for one hundred days that was exactly the problem. Tutsi children were of particular interest to the militias, because they would grow up to become the next generation of RPF soldiers and would want to revenge the deaths of their family. As long as Tutsi boys remained alive, they were a foreseeable threat to the future of Rwanda. In Nyamata and Rukara, attacks were carried out on maternity clinics, killing adults, children and infants. Nurses reported children who had lost limbs, throats slashed, cuts all over their body, and broken bones. One nurse in Kigali reported attending to a child whose top of his head had almost been completely cut off. In reality these children were considered to be the “lucky” ones, because they were able to make it through the roadblocks (African Rights 1994). Other children were buried alive, stomped on or thrown up against walls. At Murambi, there is a room set-aside especially for the children. I will never forget the small body of a toddler whose head had been stomped on; where it was almost possible to trace the shoe’s imprint.

Religion and Genocide

The genocide brought out the ugliness of every aspect of human nature. There is perhaps nowhere this is clearer than the role of the church. Religious intuitions like any other part of society do not exist in a vacuum; as a result, the same issues that plagued Rwanda during the genocide also infected the church. In his discussion of bystanders, Prunier (1995) argues that the “church hierarchies were at best useless and at worst accomplices in the genocide” (Prunier 1995: 250).

When the genocide began to spread outside Kigali, many people sought protection in churches. People believed the militias would not dare commit atrocities inside a sacred place. During previous waves of violence, people often sought refuge in the church and were
protected. However, the genocide was unlike previous massacres and some of the most horrific massacres happened inside churches. In the worst cases, priests and nuns often participated in the killings, turned their congregations over to the militias or refused to allow people to stay there. Many times priests, who subscribed to the racist ideology of the times, simply looked the other way when the militias showed up at the front doors of their church. One of the most sited examples is of that Father Wenceslas Munyashyaka, who replaced the first priest of Sainte-Famille in Kigali. Eight thousand people sought protection in the church, which is located close to downtown Kigali. Father Munyashyaka at first offered his protection. However, he gave the names of RPF supporters to the Interahamwe and allowed them to take members of the congregation. As the RPF advanced and gained more control over the country, many of the displaced people within in Sainte-Famille wanted to go into the RPF zones. Father Munyashyaka felt betrayed because they wanted to “go over to the Inyenzi” (Prunier 1995: 258).

Some of the churches where large-scale massacres took place have been turned into memorial sites. One of these churches in Greater Kigali region of Bugesera is the church at Ntarama. Bugesera is relatively close to the Burundian border and after the 1959-1963 massacres many Tutsi had resettled in the area. During the genocide around five thousand people took dishes, food items, family photos, and rosary beads into the small church. Soon after the death of Habyarimana, both Hutu and Tutsi developed a defense system, which managed to ward off the Interahamwe for a week. However, on April 15th well-armed soldiers, along with the Interahamwe, began to attack the church. According to a survivor of Ntarama, Beata
People hiding inside the church did not know that the defense had crumbled. I was in the church that day. I had been going to the defense but by then my four-year-old son had become very difficult and I could not leave him. A group of soldiers and Interahamwe attacked the church. They made holes in the back of walls and threw grenades through the holes. Everyone tried to take cover. The Interahamwe then came in with their machetes and began massacring. At least one uniformed soldier continued to shoot into the church to protect the Interahamwe until they were right inside the church and had begun their ‘work’. The Interahamwe included women and young boys, about eleven to fourteen, carrying spears and sharpened sticks. They used these to beat a lot of children to death (African Rights 1994: 212).

After the genocide the church became a memorial. As John an overseer of the memorial, unlocked the door and allowed me to step into the church, the first thing I saw was a picture of Pope John Paul II. His picture was hanging next to the shelves of the remains of the victims of Ntarama. John picked one up and showed it to me pointing out the blacken areas and than pointed to the hole in the wall where a grenade had been thrown. The next skull he showed me still had a nail from a club that had broken off when it struck the skull. There were canvas bags filled with bones leaning against the wall. John began to step on the low-lying pews and motioned me to follow him. As I did, I looked on the ground and there were all those things that people had left behind. Some of the items included a hair pick, a bowl filled of red beans, pictures, shoes, among small bones such as a femur and articles of clothing. At Ntarama, after the genocide, there was no massive removal of personal items. Some of the skulls and bones had been picked up, while others remained as they were when people were killed.

Not all priests and religious leaders simply opened the door to the militias. Rather, they lost their lives at the side of their parishioners. The only religious group that had relatively little involvement in the genocide was Islam. Rwanda’s Muslim population is extremely small, well under one and half percent. However, the sense of community among
Rwandan Muslims withstood the divisive nature of Hutu and Tutsi (Prunier 1995). Several individuals told me about Imams who would not allow the militias into the mosques but offered safety and protection to those who sought refuge. There were some attacks on Muslims and mosques. In a heavily Tutsi district of Kigali, several hundred people were killed in a mosque after RTLM broadcasted the location of a number of Tutsi hiding (African Rights 1994). In the post-genocide era, many people who felt betrayed by Christianity and the church have converted to Islam particularly for these reasons. One reason for the ability of Muslims to remain united during the genocide is the due to the importance that the religious community or umma has in Islam. This sentiment is well illustrated by a passage from the Qur’an,

So let there be one community among you who may call to the good, enjoin what is esteemed and forbid what is odious. They are those who will be successful.
So be not like those who become disunited and differed among themselves after clear proofs had come to them. For them is great suffering... (Peters 1994: 105).

Post-Genocide

“Liberation” and Flight

The genocide did not end due to the outrage or help from the international community. It ended when the RPF took control on July 4th 1994. It is again important to reiterate that at the same time there was an ongoing civil war in addition to the genocide. The RPF had broken the cease-fire agreement on April 7th in response to the campaigns of mass violence being carried out against members of the coalition government and civilians. As the RPF fought their way through Rwanda, they pushed the genocidal regime out of Kigali into Gikongoro. People fearing revenge and retaliation by the RPF fled into the prefectures of
Ruhengeri and Gisenyi. The RPF take over of Kigali, forced RTLM to stop broadcasting on July 3\textsuperscript{rd}, which relocated to Gisenyi a few days later. The regions of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi were the last safe havens for the genocidal regime; the Hutu extremists’ strongholds fell on July 13\textsuperscript{th} and on the 18\textsuperscript{th} respectively.

In one week, a million people, members of the genocidal regime, the militias, FAR soldiers, nuns, priests, nurses, teachers, businessmen, Hutu and Tutsi all began to run to the Zairian border. Along the journey, people collapsed along the streets and were crushed to death. A day after the fall of Gisenyi, the new government was sworn in. Rwanda had lost ten percent of its population in three months and another thirty percent were now in exile. Within the country itself, people were now facing the effects of psychological trauma, while most of the infrastructure had been destroyed in lootings and raids. There was also no electricity or running water and no one to participate in food production, despite ripened crops (Prunier 1995).

The new government was formulated within the framework of the Arusha Accords, with some revisions, such as the RPF taking the ministries that MRND were allocated. RPF military leader Paul Kagame was made the Vice President as well as the Minster of Defense. Pasteur Bizimungu a Hutu, who was active in the RPF, was made the president of Rwanda. The Prime Minister along with sixteen out of twenty two ministerial positions was to be held by Hutu. According to Prunier, the power still remained in the hands of the RPF. The newly appointed ministers may have had power, but they did not have an office, working vehicles, fuel, phones, a typewriter or even a secretary. The RPF were the only ones that had working vehicles, weapons, which created a relationship of dependency. The new government also had to deal with the return of Tutsi refugees coming from Uganda and Burundi, who had
began to participate in land grabbing. Adding further trouble was the fact the government was left completely bankrupt. The *Interahamwe* government stole money from the collection of taxes, as well as took out a number of loans from the World Bank, which had to be repaid before further loans could be given out.

Rwanda’s historical events and accounts of the genocide are important pieces to understand when exploring the wider context of how these two groups have transitioned over time. Chapter four will explore the processes of the racialization of the Hutu and Tutsi identities, the manipulation of “history”, and the transformation of a “racial/ethnic” identity to a post-genocide national identity.
Chapter Four: Narrating the Past: The Reification of Identity

Introduction

The last chapter dealt with the chronological events of Rwanda’s past. In this section I will explore theories related to the construction of identity. Using Rwanda as a case study, I wish to demonstrate how the construction of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy has been defined in various ways according to the ideologies of the ruling elite. In addition, this section will also address the manipulation and narration of history. The various definitions of Hutu and Tutsi were legitimized through the ruling elite’s manipulation of history. To ask how the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy was constructed involves an investigation of the past. Eltringham (2004) argues, “Historical narratives remain the main recourse by which actors conceptualise social distinction in Rwanda” (Eltringham 2004: 5). How the past has been perceived through the different political regimes continues to be essential in defining the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy. Considering the historical events that are attributed to the “reification” of Rwandan identity, it is important to differentiate between a linear one-sided view of history and a more multi-dimensional account. What makes this latter version of “history” important is that it takes into account the various experiences and perceptions different people may have of the same past chronological event.

For starters, Rwandans share a common past of chronological events. However, their experiences, how they narrate and interpret the past has led to multiple versions of competing histories. For example, Rwanda was colonized by Belgium, but there are different experiences within this specific chronological event. Nonetheless, it is important that each
competing history appear to be absolute (Eltringham 2004). In using the concept of mythico-
history to illustrate how history and cultural myths are formulated, Malkki (1995) argues

The mythico-history worldmaking was an oppositional process, it was constructed in opposition to
other versions of what was ostensibly the same world, or
the same past. The oppositional process of construction
also implied the creation of the collective past in distinction
to other pasts…” (Malkki 1995; 55).

This is clearly represented in the two paradigms that define the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy
as “separate races” and as “one people.” The historical construction of the Hutu/Tutsi
identity in Rwanda has changed drastically since the RPF took power in 1994. The previous
regime’s ideologies are often viewed as one of the central causes of the genocide; as a result
the new government constructed a past that is in direct opposition to the Hamitic myth and
the old regime’s paradigm of separate races. In a top-down approach, the racialized and
ethnicized dichotomy was replaced with the “one people” paradigm under a newly defined
national identity of “Rwandan” (Buckley-Zistel 2006).

The Hutu Revolution did nothing to change the cultural myths established during
colonialism; instead, it used them to legitimized Hutu majority rule and the political and
economic exclusion of Tutsi. The genocidal regime in face of losing control, used their
position and hate propaganda to successfully construct the Tutsi identity as foreign invaders.
This construction involved the processes of dehumanization in which all Tutsi were
identified as “cockroaches” or as RPF accomplices. In contrast, the RPF used historical
narratives to “prove” that Hutu and Tutsi were one people and shared the same language and
culture. It was the “one people” paradigm that led to the transformation of the dichotomy
into the post-genocide national identity of “Rwandan.”
There are points of reference that are addressed in all versions of Rwandan “history”, such as the precolonial social hierarchy, Belgian colonialism, the second half of Habyarimana’s term and the genocide. The telling of traditional creation myths in precolonial Rwanda, “explained” the absoluteness and binding nature of the social hierarchy. With the coming of Europeans and colonial rule, missionaries brought the bible and used it to interpret that social system. Defining Tutsi in terms of biblical origins and supposed “Europeanness”, permanently fixated the once fluid identities into a racialized dichotomy. Some (Prunier 1995, Eltringham 2004 et al) claim that the genocide was the byproduct of history. This is supported by the role of historian Ferdinand Nahimana, who served as the director of the hate propaganda station RTLM. Nahimana used history and the mass media to effectively exploit the fear that if the RPF were allowed into a position of power, Rwanda would return to a Tutsi hegemonic power. If this were allowed to happen, it would result in the enslavement of Hutu under ubuhake/ubureetwa.

