

HUTU DIASPORA NARRATIVE: CONFLICT OF IDENTITY, IDENTITY IN  
CONFLICT

by

Claudine Kuradusenge  
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Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_ Dean, School for Conflict  
Analysis and Resolution

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at George Mason University

by

Claudine Kuradusenge  
Bachelor of Science  
Utah Valley University, 2013

Director: Karyna V. Korostelina, Professor  
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Spring Semester 2015  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, VA

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## **DEDICATION**

This is dedicated to my parents, Anisia Nyirankera and Aminadab Ndabarishi, who were taken away too early. This is a tribute to their sacrifice.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to every person I met along the way, who helped me to grow and discover myself. To Mr. and Mrs. Gay who allowed me to dream and make those dreams a reality. To Dr. Karyna V. Korostelina who worked hard with me from the beginning until the completion of this research. To Jean - Damascene Nshimiyimana and Victoire Nikomeze who helped me to see my worth and let me cry over their shoulders every time I needed it. Nobody can hope for a better brother and sister-in-law. To the Nsabimana family: Athanasie, Maurice, Denise, Alice, Yvonne, Josiane, Fabrice, and spouses, who taught me important lessons and helped me navigate the different challenges I had to face. To Ellen Galdava who was there to make me believe in myself and laugh with/at me when I needed. To Martha Jones who was my confident and support system in tough times. To Suzanne Uwicyeza who helped to stay strong when I felt defeated. And to all the people who were there for me, thank you.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The Cognitive Motivational Relational Theory .....	CMRT
The Department for Peacekeeping Operations .....	DPKO
Democratic Republic of Congo .....	DRC
The International Criminal Court.....	ICC
The International Commission of Intervention and State Sovereignty.....	ICSS
The International Criminal Tribunal for Hutus.....	ICTH
The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda .....	ICTR
The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia .....	ICTY
Internally Displaced Persons.....	IDPs
Non-Governmental Organization.....	NGO
National Unit and Reconciliation Commission .....	NURC
New Caseload .....	NCL
Old Caseload.....	OCL
The Office of the Prosecutor.....	OTP
Rwandan Patriotic Army.....	RPA
Rwandan Patriotic Front .....	RPF
Responsibility to Protect.....	R2P
State Owned Enterprises .....	SOEs
Le Tribunal Penal International pour les Hutus.....	TPIH
United Nation.....	UN
The United Nation Peacekeeping Mission.....	UNAMIR

## **ABSTRACT**

### **HUTU DIASPORA NARRATIVE: CONFLICT OF IDENTITY, IDENTITY IN CONFLICT**

Claudine Kuradusenge, M.S.

George Mason University, 2015

Thesis Director: Dr. Karyna V. Korostelina

This study followed three generations of Hutus in their diasporic communities. Seeking to understand the formation and/or transformation of their identity, the researcher aimed to explore the narratives of selves in the mixture of competing narratives. Classified as victims and treated as the Other, these generations offered an inside look in the individual and social dynamics that composed the general understanding of mass violence and trauma. As diaspora communities, it was essential to explore the history of Rwanda and its aftermath in order to identify the different narratives these communities were facing. Along with that, their sense of belonging to a nation was not only shaped by the homeland but also by their political attachment to both the homeland and host community. Therefore, knowing that their narratives of Rwanda and selves were competing with the official narrative of the 1994 genocide and the Rwandan government, these three generations were offering a different, maybe counter-

narrative of their understanding of the events and their impact of the formation of identity in the perpetrator's group. Consequently, the idea that guided this research was based on the examination of the identity formation of those labeled as perpetrators and their next generations. This research is a compilation of their narratives of identity and their understanding of the events, as well as the coping mechanisms they used in order to overcome their challenges. It is primordial to conduct such research since history tends to repeat itself. Often, victims become the perpetrators and perpetrators become victims.

## **CHAPTER 1: A GLANCE TOWARD THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

From the holy Crusades, to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, men have sought to either conquer or convert their opponents. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of war shifted. The battles were not on the battlefield, but in our backyard. The desire to impose one's rule on others was not specific to a foreign enemy. Even the notion of the enemy was not as clear as it used to be. Once, men would travel to faraway lands to fight for their country; fight with pride. In this new century, the battlefield entered in people's homes. The enemy was within the country, among the normal citizen. He was a product of the motherland. The aims of these conflicts were not only to conquer and convert, but to destroy by any means. Instead of fighting for their nation's pride, people fought against their own rulers and fought for their basic needs. The idea of the soldier was also transformed. Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, soldiers were seen as warriors; they were admired and envied by the rest of the world. Later on, soldiers were utilized or seen as obedient puppets, as machines useful in particular situations. The 20<sup>th</sup> century opened the door to the evil within each person.

Consequently, not