**Gatwa, Gahutu and Gatutsi: Traditional Explanations**

One common myth often told in precolonial society explained the origins of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, which began with *Mwami* Kigwa. Kigwa descended from heaven and had three sons (Gatwa, Gahutu and Gatutsi). One night each son had to watch a pot of milk, the one who completed the task would become the successor to his father. In the morning, Kigwa had found that his son Gatwa had drunk the milk, Gahutu had fallen asleep and spilled the milk, and Gatutsi was the only one who had carefully watched it to ensure its safety. Kigwa had decided to make Gatutsi his successor and be free of menial tasks, while Gahutu was to be his serf. As for Gatwa, “who showed himself so utterly reliable, his station in society was to be that of a pariah” (Lemarchand 1970: 33). This cultural myth legitimized the
precolonial social structure, in which Tutsi were the rulers, Hutu were the peasants, and Twa were socially marginalized. In addition to establishing the social order, it also granted the cattle ownership rights to Gatutsi. Whereas, Gahutu could only obtain cattle from Gatutsi, and Gatwa could not acquire any (Twagilimana 2003).

In another traditional myth, Imana (God) had invited the king, Gatutsi, Gahutu, Gatwa and a woman to get the intelligence contained in a pitcher of beer. First, the king took a large drink only leaving a small amount in the pitcher. Gatutsi followed the king, who also drank until he quenched his thirst. When it was Gahutu’s turn, he found that there was almost nothing left. Gahutu argued that he didn’t have enough to fully satisfy his thirst. Gatwa took the last little bit of intelligence left, while women weren’t allowed to have any. It was argued that women would than inherit intelligence from their husbands (Twagilimana 2003).

These traditional myths were more than fairytales or stories told to children at bedtime, rather they “explained” and in the process legitimized the precolonial social hierarchy. The traditional oral stories were spread throughout all aspects of Rwandan society and came to be accepted. Since the king was always a Tutsi and was the embodiment of Imana, whose rule was absolute, these myths had religious-political ramifications. The king nor the social system was not to be questioned. Another cultural myth involves Gihanga (first descendent of Imana) asked his three sons to build a house on top of a rock. The only one to successfully complete the task was Gahutu, who became known for his manual labor and handiwork (Twagilimana 2003).

There is little doubt that the labels of Tutsi, Hutu and Twa existed prior to colonialism. What is contested is the nature of the relationship between them (Eltringham
Most agree that these identities were social categories, which demarcated class and/or political status (Lemarchand 1970, Newbury 1988, Prunier 1995, Twagilimana 2003 and Eltringham 2004). It is clear that while Rwanda was not always “peaceful”, it did not have the degree of violence that was manifested in the genocide. There are many cultural myths, which explore the origin and development of the “primordial” past of Rwandan society. These myths sought to explain how the social order came to be.

**Race and Ethnicity**

*Introduction*

Anthropology played a decisive role in the creation of the “monster” of race (Brace 2005). Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of Rwanda. Colonial anthropologists and scientists measured and analyzed the physical “differences” of Hutu and Tutsi and “proved” they were physically different and thus separate races (Prunier 1995, Kigali Memorial Center). This was further translated into differences regarding intelligence, ability to govern and other personality qualities. Montagu (1951) defines race as

> One of the group of populations constituting the species *Homo sapiens*. These populations are capable of interbreeding with one another but, by virtue of isolating barriers which in the past kept them more or less separated, exhibit certain physical differences as a result of their somewhat different biological histories” (Montagu 1951: 12).

Race as Montagu defines it does not exist in modern humans and has nothing to do with biology. However, race is often associated with physiological characteristics, such as skin color, hair texture, nose width and blood. For instance, the U.S. policy of the “one-drop” rule, determined that individuals with one drop (exact amount varied from state to state) of African American ancestry were to be classified as belonging to the “Negro race.”
In contrast, places like Brazil and Cuba, the racial classification schemes are more fluid and less institutionalized. According to the American Anthropological Association race is a cultural construction based on the classification and designation of social meaning to perceived physical differences of people (American Anthropological Association 1998). In arguing for a cause that the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy was “racialized”, I am referring to the process whereby value and meaning were ascribed to physical and behavioral qualities. For example, it was believed that the Tutsi resembled Europeans rather than Africans. Based on their assumed “European” physical features, Tutsi were considered to be superior to the Hutu and Twa.

Categorization based on race does not take into account cultural differences. For the most part, Africans (Bantu), African Americans or Australian Aborigines were all classified as belonging to the “Negroid” race. As scholars began to question and devalue race as a legitimate system of categorization, ethnicity slowly began to replace the faulty generalizations of race. Ethnicity involves the beliefs of its group’s members concerning their own relatedness, a sense of a common shared past, language, religious and cultural beliefs (Maybury-Lewis 2002). Ethnicity also includes a sense of kinship usually resulting from the descendents of a common ancestor or Supreme Being. Furthermore, ethnic groups are usually economically specialized, have a particular form of leadership and perceived as being racially or biologically distinct (Eltringham 2004). Whereas, “race” has an aspect of population isolation, ethnic groups do not exist in a vacuum but within the context of national borders and for better or for worst among other social groups (Maybury-Lewis 2002). Barth (1969) suggests that ethnic identities are not static boundaries, but rather are influenced by other social processes.
Can we define the Hutu and Tutsi identities in terms of “race” or “ethnicity”? Most anthropologists would agree that race is an invalid category and “races” do not exist. It would also seem that a definition of ethnicity does not apply to the Hutu or the Tutsi. For one, peoples of Rwanda share the same language, cultural beliefs and practices, religion and participate in the same subsidence patterns (not all Tutsi owned cattle and not all Hutu were involved in agriculture). Hutu and Tutsi may have different experiences, but they share a common past, thus not fully conforming to the definition of ethnicity. In a way it does not matter whether Hutu or Tutsi fits a laundry list of characteristics developed by scholars. What matters is how Rwandans classify themselves and their perceived beliefs related to their differences and similarities. It is also important to understand the context, processes and conditions, which produced these perceptions (Eltringham 2004).

I will now address the processes that led to the construction and legitimization of the Hutu/Tutsi identity into a racialized/ethnicized dichotomy and its transformation after the genocide. Additionally, I will examine the responsibility that European colonialism had in this process. The construction of race in this context was based upon European and Christian ideologies, but was also legitimized through the scientific measuring of physical features. In regards to colonialism, I will focus on the role of missionaries, the Hamitic myth (see chapter two), and the transformation of the ubuhake/ubureetwa systems. The ideologies established by the colonial and missionary agents were maintained and further embedded into the hearts and minds of all Rwandans during the rule of Kayibanda, Habyarimana and the subsequent genocide.
The Hamitic Myth: Rwanda as a Case Study

When Europeans were finally able to make it into the African interior and began to explore Rwanda, they found a system of identity and organization that could be manipulated to fit their preconceived ideas about African peoples. I suggest this contributed to the application of the Hamitic myth in Rwanda. The perceived differences of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa by Europeans are outlined in Figure 1 (see Appendix 5). At one end of the classification system were the original inhabitants of Rwanda the Twa, who practiced hunting and gathering and belonged to the Pygmoids. The importance of the Twa in Rwanda should not be overlooked, as they have faced vast amounts of discrimination from Europeans and Rwandans. The descriptions in Figure 1 (Appendix 5) demonstrate how the Twa were considered to be sub-human and on the same level as animals. However, their identity and position in Rwanda has never been as problematic as their counterparts. In fact, their status as marginalized members of precolonial and colonial Rwanda society has in a sense allowed them to escape the violence that has been perpetrated by Hutu and Tutsi against each other. In post-genocide Rwanda there has been a push to throw out the labels of identity of Hutu and Tutsi. However, it has had less impact on the Twa identity.

The Hutu were the next to migrated to the region of Rwanda (Burundi), however little is known about their exact origins. In general, they were classified as Negroid, who shared many of the same features as other Bantu groups spread throughout Africa (Lemarchand 1970). Their primary mode of subsistence was in agricultural productions and made up the majority of the population. Regarding the Tutsi, there has been much speculation about their origins; some have argued that they migrated out of Ethiopia, Egypt, Tibet or even the mythical land of Atlantis. Others believe that they were pastoralists who migrated into
Rwanda during the fifteenth century (Twagilimana 2003). Whatever the origins of the Tutsi, they adopted the Bantu related language of Kinyarwanda as well as shared the same cultural practices and beliefs of the Hutu and the Twa (Prunier 1995).

Historically, the Hamites in general were believed to be pastoralists and nomadic with superior intellect. They were part European, which meant that they colonized the Bantu and “Pygmy races.” Hamites were more European-like in their physical features and character traits (Twagilimana 2003). It is crucial to remember that these beliefs were instilled in the mindset of European explorers prior to contact with the Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. When European explorers made it into Rwanda, they viewed the preexisting social structure within the Hamitic paradigm and discarded what didn’t fit. They saw the “European-like” pastoralists with their superior intelligence dominating the Bantu and “Pygmies.” Their entire system of reference was based on the Eurocentric concept of race, whereas recent theories argue that the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy in precolonial Rwanda was based on class. It is speculated by some that the Tutsi migrated out of Ethiopia into Rwanda similar to the European patterns of conquest and domination (Prunier 1995). In fact, the Europeans (first by Germans and continued by Belgians) reconstructed the social hierarchy of peoples of Rwanda by creating artificial boundaries based on their notions of superiority versus inferior peoples. The Europeans perceived the Tutsi as enslaving African people, which in the colonial mindset resembled the enslavement of Africans during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Sanders argues that colonialism and racism shaped the Eurocentric view of Africa and Africans. When they encountered a variety of physical characteristics in Africa, their ethnocentrism gave value to those who looked more like themselves and declared them of Hamitic descent and endowed with the myth of superior
achievements and considerable beneficial influences on their non-Hamitic counterparts (Sanders 1969; 528).

In Rwanda, European colonialism and the utilization of the Hamitic myth undermined the flexibility and fluidity of the precolonial social system and in return created a racially based highly stratified hierarchy. Mahmood Mamdani (2001) argues that this racialized dichotomy was a colonial creation. In this context, colonialism reconstructed the once fluid social categories into political entities, which were legitimized through the implementation of colonial policies. The Hamitic hypothesis was used to justify the “superiority” of Tutsi by portraying them as “foreign settlers” from Ethiopia or Egypt. Mamdani states “The Hamitic hypothesis became the basis of a series of institutional changes that fixed the Tutsi as a race in their relationship to the colonial state” (Mamdani 2001; 34).

**Changes in Tradition: The Racialization of Ubuhake and Ubureetwa**

In the period immediately prior to colonialism, as the mwami’s empire became more centralized, the relationships between the client-patron and the ownership of land began to change. Under the system of ubukonde land was granted and placed under the control of a particular lineage. However, the king took control over this system and decided who could use the land granted. This land reform took control away from the Hutu and placed it directly and solely into the hands of the mwami, pushing them further into an inferior social position (Mamdani 2001). The system of forced labor (ubureetwa) also resulted from the loss of control and rights over land. Ubureetwa was imposed solely on Hutu, who no longer had power or claim to their land. Furthermore, chiefs set up the system in such a manner, which permitted the abuse of workers. Newbury (1988) tells the account of one missionary
who explains the exploitive nature of the system as well as the abuse the *ubureetwa* guards suffered.

Certain chiefs abused their authority and found ways to make this already odious duty even more irksome. It is recounted that several were so cruel they kept nightwatchmen outside the hut, exposed to the cold and rain... Others, when morning came, would oblige the unhappy watchmen to go to the spring, often far away and at the bottom of the hill, to fetch water... They also had to go and cut grass. Only after such harassment were they permitted to leave (Newbury 1988: 141).

According to Mamdani, the consequences led to the polarization of Hutu and Tutsi, constructing these social categories into a distinct dichotomy (Mamdani 2001). During colonialism, the menial tasks evolved into the production of cash crops and the construction of roads, which was still under the authority of chiefs acting as agents for the colonial administration. As a tool of colonialism, *ubureetwa* was forced on to more and more people, in places where the practice had not existed. At the time, *ubureetwa* was the most despised and humiliating practice. “It symbolized the servitude of the Hutu vis-à-vis the dominant minority” (Newbury 1988: 141). It is here that the comparative approach becomes useful in filling the gaps. The forced labor policies carried out first by King Leopold and later by the Belgian administration in the Congo were notorious for their absolute inhumanity, cruelty and slave like treatment (Hochschild 1998). *Ubureetwa* also represents the ways, which Europeans and the Tutsi elite exploited Hutu. To fulfill the social and cultural obligations of the client-patron system, Hutu were forced into perform mandatory labor and services. In addition to having their land taken out of their control and placed into the control of the king
and Tutsi hill chiefs, many Hutu were forced to sell their labor to the colonial government (Prunier 1995).

Anthropologist Helen Codere (1973) collected forty-eight ethnographic life-histories of Rwandans, spanning from 1900-60, one of which was a Hutu by the name of Muyaneza. At the time of the interview he was in his seventies and was considered by Codere to be was involved in the *ubuhake* and *ubureetwa*. Codere does not distinguish between *ubuhake* and *ubureetwa*; rather she combines both practices under *ubuhake*.

When I was fifteen years old I wanted to got into service to a great Tutsi and receive many cows as my uncle, Mutabazi had done. I went to the house of Nyiradagano, who had a son of my age named Rubindo. Masuliro, who was Nyiradagano cook, told me to present myself to Nyiradagano and I said that I wanted to with all, that that was the only reason I had left my papa and mama and all my brothers and sisters.

...Rubindo, who was the oldest (child of Nyiradagano) saw me and took hold of me and cried out to the others <<I have a good vassal>>. He told me, <<You will be my vassal, and I shall give you a cow and after that more cows...When we grow up we will go to the Mwami and I will tell him that you are a good vassal and he will give you a good piece of land for your son and all your descendants>> (Codere 1973: 211).

Muyaneza was accepted as “vassal”\(^{11}\) and was given child-rearing responsibilities. Unlike, others involved in *ubuhake*/*ubureetwa*, he was allowed to sleep and eat with the family and their children. After five years he received two cows as payment for his services and was given permission to go home. After his trip home he returned to the family and maintained his position. However, when he returned to his family home upon the death of his father, Muyaneza had became ill with malaria. The remaining part of his story illustrates the unstable, unequal and dependent nature of the *ubuhake*/*ubureetwa*.

\(^{11}\) Under feudalism, a vassal exchanged labor, land, allegiance or commodities for protection from the feudal lord. Codere uses vassal to refer to the position of Hutu under the *ubuhake*/*ubureetwa*
Then my life became sad. I had just lost my father. Then malaria laid me low. No more marriage prospects. No more living. I was completely discouraged without help. I said to myself I am sick and cannot serve Nyiradagano and her son, and soon they will come and take their cows back because there is nothing for them here. I do not have a child to guard them.

Although my sister had been betrothed by a Hutu of our collie (hill), Nyiradagano wanted her for her son Rubindo for the bazimu (spirits of the dead) as was done in those days. The only reason ancient Tutsi had so many children was that they had many wives and concubines. I did not even think about the cows they had given me. I thought only about justice, and because of that I lost my cows when I refused to give my sister to them for them to marry to the bazimu, the spirits of the dead ancestors. Nyiradagano sent a man to take my cows and their calves (Codere 1973: 212).

During colonialism the implementation of ubuhake evolved into Hutu owning allegiance to a Tutsi. Hutu clients were expected to demonstrate unconditional loyalty to their Tutsi patron, thus supporting ideologies of Tutsi superiority. Colonialism also changed the gender makeup of the ubuhake/ubureetwa. Prior to Belgian rule, Hutu men were primarily responsible and involved in ubuhake and ubureetwa. During colonialism Hutu women were also forced to participate in ubuhake/ubureetwa. Beatrice Umutesi (2004) a Hutu from Rwanda became a refugee in Zaire after the genocide. She provides an illustration of how the practices ubuhake/ubureetwa became a representation of Tutsi hegemony and superiority over Hutu. Umutesi’s account also describes how people were not just passive actors within the exploitative system, but risked punishment and beatings to protest their treatment. She states,

One of my aunts rebelled against this system (ubuhake/ubureetwa). At sixteen while performing these obligatory services, she had to accompany a young Tutsi woman back to her family. One there, she refused to eat for three days because she was forced to eat along after the members of the family had finished their meal. She was not allowed to look at the mouth of her “masters” while they were eating. She did not understand how such poor Tutsi could treat her with so much contempt when her own family was quite well off. On the way back she refused to help her “mistress” carry the gifts that she had received from her family. At this time an attitude like this was punished by a public beating called umunai. My aunt knew
perfectly well that by rebelling she ran the risk of being beaten, but she preferred a beating to being treated with contempt. This time she was not punished for her rebelliousness (Umutesi 2004: 7-8).

The utilization of these two practices by colonial installed chiefs along with the implementation of the *Hamitic myth*, reified the existence of a “primordial” Tutsi hegemony. The traditional practices demonstrated that the social hierarchy had always been there with Tutsi always at the top of the hierarchy and Hutu as their serfs. The ubureetwa system further conceptualized the difference between Tutsi and Hutu, in that “petite” Tutsi were even exempted from participating in the forced system of labor (Lemarchand 1970). Locally and economically there may have been little difference between “petite” Tutsi and Hutu, but the ubureetwa demonstrated that being considered a “Tutsi” no matter how poor, still meant they were superior to Hutu. During the genocide the exploitive nature and past abuse of the ubureetwa would be portrayed as Tutsi enslavement of Hutu.

The mythico-history that developed in the context of the civil war between the Tutsi dominated rebel army and the Hutu government would portray the invasion as an attempt to reinstall this Tutsi hegemony. Pottier (2002) argues that the process of ethnicization of Hutu and Tutsi began prior to colonialism, during the reign of Rwabugiri. He argues that it was under Rwabugiri in which ubuhake and ubureetwa first became oppressive. I argue that Rwabugiri may have contributed to the polarization of the identities. However, it was only with colonialism and the implementation of colonial policies and ideologies that turned the identities into a racialized/ethnicized dichotomy. Traditional myths demonstrate that in precolonial Rwanda, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa were all thought of as coming from the same common ancestor. The categories were present in precolonial Rwanda and there was an unequal relationship between them. However, Tutsi were not considered foreigners nor were
their identity defined based on physical differences and the value of those differences. It was only with colonialism and the institutionalization of the *Hamitic myth* that characterized Tutsi as foreigners and colonizers.

**Continuing the Colonial Legacy: Kayibanda**

The Kigali Memorial Center displays a quote from Rwanda’s first president Gregoire Kayibanda, in which he states the relationship between Hutu and Tutsi as being

> Two nations in single state ... Two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy, Who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers of different zone, or inhabitants of different planets.

The mythico-history established and invoked during Kayibanda’s reign, centers on the continuation of colonial ideologies, but within the context of the Hutu Revolution. European administrations and missionaries were the predominate source of political, social, and economical change. Alonso (1994) argues that the establishment of colonial ethnic hierarchies can have a significant impact on the formation of “national” identities in the postcolonial era (Alonso 1994). This is most certainly the case in post-independent Rwanda. The Tutsi, in the context of the *Hamitic myth*, were assumed to have a “mythical” and foreign origin. They were also considered the conquerors and colonizers of Rwanda’s “indigenous” peoples. Prior to colonialism, Hutu/Tutsi had been defined as political and economic categories based on the accumulation of cattle, the *Hamitic myth* and European ideologies assigned access to power according to the presence and value of these physical characteristics to these identities. In order to implement their’ policies, Europeans did not have to create an entirely new system, since there was already an established social hierarchy with a “primordial” history. Neither the Hutu Revolution nor their European allies sought to
change or contest the colonial cultural myths. Rather, they turned them on its head. According to the Hutu elite, Tutsi were or thought of themselves as being superior to all others. Along with this perception, Tutsi were still thought of as the oppressive slave-masters, who used deceit and trickery to fulfill their goals and were actively killing Hutu in Burundi (Prunier 1995).

Francis (1968) contends that in the fight for power, the oppositional elite will legitimate its’ demands for power along “ethnic” lines if the ruling elite is disproportionately made up of a certain “ethnic” group. Moreover, “ethnic” claims to power will result if ethnic divisions are already established, from which populations can clearly be classified and separated according to (Francis 1998). Ndegwa (1997) argues citizenship determines who is and who is not considered members of society. Citizenship establishes the nature of the relationship between the individual and the nation-state (Ndegwa 1997, Buckley-Zistel 2006). Citizenship further defines the obligations, basic rights, political representation and claims to land individuals may have (Konneh 1996). In using Gagnon (1994-1995) definition of ethnic nationalism, as the “rhetoric by which political describe, justify, and explain policies with reference to the interest of the “nation” defined in ethnic terms” (Gagnon 1994-1995: 131). I argue that the first republic under Kayibanda was essentially founded in terms of “racialized/ethnicized” citizenship and nationalism. In turn, through a process of political reification were embedded into the Hutu/Tutsi identity.

The process of political reification involved maintaining the Belgian system of identity cards, installed quota systems, and also defined Tutsi/Hutu in terms of physical differences. The revolution of 1959 was not a movement for all Rwandans, but exclusively for Hutu. Hutu were logistically the dominant population, according to Hutu elite this had to
translate into political representation and power. Majority rule essentially meant Hutu Power; the new republic was a nation for Rwandans. However, citizenship and full incorporation into the new Rwanda was determined based on ethnic identity and defined in terms of indigenousness. Since Tutsi were “foreigners”, they could not be considered Rwandan and were denied the rights of national citizenship. What Kayibanda’s quote suggests is the degree to which Tutsi were perceived as “foreigners”. These “foreigners” did not belong in the same space, country or world as Hutu. In turn, they had no right to participate in the economic, social, or political spheres of Rwanda.

Using a case study of ethnic and national citizenship in Kenya between 1960-64, Ndegwa contends that for larger ethnic groups the formation of political alliances along ethnic lines was not as problematic as it was for smaller ethnic groups. In Rwanda, majority rule was defined as the rights of the “racial/ethnic” and “indigenous” majority to control political power. After the attacks of the *inyenzi* 12 the Tutsi were excluded from all forms of political participation, education and civil sectors. In excluding the Tutsi from political representation, it legitimized Kayibanda’s government as being a representative of the will and ideologies of Hutu people or the majority people. In turn, it made it perfectly clear that Hutu and Tutsi were separate entities to Rwandans (Uvin 1999).

**Identity of the Enemy**

*The Legacy of Habyarimana*

The construction of Tutsi as a separate race was not enough to motivate the masses to pick up arms in order to kill. In order to normalize the killing to mobilize all Hutu to

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12 In Kinyarwanda *inyenzi* means “cockroach”, also refers to the attacks by Tutsi in exile beginning in 1959
participate in the bloodbath, the humanness of the Tutsi had to be deconstructed. As stated before, under the new morality of the government, killing Tutsi was not seen as killing humans, but as exterminating insects or clearing bushes, fields and trees (Kirschke 1996, Des Forges 1999, ICTR-99-52-T 2003 et al). All Tutsi were considered enemies and as a threat to the state was an immediate threat to all Hutu. The process of dehumanizing the Tutsi identity resulted from three major constructions: Tutsi as a foreign colonizer, Tutsi as inyenzi (cockroaches) and Tutsi as ibyitso (accomplices to RPF)/Inkotanyi (fierce warriors, also refers to RPF). It is important to note that any Rwandan could be labeled as an inyenzi or ibyitso if they disagreed with Habyarimana’s regime. Many Southern Hutu were killed for being considered supporters of the RPF or for hiding and protecting Tutsi. The dehumanization process was primarily transmitted through the mass media and from politicians. The main propaganda machines consisted of the government-backed magazine Kangura (Awaken) and the highly popular Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM).

On a daily basis the mass media institutionalized the beliefs of Tutsi as enemies and non-humans. The propaganda drew on cultural myths and the mythico-history established during colonialism, such as the Hamitic myth and the oppressive past of the Tutsi monarchy. In using the terms inyenzi and Inkotanyi, the propaganda machines were essentially invoking the past. After the Hutu Revolution of 1959, many Tutsi in exile formed a guerilla army in order to regain power. They were called cockroaches out of malice, but also because like cockroaches they typically attacked during the night (Kirschke 1996).

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13 At least in theory, not all participated in the killings, the highest estimate would leave some five million Hutu, who did not participate.
From its’ establishment in May of 1990, Kangura sought to polarize Hutu and Tutsi. Prior to the invasion of the RPF, Kangura claimed that it was the goal of Tutsi to overthrow the government and replace it with the Tutsi monarchy. The RPF invasion in October of that same year for many seemed to validate Kangura’s accuracy. It also made claims about Tutsi controlling 70 percent of the country’s wealth, having too many positions in secondary schools and within the civil service. Their slogan was “the voice which seeks to awaken and defend the majority people” (Kirschke 1996: 35). Kangura was responsible for publishing the Hutu Ten Commandments (see Appendix 7). These commandments preached that Tutsi were dishonest, who believed in their own racial superiority. The commandments also called for Hutu solidarity. Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM, one thousand hills free radio) was a private radio station sponsored by members of the Akazu and officially began to broadcast on July 8th 1993.

As the brainchild of historian Ferdinand Nahimana, RTLM was widely popular and served many functions. First, it had a Western style format, which included obscene jokes, talk and call in shows, and popular music. Second, it presented the news in an informal and unstructured manner, which often bore no aspects of the truth. According to a Canadian Ambassador it was like relying on the National Enquirer to formulate one’s beliefs and policies. However, it was so widely popular that even members of the RPF were devoted listeners. According to Prunier, RTLM targeted audience was the youth, in particular those who were unemployed and joining the militias. Beginning in April of 1994, RTLM served as the cheerleader and charismatic leader to the genocide. It incited people to kill stating “the graves are only half filled, who will help us fill it” (Kirschke 1996: 49).
Gagnon (1994-1995) argues that in face of increasing political opposition, the ruling elite will distract the attention away from their faults, by concentrating on issues of cultural and ethnic issues. Furthermore, among competing elites who are vying for power or to maintain their authority they, will draw on selective traditions and mythologies to associate their goals with the collective interest. If they are successful, they legitimized their own position and delegitimize the goals of their challengers.

*Tutsi as Foreigners*

The propaganda machines rediscovered the *Hamitic myth* and often argued that Tutsi as “Ethiopoids” or “Nilotics” had infiltrated and conquered every aspect of Rwandan society. It was the goal of the RPF and their accomplices to recapture power (through the Arusha Accords) to reinstate Tutsi hegemony. Simon Bikindi a Hutu extremists musician, sings about the Tutsi, if they are allowed to return to power Hutu would face, he sings: “the servitude, the whip, the lash, the forced work that exhausted the people, that has disappeared forever. You the great majority pay attention and, descendants of Sebahinzi (Father of Cultivators), remember this evil that should be driven as far away as possible, so that it never returns to Rwanda” (Des Forges 1999: 77).

Reference to the *Hamitic myth* was also used in June of 1993, Kangura published that there was

Indeed a diabolical plan prepared by the Tutsi and related groups and targeting the systematic extermination of the Bantu population as well as the extension of a Nilotic empire from Ethiopia...and Douala to the sources of the Nile (located in Uganda and Rwanda) and from...Gabon t Lesotho going through the vast basins of the Kongo, the Rift Valley of Tanzania...down to the Cape and the Drakenberg Mountains...What are Bantu peoples waiting for to protect themselves against the genocide that has been so carefully and consciously orchestrated by the Hamites thirsty for blood and barbarian conquests and whose leaders dispute the golden medal of cruelty with the Roman emperor Nero (Des Forges 1999:80).
This illustration the propagandists eludes to the intended colonization of Rwanda by Tutsi by putting it in the context of the Great Lakes region. In Uganda, the RPF had the support of Museveni, whose ethnic group Hima was related to Tutsi. In Burundi, the first democratically elected Hutu president Melchior Ndaye was assassinated by Tutsi military officials. In light of the invasion by the Tutsi-dominated RPF allowed for the propagandists to create conspiracy theories about uniting the entire Great Lakes region under the rule of Tutsi/Hima. This in turn would only result in the enslavement and oppression of Hutu and other Bantu groups (Des Forges 1999). Similar sentiments were made in a speech given in 1992 by Leon Mugesera, a popular leader of MRND. In this speech, which was often repeated before and during the genocide on RTLM, Mugesera states:

We ourselves will take care of massacring these gangs of thugs. You know, it says in the Gospel that the snake comes to bite you and, if you let it stay, you are the on who will perish...The mistake we made in 1959...is that we let you get out safe and sound...your country is Ethiopia and, soon we will send you home, via Nyabraongo, on an express trip (Kirschke 1996: 19).

In this claim to return the Tutsi back to Ethiopia by way of the Nyabraongo, it revisits the Hamitic myth.

**Tutsi as Inyenzi, Ibyitso and Inkotanyi**

The power of the mass media should not be underestimated. If RTLM revealed the name of an individual as a supporter or accomplice of the RPF, that person was usually killed within days (Prunier 1995, Taylor 1999). Neither in ways nor on a scale that were possible before, the language used by RTLM and Kangura indiscriminately embedded the identity of Tutsi with *Inkotanyi* and as enemies of the nation (ICTR-99-52-T 2003). In March of 1993, Kangura published the article “A cockroach cannot give birth to a butterfly.” He writes:
We begin by saying that a cockroach cannot give birth to a butterfly. It is true. A cockroach gives birth to another cockroach...The history of Rwanda shows us clearly that a Tutsi stays always exactly the same, that he has never changed. The malice, the evil are just as we knew them in the history of our country. We are not wrong saying that a cockroach gives birth to another cockroach. Who could tell the difference between the inyenzi who attacked in October 1999 and those of the 1960s? They are all linked...their evilness is the same. The unspeakable crimes of the inyenzi of today...recall those of their elders: killing, pillaging, raping girls and women, etc. (Des Forges 1999: 74).

In Rwanda, “ethnic” identity is passed from father to child, while a woman would typically assume her husband’s identity. However, RTLM and the Hutu-hardliners were not just targeting those considered Tutsi through paterlineal descent, but also those whose mothers’ were Tutsi. On May 28th 1994, a RTLM journalist said that even Hutu, who had a Tutsi mother, should also be killed.

In his Identity Card it is written the is a Hutu though he acknowledges that his mother is a Tutsi...If you are an inyenzi you must be killed, you cannot change anything. If you are Inkotanyi you cannot change anything. No one can say that he has captured an inyenzi and the latter gave him money, as a price for his life. This cannot be accepted. If someone has a false identity card, if he is Inkotanyi, a known accomplice of RPF, don’t accept anything in exchange, he must be killed (ICTR-99-52-T 2003: 145).

RTLM encouraged its listeners to remain vigilant at the roadblocks

Because there are some Inkotanyi coming...dressed as civilians and unarmed...seeking reinforcements. But citizens really need to stay at the roadblocks, they really must defend themselves, they must remain invincible (Kirschke 1996:69).

During the genocide, RTLM broadcasted those who did not have their identity card, risked death.

One should have his identity card with him, showing that he is Rwandan and that he is a son of a cultivator, that he is not an enemy or an accomplice, that his not an Inkotanyi (Kirschke 1996: 69).

During the trial of Nahimana, the International Court Tribunal for Rwanda found that RTLM broadcasts promoted and incited ethnically based violence against the “enemy.” The
enemy was defined “as the RPF, the Inkotanyi, the inyenzi and their accomplices, all of who were effectively equated with the Tutsi ethnic group by the broadcasts” (ICTR-99-52-T 2003). The belief that the “enemy” could go around unnoticed and unmasked finding ways to manipulate the system, which was established to detect them, created a sense of fear and subsequently had violent consequences (Bartov 1998). To prove one was not associated with or an accomplice of the RPF, people often resulted to drastic measures, such as killing a known “enemy” in front of the militias. This was the case in the stories of Devota who killed her godmother and Veuste, who was forced to kill his brother.

According to Bartov (1998) if the enemy is clearly defined and readily identifiable, than it is easy to determine the victim. The victim is fighting to preserve and protect their nation from the defined enemy. As a result, amid the chaos of war there is “miraculous clarification of identities” (Bartov 1998: 774). The slaughtering of Tutsi and non-supportive Hutu was not seen as genocide or an unjust war. Rather, in light of the RPF invasion, the slaughtering of Tutsi was portrayed as Tutsi committing acts of suicide. They brought it upon themselves by going to war against the majority, which resulted in the minority signing their own death warrant.

If all Tutsi were the enemies, than all Hutu were their victims. In the use of history and the “memories” of the oppressive ubuhake and ubureetwa systems, the implementation of the Arusha Accords, and the ongoing economic crisis, which the propagandists blamed on the Tutsi, created an atmosphere of potential victimization. By identifying all Tutsi with the RPF, essentially all Tutsi were soldiers at war, which meant that all Hutu were practicing self-defense or as a preemptive strike in order to prevent their own enslavement. Furthermore, to prevent further victimization the genocide had to be the complete
annihilation of the enemy. This included the children of the enemy, who would come back as the next wave of RPF (Bartov 1998).

**The RPF: One People, One Nation**

*Refugees: A New Identity*

The UN High Commissioner of Refugees defines refugees as “persons who are outside their country and cannot return owning to a well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group” (UNHCR 2005). As mentioned in chapter two, the waves of violence against Tutsi during 1959-61, 1963-64 and 1973 led to the development of a significant Rwandan diaspora. The number of Rwandan refugees in the Great Lakes region during this timeframe was between 500,000-600,000, with most living in Burundi and Uganda. From these refugees the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) emerged as a rebel army. They fought Habyarimana’s regime in order to allow for all Rwandans to be allowed home alongside political change in Rwanda. It would also be the RPF that would stop the genocide and emerge as the dominant ruling party in the post-genocide era (Mamdani 2001).

In her study on Burundian Hutu refugees living Tanzania, Malkki (1996) argues that refugees continually took part in processes of constructing and reconstructing their “history” as “a people.” The mythico-history of Burundian Hutu refugees included the precolonial social harmony between Hutu and Twa, the invasion of the foreign Tutsi from Ethiopia/Egypt, the role of colonialism in giving power to Tutsi, the continuation of Tutsi hegemony in post-colonial Burundi, and the creation of national history of the “rightful natives of Burundi” (Malkki 1996: 380).
I argue a similar process took place among Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda, which members of the RPF were part of. The RPF strongly believed that Hutu and Tutsi were one people who shared the same cultural traditions and language. According to this paradigm, the identities that were once social classes that only under colonialism did they merge as polarized races. However, there is a fundamental difference between the role of the mythico-history in the context of the RPF and that of the Burundian refugees. The Burundian refugees never militarily invaded their homeland in an attempt to change the political context that contributed to their continuous status as refugees. Rwandan Patriotic Front militarily invaded Rwanda to demand the right for all refugees to return, as well as to fight for political representation. The genocide ultimately led to the RPF taking political control of the country, a position of power that was not even granted to them under the Arusha Accords. As a result, their mythico-history paradigm of “one people” was institutionalized in the post-genocide era.

It makes ideological and political sense that the RPF would have argued in favor of a single origin and the commonality of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. Since most members of the RPF (though with some excepts) were Tutsi refugees, any claims to power were undermined by the fact that they were considered foreigners in two ways. For one, all Tutsi through colonial policy and the Hamitic myth, were branded as foreigners, assumed to be colonizers originating from outside Rwanda. After independence, this idea did not go away, it was further embedded and used as a way to justify discrimination and exclusion. For another, many members of the RPF had left Rwanda when they were very young, while others were born in Uganda. They had grown up, were educated, spoke English rather than French,
gained access to land and cattle, and developed their own economic means of success in Uganda, making them literal foreigners.

According to Malkki (1996) the status of being a refugee or refugeeness was internalized in that it was “inherited.” An individual’s status as a refugee was passed on to their children who would pass it on to their descendants. A Burundian Hutu refugee in Tanzania would always be a refugee as long as they lived outside their homeland. Similarly, various Ugandan regimes refused to accept Rwandan refugees as citizens. They considered the children of refugees to be refugees. Legally they were Rwandan; spatially they were Ugandan, although not recognized by either country (Mamdani 2001). Another essential element to the construction of refugeeness was the idea of homeland. Often the location or the territory of the homeland is not what is important to the refugees; rather it is often the romanticized ideas that contribute to the creation of a “homeland” (Malkki 1992). During the decades in exile, for many Rwandans their homeland became a mythical land full of potential. Any evidence to the contrary such as economic crisis or the decreasing productivity of the soil, was viewed as excuses to prevent their return (Prunier 1995).

The outcome of the genocide determined whether the Hutu/Tutsi identities were viewed as separate races or as one people in post-genocide Rwanda. If the genocidal regime would have been successful in their attempt to eliminate all Tutsi in the country, those left may have been united under a “Rwandan” identity based on “racial/ethnic” nationalism. The Tutsi-side of the dichotomy would have been erased. What would it have meant to be a Hutu without the construction of a Tutsi identity to compare it against? The genocidal regime’s version of history and its’ beliefs about the Tutsi would have remained intact, since these beliefs provided justification for the genocide. The ongoing conflict by the Tutsi dominated
military and Hutu in Burundi would have also continued to validate the genocidal regime’s beliefs about the Tutsi, thus making the genocide seems necessary and justified. However, the RPF were the victors and Hutu and Tutsi became “united” as non-ethnic “Rwandan.” Under the new national identity paradigm, these categories are not viewed as separate races, but as social categories that were manipulated by Europeans. In addition, the use of Hutu and Tutsi outside of the context of the genocide or the ongoing conflicts in the Great Lakes region is seen as dangerous and destructive.

All those interviewed in this study reported similar accounts of Rwanda’s past as well as their individual perceptions about how the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy emerged from it. Each of their stories was very similar to the Kigali Memorial Center (KMC), which incorporates the RPF version of the past and the construction of the dichotomy. Based on the consistency, the political climate and the diverse group of people interviewed, their narratives at the very least formulate a recognizable pattern as to how the past and the dichotomy are being reconstructed under the new government. There was also a noticeable reluctance and refusal to discuss any subject or respond to any question outside of this “national narrative.” I realize that my small sample is much too narrow to draw any overarching conclusions. In fact, I am not suggesting that all Rwandans share this homogenous point of view. I believe these stories and the manner in which they were collected reflects the institutionalization of this reconstructed version of history and identity established by the new political structures. Additionally, as an outsider, there were limits placed on the types of information I had access to. For the most part, Rwandans, who were born and raised in Rwanda, are very reserved in conversations and mannerism. There is always a risk in stating generalities about a group of
people’s character. However, it is important that these issues are understood within the context of the current political climate.

In almost every issue of an English newspaper there are vague statements about those who still support, maintain and subscribe to the “genocidal ideology” or “those who are attempting to divide the country” (The New Times 2005). These comments seem to reinforce the belief that there is still a risk for another genocide. For this reason alone, old identities that caused it cannot be used. Again, I have no doubt that any attempt to publicly use the Hutu identity would be seen as an attempt to refuel ethnic divisions. Members of the Rwandan diaspora who returned to Rwanda after the genocide, I discovered, were much more willing to answer direct questions about the genocide and issues of identity. I asked a friend, who was a Rwandan-Congolese Tutsi named Michel, whether or not people still knew what their “ethnic” identity was? He replied “You have to know who you are; it’s just not a gospel.” His response addresses an inherent problem with the use of ethnic identities in the context of genocide, there is almost impossible to completely eradicate. There is also more pressure to suppress the Hutu identity and experience than that of Tutsi. People were targeted and killed because they were either Tutsi or because they were not “good” Hutu. This collective experience reinforces connects Tutsi may have with one another. Furthermore, it raises the issue of collective guilt of the Hutu. According to Eltringham (2004) many Rwandans feel that they are being persecuted and forced to accept responsibility because of the actions some Hutu during the genocide.

The first display in the Kigali Memorial Center poetically summarizes the important elements, which are always stressed:
This has been our home for centuries. We are one people. We speak one language. We have one history. This is about our past and our future. Our nightmares and dreams, our fears and our hopes, which is why we begin where we end with the country we love (Kigali Memorial Center 2005).

I have incorporated Malkki’s (1992) format of panels as way of presenting the similar narratives as told to me by informants. According to Innocent, whose narrative of the past can serve as a general template for all those interviewed both tour guides and ordinary people:

Panel 1: Precolonialism
The first inhabitants of Rwanda and Burundi were the Twa who were hunter and gatherers. Hutu came after them and were cultivators, lastly the Tutsi who were pastoralists arrived. In the beginning the three groups were social classes. All of them shared the same language, culture and religion. We all worshiped the same god, known as Imana. A Tutsi king called a mwami in Kinyarwanda ruled pre-colonial Rwanda. There were other chiefs that could be held by either a Hutu or Tutsi. The definition of Tutsi was based on how many heads of cattle a person had. If an individual had ten or more cattle they were considered to be Tutsi. If they had less than ten, they were considered Hutu. A Hutu could become a Tutsi by acquiring more cattle and a Tutsi could become a Hutu if they lost cattle (Fieldnotes 07/10/2005).

Panel 2: Colonialism
Colonialism, especially Belgian rule changed this system by making Tutsi and Hutu something that someone was born as. Europeans and missionaries used to measure the nose, height, and compare skin color of Tutsi and Hutu. They determined that Tutsi were more European like because they had lighter skin tone, narrower noses, and were taller than the Hutu. Based on Tutsi’s superiority all chief positions and other positions of power in the colonial administration were given to Tutsi. Only the Tutsi elite actually benefited from this system, there were many Tutsi who were poor. Belgian rule also conducted a census and forced all adult Rwandans to have an identity card, that told whether the person was a Muhutu, Mututsi, or Mutwa14 (Fieldnotes 07/10/2005).

Panel 3: Hutu Revolution-Arusha Accords
In 1959 there was a revolution to overthrow European colonialism. The new Hutu president Kayibanda still used the identity cards, but also introduced a quota

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14 In Kinyarwanda Muhutu, Mututsi and Mutwa is the singular form of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, whereas, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa refers to the plural form.
system to regulate the amount of power Tutsi and Twa could have in the new government. There began to be violence against Tutsi that sent many fleeing into neighboring countries of Uganda, Zaire, Burundi, Tanzania and Kenya. Habyarimana took power in the seventies by overthrowing Kayibanda. He was a close friend with the French president Francois Mitterrand, who supplied him with lots of money and weapons. The RPF invaded the country in 1990 and there was a civil war. When the war started many Tutsi began to “disappear” or were arrested for being accomplices of the RPF. RTLM and Kangura than began to spread hate propaganda; the president was the biggest shareholder of RTLM (Fieldnotes 07/10/2005).

Innocent’s story was also the first time I heard the personal accounts of the genocide; this would be one of several. Before the onset of the genocide Innocent lived with his parents, sisters and brothers in Gikongoro. When the RPF invaded Ruhengeri from Uganda in 1990, many Tutsi men were arrested for being “supporters” of the RPF. However, in reality the arrests were not about political alliances, but about “racial/ethnic” identities. Around this same time frame many Tutsi living in the area of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi began to “disappear,” Innocent’s aunt and uncle were assumed to have been killed. The genocide claimed the lives of everyone in his family except his younger sister, who lost her arm. He moved to Kigali in order to work as a tour guide for the Kigali City tours, which is where I met him.

Prior to arriving at the exhibit on the genocide, every single tour guide I observed, including John and Innocent, stopped explaining things or left the vicinity. John told me they do this because for them it is too awful for them to deal with on a daily basis. Panel 4 comes from formal and informal interviews and observations at the Kigali Memorial Center.

**Panel 4: Genocide** (Based on interviews and observations conducted at Kigali Memorial Center)

The RPF and Habyarimana signed the Arusha Accords and established a transitional government that would lead to democracy. But soon after the agreement
was signed the President signed treaties for more weapons from other countries. UNAMIR received information that there was a plan to kill Belgian peacekeepers and there was a warehouse filled with weapons. General Dallaire sent a cable to UN headquarters asking for permission to raid the weapons, but was turned down by Kofi Annan. In 1993 General Bagosora talked about the coming of the apocalypse, and a few months later in April 1994, Habyarimana’s plane was shot down. On April 7th the first woman Prime Minister in Africa and Rwanda was killed. A man named Kambanda became president. The whole country was engulfed in violence. Dogs at their masters, rotten corpses were everywhere, and people were not allowed to bury their dead. Rwanda was dead. There were massacres at Nyamata in Bugesera where 10,000 people were killed. 20,000 people were killed at another church in Narubuye in Kibungo, and in Ntarama. The UN could not do anything to stop the genocide. Foreign countries came to rescue evacuate their citizens, but did not help Rwandans. There were many people who risked their lives to protect Tutsi. When the RPF took over the country, many Hutu began to flee into other countries, fearing retaliation. Many children orphaned either by being separated from their families or had no family members left. Also many women were raped during the genocide and became infected with AIDS (Fieldnotes 07/10, 07/, 08/16/2005).

Earlier, while we were at the military barracks where ten UN peacekeepers had been killed, I asked Innocent if he thought the genocide could ever happen again. He responded, “We were divided before, but now we are one people. The genocide will not happen again.” David added that there was nothing they could do about the past, just to ensure it didn’t happen again. Many people often stated how “the government wanted us to unite, so we are.” I often tried to get Innocent and other informants to elaborate on this issue. However, responses to questions, which probed further into aspects outside of the “national narrative”, were meet with reluctance, language barriers and “I don’t knows”.

An example of this occurred when Innocent and I walked through the “before the genocide” part of the museum. When we arrived at the exhibit on “hate propaganda,” there was another tour group coming that consisted of a Black man and a woman accompanied by a museum tour guide. From my observation neither seemed to have an identifiable accent, but were not from Rwanda. In a very brash and almost disrespectful manner, the man asked
what the Hutu side of the story was. The tour guide said that this was what happened, he
seemed confused and uncomfortable by the man’s question. The man got a little annoyed
about the lack of an actual answer and responded that he believed the other side probably saw
things very differently and continued to discuss this with the tour guide for several more
uncomfortable minutes.

National Identity

The civil war, the genocide and the continuous fighting in the region, resulted in the
reconstruction of not just the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy, but also what it means to be “Rwandan.”
Konneh argues that, “in the process of moving toward peace, the issues of citizenship are
again being reformulated” (Konneh 1996: 153). In the post-genocide era and the political
take over by the Tutsi-dominated RPF resulted in a change of the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy.
However, this time it was the abolishment of Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy, replaced under a newly
defined national identity. According to Michel the change from Hutu/Tutsi to Rwandan
helped the country to unify after the enormous divide created by the genocide. As stated
before, a nationalist identity defines the relationship between citizens and the state (Gagnon
1994-1995). Whereas, during the Kayibanda regime to be “Rwandan” was essentially
characterized as the “indigenous Hutu”, the new definition of “Rwandan” is more inclusive.
In the post-genocide period to be “Rwandan” means that everyone has access to the same
equal rights and privileges, whereas, before Tutsi could not hold high government positions
or equal access to education. In creating a sense of nationalism under “Rwandan” it is also
meant that a person’s first and foremost sense of duty and loyalty was to the newly
established Rwandan government and not to Hutu or Tutsi identities. The new national
identity means that all citizens share the same rights and duties.
However, the complete acceptance of this new national identity should be taken with the figurative grain of salt. Eldedour, Bastien and Center (1997) study on the construction of identity in the midst of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, demonstrates that the context of violence and conflict largely contribute to the development of a child’s sense of self and the construction of wider social identities. They further argue the formation of identity in the context of violence, is especially important to understand because of the relationship between identity and people’s actions. The process of identity formation involves two important parts, first is how an individual projects his or herself and others into the future, also how they are defining themselves and others in relationship to the past. This process incorporates both direct experience and knowledge gained through social system and networks, such as family, peers, members of the community, or politicians (Eldedour, Bastien and Center 1997).

The relevance of the mythico-history paradigm accepted and institutionalized by the RPF is especially important here. In a way the genocide is being presented through a very specific narrative. It does not address, the precolonial origins of each group, rather it suggests that Twa were the first people to inhabit of Rwanda, followed by Hutu, then Tutsi. It does not mention that Tutsi probably came from outside of Rwanda. It also does not address the full experience of colonialism, such as the forced labor of ubureetwa, nor does it address the atrocities committed by RPF soldiers, the ongoing conflict in Burundi or the massive humanitarian crisis occurring in border regions of DRC and Rwanda. This “national narrative” is attempting to institutionalize unite among all Rwandans under a single mold of experience and history. In not allowing other perspectives and experiences to be told, the present history appears to be absolute.
However, the official “history” will not always match up to every Rwandan’s experience. According to Alonso (1994), “the pasts that cannot be incorporated are privatized and particularized, consigned to the margins of the national and denied a fully public voice” (Alonso 1994: 389). I observed that on an almost daily basis for six weeks, the daily newspapers proclaimed the RPF as “liberators” (New Times 07/2005). For many people, the RPF were anything but liberators. The two million people who fled after the genocide, were not fleeing because they were liberated, they fled because of the fear of retaliation and persecution from the RPF (Prunier 1995, Umutesi 2004).

The “one people” paradigm is being institutionalized through the memorial and research centers located in Rwanda. I found it interesting that the genocide research center at Murambi as well as the research center at the Kigali Center was only open to schoolchildren. Moreover, on any given day there are often Rwandan schoolchildren at the Kigali Memorial Center. When I went through the genocide section there were a group of six, ten to fifteen year-old, very tall Rwandan girls. I ran into them in the “before genocide” section of the center and decided to slowly and obscurely their behavior. They were laughing and behaving like typical children on a field trip, without chaperons. As the girls watched pictures of the genocide flash on a flat plasma TV, one girl could not take her eyes off the weapons that were near me. Another girl brought her hands to her face. While yet another thought it was kind of boring and in the end they ran out some laughing continuing to be teenagers. Later I ran into another group of girls from the same school, all spoke English extremely well and extremely softly. I asked them their names and their ages, and where they were from. They asked me where I was from and if I had any kids. One girl asked me how I found the museum. I said it was beautiful but sad. Quickly seizing on the opportunity, I asked them
what they thought of it, thinking this was it an actual chance to get some information. Her replied that they were just there for school.

Through these school fieldtrips, Rwandan children are being enculturated to a particular mythico-history. However, the violence and the persecution that took place before, during and after the genocide may have united people around their “ethnic” identities. According to Sherif and Sherif (1953) there is more likelihood for an increase in intra-“ethnic/racial” group solidarity the greater the scale of inter-“ethnic/racial” group conflict (Eldedour, Bastien and Center 1997). This raises the issue of collective guilt and collective victimhood. From the narratives told by African Rights (1994), Alison Des Forges (1999), and the Kigali Memorial Center, one gets the feeling that everyone was either killing or being killed. In the process, 85 percent out of a population of eight million gets homogenized as a collective killing machine. This is complicated by the fact that there is no firm estimate as to how many people participated in the genocide. Estimates range from 25,000 to 650,000. However, if the highest figure is used there remains over five million Hutu who did not participate in the genocide (Eltringham 2004).

According to Rwandan living in exile in Europe, there is a belief that the responsibility for the genocide is falling on all Hutu, while simultaneously ignoring Hutu who were killed during the genocide. They argue that during the week of mourning beginning on April 7th continuing for seven days, only Tutsi are mourned. According to an informant Paul, during this week no one works, everyone is expected to participate in the mourning of those who died in during the genocide. However, since no one is allowed to perform work, family members who’s relatives are imprisoned and are “charged” with crimes related to the genocide are not allowed to bring food or water to them. According to
Paul this has resulted in the deaths of some of the prisoners. The definition of genocide contributes to the victimization of Tutsi, while simultaneously ignoring the Hutu who were killed. As stated by the Geneva Convention genocide does not include people who are systematically killed because of political or regional affiliation, thus excluding Hutu.

The RPF government has sought to create a united Rwandan out of its once divided population. One challenge the government has had to face revolves around the issue of language. The genocide and the ending of Habyarimana’s rule brought thousands of Rwandans displaced over the last four decades back. Many of them were born and raised in countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. As a result many do not speak French, as do those who were raised in Rwanda, DRC, and Burundi.

I asked Michel who is fluent in French and semi-fluent in English, if there was favoritism of one language over another. He said that the government is focused on developing multi-lingualism at all levels of society, stressing the fact that the government will not allow for language to become a divisive weapon (Fieldnotes 07/2005). The news is conducted in all three languages, one right after another. Signs hanging around Kigali, says Kigali is my village, in all three languages. At the university level, the government mandates French speakers must learn English and English speakers must learn French. Classes are taught in either language and not knowing the language of the professor is not an excuse to be exempt from the class. Michel believed there was no discrimination or favoritism based on language.
It is also interesting to note that while not all Rwandans speak Kinyarwanda or similar languages of Kiswahili or Kirundi\textsuperscript{15} the majority do. However, the government, businesses and education are typically conducted in French or English. According to Claudia, Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who speaks very little French will give radio addresses in English, only using Kinyarwanda when he is speaking to people in extremely rural areas (Fieldnotes 08/13/2005).

However, I found English-speaking Rwandans held a certain amount of resentment despite all the initiative to unite under multilingualism. Many of the Rwandan English-speakers who spoke little to no French, often felt discriminated against by French speaking Rwandans, but also more so by French speaking Europeans. I met Claudia, who was in her early twenties and working in her aunt’s store in the local tourist market. Her father was a Rwandan citizen, while her mother who raised her, was Ugandan. Together, Claudia and her mother lived primarily in Mombassa Kenya and Kampala Uganda. A few years ago, Claudia came to Rwanda to live with her father and stepmother, in order to attend the university. However, so far she has been unable to secure the financial means required. In one conversation, Claudia told me that when French Europeans would come to her store, she would say hello in her perfect English and often they would turn around and walk out. She also felt that there was still favoritism for French speaking professors from DRC and Burundi over Ugandan and other English speaking East African professors, putting English speaking students at a severe disadvantage.

It’s not uncommon to find Rwandans who share negative feelings towards the French. Much of the hostility stems from the previously close relationship of French President

\textsuperscript{15} Language of Burundi
Mitterrand and Habyarimana, including supplying arms to Habyarimana’s regime. It has been suggested that France’s unconditional support of the previous regime was based on the preservation of language. France supported Habyarimana’s regime in order to “save” the francophone country from the English speaking invaders (Prunier 1995 and Melvern 2000).
Chapter Five: Conclusions

Current Issues

Rwanda and more recently Burundi have entered a critical phase of political change. Each country has the opportunity to resolve the divisive “racial” and “ethnic” plague that has crimped and ravaged their countries and their people. After forty-two years of authoritarian rule and seventy years of colonialism, in 2003 Rwanda held democratic elections for the first time since 1961. However, the election was not without controversy. There was growing concern over the exclusion of political parties, based on the perceived threat of invoking “ethnic” tensions. In March of 2000, amid growing speculation of fraud and friction within the government, the first post-genocide President Pasteur Bizimungu (a Hutu), resigned. Despite the fact he was president, many Rwandans believed that true power rested in the hands of Tutsi Vice President Paul Kagame. Kagame had been trying to restrict and curb dissent.

In 2001, Bizimungu established the Party for Democracy and Renewal (PDR) as opposition against Kagame’s Rwandan Patriot Front (RPF). However, the government almost immediately banned the party, claiming that Bizimungu was attempting to incite ethnic divisions. When Bizimungu continued his party’s activities, he was placed under house arrest. He is now serving fifteen years in prison for embezzlement and his attempts to incite ethnic divisions by forming a militia. As a member of in the predominantly Tutsi RPF, Bizimungu played an important role in uniting the country. His arrest was seen by many, both inside and outside of Rwanda, as a political ploy by Kagame’s desire to stay in power (BBC 2004). In August 2003, Kagame was officially elected to a seven-year term of as the
president of Rwanda. This means that by the next election, Kagame will have been the most
dominant political figure in Rwanda for nearly fifteen years.

In August 2005, Burundi held its’ first democratic elections since 1994. The
democratically elected and newly formed National Assembly and Senate selected Pierre
Nkurunziza, who was sworn into office on August 26th 2005. The appointment of the
Nkurunziza ended the ongoing twelve-year civil war, which was triggered by the
assassination of the president Melcior Ndadaye (BBC 2005).

**Implications**

As the twelve-year anniversary of the Rwandan genocide approaches, we must
appreciate the fact that we cannot change events of the past, but attempt to understand them
for the sake of the future. What Rwandans have shown is a remarkable resilience to survive.
Unlike the victims of the genocide, the ideologies that paved the way for the massacres are
not dead. It is not enough to have stopped the massacres or find simple quick-fix solutions.
It took decades and various social, political and economical factors to trigger the genocide; it
will take the same for the wounds to heal. Initiatives of reconciliation, justice and unity must
anticipate the demands and needs of all members of society both now and in the future. I
believe that the greatest challenge to Rwanda is finding a solution for peace and
reconciliation. This is not an easy task. One can look at the reconciliation process in post-
Apartheid South Africa as a model (see Jones-Hysmith 2001). Whatever the strategy one
must consider basic human rights, political representation, access to education and economic
stability.

Central to this is the inclusion of different narratives of “history”. In order to prevent
the genocide from repeating itself, Rwanda must face all of its’ “histories”. The creation and
the institutionalization of a homogenized history by those in power had horrific consequences. Much of the rhetoric on RTLM and Kangura invoked a particular version of “history”, which had its origins in the 1959 Hutu Revolution. The general trends outlined in the post-genocide section represent an institutionalized pattern from which the context of the genocide and Rwanda’s past are fixated within a particular homogenized “absolute” version of history. Eltringham (2004) suggests:

While there may be non-negotiable chronicle of events, the narratives that actors recognize (and value) as history are the product of an interpretive exercise that inevitably generates different narratives. While Rwanda has a single past, a single, definitive history is unattainable. Give the role played by history in Rwanda’s past, a recognition of the limits of historiography should be encouraged (Eltringham 2004: 182).

True reconciliation and peace in Rwanda will not be achieved in a vacuum. The violence against genocide witnesses and Tutsi by Hutu militias, the persecution of Hutu by Rwandan soldiers, the political instability of the Congolese government, in addition to the conflict between the two countries will continue to threaten the stability of the entire Great Lake region. The connections these countries have to one another became evident during my trip to Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

According to travel and tourist literature, Gisenyi Rwanda is “Africa’s Switzerland” or “Africa’s Mediterranean.” It is fully equipped with five star hotels and restaurants, which outline the magnificent beaches along Lake Kivu. Gisenyi has become a tourist safe haven. However, I knew something else of this little bit of paradise, something that was not articulated amongst travel agents. Gisenyi is located in the northwest of Rwanda, bordering Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, Ruhengeri to the north, and Kibuye to the
south. It was the homeland for most of the Aka.zu, members of RTLM and genocidal architect Colonel Thinnest Bagosora. During the genocide, when the RPF captured Kigali and pushed on into Gitarama, most of the members of the genocidal regime fled to Gisenyi. According to a couple of American NGO workers, the post-genocide government has not forgotten Gisenyi’s ties to the old regime. According to them, Gisenyi is often placed at the bottom of the list in terms of having access to developmental and restructuring funds.

However, while observing Europeans sunbathing, and drinking Primus and Coke on the beach, I could have overlooked the fact this is not just an average tourist spot. There is something completely unique to this picture. One night, I talked with several businessmen while having dinner at a nearby restaurant in Gisenyi. All of them worked across the border in Goma, but because of safety concerns lived in Gisenyi. Everyday by six when the border closes, the men make sure they are in Rwanda. I decided to find out for myself, how different this view was. I walked down the main road that runs parallel with the lake away from the beaches, palm trees, restaurants and expensive hotels towards the Congolese border. Walking along the road that leads to Goma was like walking away from Beverly Hills into South Central L.A. Right along the lakeshore of Kivu lacking the beaches of Gisenyi, there are several nice looking hotels and restaurants. The border is guarded by a single guardrail, which is maintained by several rather intimidating looking soldiers. For thirty US dollars, one can buy a five-day, one-time entry visa to the Congo. After making it across the border with no additional fees, I got a motorcycle taxi to take me into the city of Goma.

There are parts of Goma that resemble abandoned industrial urban areas of cities in the U.S., while other parts in the downtown area consist of thriving markets and stores. I never realized how different things were across a European designed border. Goma is
literally one small guardrail across from Gisenyi and yet worlds apart. Women in the markets would say “Jambo muzungu” in Kiswahili to me as I tried to remember the basic greetings laughed. They laughed excessively when I responded. As I wandered through the stores in the downtown market, women showed me the newest fashion arrivals from Kinshasa offering me a good deal in exchange for American dollars. The atmosphere was very different than what I had experienced in Rwanda.

When I crossed an alley behind a bank, out of nowhere I came face to face with an enormous UN truck filled with four Bangladeshi peacekeepers. On my way into Goma, I had my first view of the airport that has been made into a UN refugee camp. This was Goma, a mixture of vibrancy, displacement and destruction. In addition to the large Rwandan diaspora that sought shelter in Goma after the genocide, in January 2002, Mount Nyiragongo erupted. The volcano located near Goma, sending lava over eleven miles splitting the town in half, destroying much of the existing infrastructure and displacing some 400 thousand people. The ground is covered in nothing but the blackish grey volcanic rock varying from several inches to several feet deep. People were forced to rebuild their lives and their homes on top of harden black lava. Children run barefoot across those same rocks, never flinching or stopping from pain that I can only imagine.

There is no region in Africa or other places in the world that have experienced more bloodshed, political instability, displacement and loss of life as the Great Lakes region (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002). The two million people who fled into Zaire in August of 1994 consisted of members of the Interahamwe, FAR, the genocidal regime, and civilians. The displacement camps established by the UN and other international organizations became recruitment grounds for new members into the militias that had not disbanded. With the
support of the dictator Mobutu, the militias began to launch attacks against Tutsi civilians in Zaire/DRC and across the border in Rwanda. In 1998, Rwanda, Uganda teamed up with Congolese rebel leader Laurent Kabila to overthrow Mobutu. According to a recent UN report from the High Commissioner of refugees, DRC has “endured the most lethal fighting in the world since World War II” (UNHCR 2005). In the course of six years, over four million people have been killed. An additional three and half million people are displaced; another half million people have sought refuge in neighboring countries. Seventeen million people do not have access to a continuous supply of food (UNHCR 2005).

I was very aware of the large communities of displaced peoples living in the Congo as well as the ongoing disputes between governments of Rwandan and Zaire/DRC. However, according to Michel the genocide has found a new home in the Congo. During an interview Michel told me how Kabila’s regime has incorporated former members of the genocidal militias and FAR into the national Congolese army. This has resulted in the persecution of Congolese Tutsi. According to Michel, there is never a direct order to “kill” Tutsi, but are coded into euphuisms encouraging the persecution of Rwandans. However,

Since Hutu descendants belong to the Bantu group, it is difficult to tell if a person is a Hutu or from one of Congo’s Bantu groups. Tutsi have different facial features and some other physical differences, which makes them easier to pick out. So, when they (referring to politicians and the radio) say go get the Rwandans, they are referring to Tutsi (Fieldnotes 2005).

Fearing the spread of ethnic violence, Michel and his family moved back to Rwanda. Michel had been born and raised in Goma; his parents had fled during the first wave of violence against Tutsi. Under the new government, people of the Rwandan diaspora are granted dual citizenship.
If issues of the Hutu/Tutsi identity are complex in Rwanda, they have become further complicated by the events occurring in the Congo. Prior to the flight of refugees in 1994, there was already a significant population of Banyarwanda (Hutu and Tutsi people who speak Kinyarwanda) in the Kivu regions. There is also the Banyamulenge, who are a population of Tutsi in southern Kivu. The term Banyamulenge first appeared in the 1990s to refer to the Tutsi who arrived prior to Tutsi refugees stemming from the violence in Rwanda and Burundi from the 1950s-1990s. These two groups have been persecuted beginning in 1993 and continuing up until the present day. There are Hutu and Tutsi militias, who have joined with different Congolese rebel factions. Each has actively been involved in the persecution of their counterparts. These militias are believed to have received training and equipment from various countries including Rwanda and DRC (Eltringham 2004).

Prior to the genocide, the Banyarwanda were not divided along “ethnic” or “racial” lines, however, in its aftermath, the group was divided. According to an American woman who has lived Rwanda and in the Congo as Zaire and DRC, before the genocide “Rwandans” in Congo were seen as being one people, the genocide put Hutu against Tutsi and Tutsi against Hutu. The Rwandan genocide divided and created tensions between friends and neighbors, replacing it with the “ethnic” discontent that has plagued both Rwanda and Burundi (Fieldnotes 07/2005).

Further Research

There is an extensive and expanding amount of literature which addresses the Hutu/Tutsi identity, the historical events, and the genocide (Prunier 1995, Taylor 1999, Twalimiana 2003, Eltringham 2004 et al). Without a doubt, there are on-going issues that need to be resolved. A great deal of research was conducted immediately preceding the
genocide. These discoveries tend to take historical and political approaches to examine issues related to the genocide (see Prunier 1995, Semujanga 1998, Lemarchand 199, Mamdani 2001, Twagilimana 2003 et al.). On the other hand, human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (Des Forges 1999) and African Rights (1994) provide a focus documenting the personal accounts of genocide survivors. Taylor’s (1999) research concentrates on Rwandan cultural metaphors, ideologies and symbolism that have been embedded into the imagery and propaganda used by Kangura and RTLM. Other studies have examined issues of concern in relation to the Rwandan diaspora (see Janzen 2000a, Eltringham 2004), while Janzen’s study explores the experiences in relation to trauma and healing of Rwandan refugees in displacement centers in Zaire in December of 1994. Eltringham focuses on important post-genocide debates, included in his study were Rwandan government officials, NGO workers, civilians, those who returned to Rwanda after 1994, as well as a Rwandans who were in exile in Europe.

The research presented in this thesis represents only a narrow depiction of a much wider picture. I suggest future research on the issue of the Hutu/Tutsi identity address not only Rwanda, but also include the Great Lakes region. In expanding the research to the larger region, Rwanda should not be forgotten. Merely replacing the Hutu/Tutsi labels with a non-ethnic national identity does not mean people no longer identify with them. Based on their identity, Rwandans whether Hutu or Tutsi have been persecuted and slaughtered. These experiences do not exist in a bubble or in isolation outside the individual; in fact they have the potential to further reify “ethnic” identities.
One area that requires research consideration concerns the release of genocide prisoners into mainstream society. During my fieldwork, 36 thousand category 4 prisoners, along with prisoners who were sick and elderly were released. Their journey to freedom begins with “solidarity” camps, which in a sense is meant to enculturate them into the “new” Rwanda. Further research should also address and explore how the Rwandan government attends to the experiences and needs of this particular group. It should examine how the former prisoners are or have adapted to their new identity as “Rwandan” and whether their “history” will conform to the institutionalized one people paradigm.

Between June and August 1997, over 60 thousand displaced survivors of the genocide, violent civil wars, and ongoing battles between militias and the RPF were repatriated by the UNHCR to Rwanda from DRC/Zaire, the Congo (Brazzaville), and Gabon. As refugees in Zaire, they have suffered from massacres, outbreaks of cholera, lack of access to clean water, sanitation, adequate and reliable food supplies, persecution by Rwandan soldiers and Congolese rebels. In addition to these events, Rwanda’s past and the genocide provides a similar frame of reference to the Burundian Hutu in Tanzania and Rwandan Tutsi in Uganda. Both cases led to the development of a mythico-history. It is within this context that Umutesi’s experience provides a profound illustration.

It was only later, in the refugee camps in Bukavu, Zaire, that I began to understand. When I had myself been a refugee and daily felt the outrage of having lost my country and my identity, I understood- without admitting it- the feelings that guided those in charge of the RPF, all of whom were children of the Tutsi diaspora. I understood, because some Hutu followed the same line of reasoning, that armed struggle was the only answer. The fact that their relatives who had stayed in Rwanda would be killed if the Hutu were ever to attack did not bother them. It was a risk worth taking. They were ready to sacrifice all of them in order to return to Rwanda and reclaim their social, economic, and political rights (Umutesi 2004:47).

16 Category 4 consists prisoners whose were involved in looting and stealing property.
The reintegration of the refugees into Rwanda will necessitate a level of conformity to the national narrative institutionalized by the RPF government. How they incorporate this “national narrative” into their own mythico-history that emerged within displacement camps in Zaire, will contribute to they define themselves in the “new” Rwanda. In light of the political, demographic, economical, and social change occurring within the country, research should address how “Rwandan” as a non-ethnic nationalistic identity are internalized by this diaspora.

The ongoing violence, political instability and humanitarian crisis in Eastern Congo will influence how the Hutu/Tutsi identity is defined. It is also within this region and in this context that more research concerning the construction of identity as it relates to “ethnic” violence is not just important, but crucial. Consequently it will not be enough to use Rwanda as model to understand the processes in which identity is embedded with social meaning in the Congolese context. It is important to fully explore how the Hutu/Tutsi dichotomy has interacted with the ethnic and political tensions occurring in the Congo. The Congo has its’ own historical baggage, cultures, “ethnic” tensions, violent wars, political and economic instability and inequality that contribute to the ongoing violence.

The Congo is not alone in enduring massive humanitarian crisis resulting from ethnic violence. Today, the Janjaweed are systematically killing the Sudanese people. People are fleeing into neighboring Chad seeking safety across the border. However, the militias are crossing those same borders, attacking the refugees. By the time the world decided to intervene in Rwanda it was too late. The situation in Dafur has been labeled by the mass media as the “slow Rwanda” and as the “slow” genocide (Protect Dafur 2006). Despite all
the films and the media attention that the Rwandan genocide has received in the past year, especially with the release of *Hotel Rwanda* and *Sometimes in April*, the situations in Eastern Congo and Darfur are receiving minimum attention by major world powers. At the heart of these conflicts are the issues of identity. One cannot understand ethnic violence without understanding how people define themselves and how others are defining them. The continuation of violence in these two regions illustrates the importance of these issues. This cannot and should not be left to work themselves out. The world continues to fail to live up to the promises made at the Geneva Convention less than sixty years ago. Never again has become again and again and again. Genocide has continued to happen from the killing fields of Cambodia to the hills of Rwanda and now to the deserts of the Sudan.
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World Bank

Zachernuk, Philip S.
Appendix 1

Map 1: Rwanda

### Appendix 2

**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>Coalition pour la Defense de la Republique (Coalition for the Defense of the Republic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo (formally known as Zaire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>Force Armees Rwandese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICTR</td>
<td>International Tribunal Court for Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDR</td>
<td>Mouvement Democratique Republicain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDR-PARAMHUTU</td>
<td>Mouvement Democratique Republicain – Parti du Mouvement de l’Emancipation Hutu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Mouvement Revolutionnaire National pour le Developpement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRND(D)</td>
<td>Mouvement Revolutionnaire National pour le Developpement et la Democratie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Government Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Parti Social-Democrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPA</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPF</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTLM</td>
<td>Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMIR</td>
<td>United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 3

### Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15th Century</td>
<td>The great expansion of the Rwanda kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>The Berlin Conference, the territories of Ruanda-Urundi are awarded to Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>German explorers reach the palace of King Kigeli IV Rwabugiri in Nyanza.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>King Kigeli IV Rwabugiri dies, succeeded by King Yuhi V Musinga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Germany is defeated in World War I. Ruanda-Urundi are given to Belgium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-1926</td>
<td>Belgium begins to implement its' colonial policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Belgium replaces King Musinga with his son Mutara III Rudahigwa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-1945</td>
<td>World War II brought sweeping changes for European colonies in Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Rwanda, Flemish clergy replace Walloon clergy in the Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Tutsi elite begin to demand their independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>The UN defines genocide at the Geneva Convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>The UN pressures Belgium to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1953

The process of decolonization begins with local level elections.

decolonize its colonies.

1957

The Bahutu Manifesto is published.

1959

The Hutu Revolution emerges, Hutu replace Tutsi sub-chiefs.

July

While visiting Usumbura King Mutara II Rudahigwa mysteriously dies.

November

Tutsi-dominated political party UNAR (Union Nationale Rwandaise) attacks a Hutu sub-chief

In retaliation for the violence against political Hutu, the homes of Tutsi were looted and burned.

1959-1962

Tutsi flee into surrounding countries to escape the waves of violence.

1960

PARMEHUTU dominants the general elections.

King Mutara dies, he is succeeded by his younger brother Kigeli V.

1961

A coup d’etat places Dominique Mbonyumutwa of PARMEHUTU in power as interim president. Gregoire Kayibanda is named as prime minister.
Kayibanda is elected the first president of the Republic of Rwanda.

1962

Rwanda gains its formal independence from Belgium.

1963

Tutsi exiles attack Rwanda from Burundi.

Kayibanda removes all Tutsi from the new government.

1972-1973

The law known as “equilibre ethnique” is implemented.

1972

1973

150 thousand mainly educated Hutu in Burundi were killed under the watch of the Tutsi government.

In Rwanda, Hutu begins to attack the Tutsi populations.

Juvenal Habyarimana overthrows Kayibanda in a bloodless coup.

1982

Thousands of Rwandan refugees are expelled from Uganda. Habyarimana refuses to allow them to return to Rwanda.

In Uganda, a branch of President Obote’s party attack Rwandan refugees.

1985

Obote is overthrown.

1986

Museveni takes control of Uganda.

1987

World coffee markets crash, sending Rwanda into an economic crisis.
The Rwandan Patriotic Front is founded in Uganda.

1988 The World Bank traveled to Rwanda to discuss the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs).

1990 The RPF invades Rwanda, launching into a civil war.

1991 Kangura is founded.

1991 The Arusha Peace negotiations begin between the RPF and Habyarimana’s regime in Kinshasa Zaire.

1992 The economic crisis hits its peak.

1993 UN agrees to send a peacekeeping mission to oversee the Arusha Accords. UNAMIR is headed by Romeo Dallaire.

Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines begins broadcasting.

1994 January Dallaire receives information about a stockpile of weapons and a plan to carry out massacres of civilians and Belgian peacekeepers.

The UN prevents Dallaire from conducting a raid.

April 6th President Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaramira are killed when a missile hits their plane.
April 7th

Newly instated Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana along with 10 Belgian peacekeepers are killed.

April 10th

French paratroopers arrive in Rwanda to evacuate expatriates.

April 12th

20 thousand people have been killed.

April 20th

The prefecture of Butare becomes engulfed in violence.

April 21st

UN reduces UNAMIR.

April-May

Most intense killings occurs between the second week of April and third week in May.

July 4th

The RPF takes control of Kigali, the genocidal regime flees to Gisenyi.

July 13th-July 18th

Ruhengeri and Gisenyi are captured by the RPF.

July-August

Two million people seek refuge in Zaire.

1997-1998

RPF leaders Pasteur Bizimungu is named as president, Paul Kagame becomes vice president.

Rwanda, Uganda and Congolese rebel leader Laurent Kabila go to war against Mobutu’s regime.

2000

Bizimungu resigns, amid growing speculation of fraud and discontent within government.
Vice President Kagame becomes president.

Bizimungu establishes a political party to oppose Kagame’s RPF, is banned for inciting ethnic divisions.

He is later arrested.

Mount Nyiragongo erupts in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Paul Kagame is elected president.


36 thousand category 4 prisoners are released in Rwanda.

Bizimungu is sentenced to 15 years in prison.
Appendix 4

Glossary

Aka.zu- “little house” used to refer to the inner royal court. Also refers to family members of President Habyarimana’s wife, who part of the president’s inner circle.

Bizimu- Sprits of the dead

Genocidaires- a French term that is used to refer to those who perpetrated, planed, or participated in the genocide.

Ibyitso- a person who collaborates with or is an accomplice of the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

Imana – translated from Kinyarwanda, refers to both God and religion in general.

Interahamwe- a militia group, whose members were predominately unemployed Hutu youths. Members were responsible for the massacres on civilians. Literally translated it means “Those who work together” or “those who attack the enemy together”.

Inkotanyi- “fierce warriors”, historically connected to the warriors and protectors of the king. It was later used in reference to RPF soldiers and the political party.

Inyenzi- cockroach, was a euphemism for Tutsi in general.

Kangura- founded in 1990, it was a newspaper that served as a propaganda machine spreading anti-Tutsi, anti-RPF, and anti-Arusha sentiments. Literally translated “The voice which seeks to awaken and defend the majority”.

KinyaYwanda- the language of Rwanda. It has Bantu origins and is indiscriminately spoken by Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa.

Masu- A club with nails embedded into it.

Muzunugu- white person or tourist

Mwami- traditional king of Rwanda.

North Kivu- refers to the regions that border the northern part of Lake Kivu mainly Gisenyi and Kibuye Rwanda and Goma Democratic Republic of the Congo.

South Kivu- refers to the regions that border the southern part of Lake Kivu mainly Bukavu Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cyangugu Rwanda.
### Figure 1: European Descriptions of Twa, Hutu, and Tutsi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Origin/Race</th>
<th>subsistence</th>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Facial Features</th>
<th>Nose</th>
<th>Personality Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Twa        | Pygmoid         | Hunter-Gathers   | Small, Chunky, Hairy          | Short, Dwarf, 155.3 cm | Monkey like, flat, low and wide | Large and short | - Marked by gluttony  
             |                 | 1% of population | Weight averages 48.7        |                |                 |                                | - Easily deceived and gullible  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Similar to the apes  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Not liked by Hutu and Tutsi  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Potters, Dancers  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Buffoons  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Grotesque little creatures |
| Hutu       | Bantu/Negroid   | Agricultural, peasant, 85% of population | Medium body size, Short and thick set weight averages 59.5 | Between Twa and Tutsi in height, 167.5 cm | Large head, large thick lips, | Broad and stocky | - Likes to laugh, jovial  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Hardworking  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - More simple  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Inexplicably servile  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Cowardly without dignity  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Enslaved without daring to revolt  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Less intelligent, not clever  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Unmannerly  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Extrovert and irritable  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - More resistant to malaria |
| Tutsi      | Hamitic, Came from outside Africa, | Pastoralists, noble, 11% of population | Graceful and gigantic structure, Well proportioned, light in color | Tall, average height 176.5 cm | Narrow high face, Caucasian like skull, thin lips, wide brow, beautiful teeth, | Narrow high, thin | - Whites in black skin  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Mutant Europeans  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Innate superior intelligence  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Conquers & warriors  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Natural rulers  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Lazy & opportunistic  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Sexually unruly  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Socially and economically dominate  
             |                 |                  |                               |                |                 |                                | - Aristocrats |

Appendix 6

The Hutu Ten Commandments

1. Every Muhutu should know that a Mutussi woman, wherever she is, works for the interest of her Tutsi ethnic group as a result we shall consider a traitor any Muhutu who marries a Mutussi woman, makes a Mutussi woman his concubine, ploys a Mutussi woman as secretary or makes her his dependant.

2. Every Muhutu should know that our Bahutu daughters are more suitable and conscientious in their role of women, spouses and family mothers. Are they not beautiful, good secretaries and more honest?

3. Bahutu women be vigilant and try to bring your husbands, brothers and sons back to reason.

4. Every Muhutu should know that every Mututsi is dishonest in business. His only aim is to enhance the supremacy of his ethnic group. As a result, we shall consider a traitor any muhutu forms an alliance with Batutsi in business, invests his money or government's money in a Mututsi's enterprise, lends or borrows money from a Mututsi, gives favors to Batutsi in business like obtaining of import licenses, bank loans, construction plots, public markets etc.

5. All the strategic posts, be they political, administrative, economic, military and security must be entrusted to Bahutu.

6. The education sector (pupils, students, teachers) must be majority Hutu.

7. The Rwandese armed forces must be exclusively Hutu. The experience of the October war has taught us a lesson. No military person should marry a Mututsi woman.

8. The Bahutu should stop having mercy on the Batutsi.

9. The Bahutu, wherever they are, must have unity, solidarity and be pre-occupied by the fate of their Hutu brothers the Bahutu both inside and outside Rwanda must constantly look for friends and allies for the Hutu cause, starting with our Bahutu brothers; They must constantly counteract the Tutsi propaganda. The Bahutu must be firm and vigilant against their common enemy who are Batutsi.

10. The 1959 social revolution, the 1961 referendum and the Hutu ideology must be taught to every Muhutu and at all levels. Every Muhutu must spread widely this ideology. We shall consider a traitor any Muhutu who will persecute his Muhutu brother for having read, spread and taught this ideology.

Appendix 7

Research Questions

a. In pre-colonial Rwanda, what were the origins of each group? How were the Hutu and the Tutsi traditionally defined?

b. What impact did colonialism and European conquest have on traditional definitions?

c. Does the Hutu and Tutsi identities still exist? What context are they used (if at all)?

d. How have these identities changed since 1994?

e. How do people in everyday life address and identify others?

f. Besides ethnic identities, what are some other important social categories, which people identify themselves as, such as class, profession, religious affiliation and gender?

g. What role has religion, as well as religious institutions (if any) play in identity issues?

h. What function and what do the recently erected memorial sites represent or mean, if anything to those living in the community?
Appendix 8

*List of Approved Human Subject Forms*

Informed Consent Document (English)

Document Au Courant De Consentement (Informed Consent Document French)

Constructing Identities in Rwanda: Assent Form (English)

Construction des Identities au Rwanda: Forme De Consentment (Assent Form French)

Research Questions (English)

Comment se Forment les Identities au Rwanda (Research Questions French)

*The approval form is on file.*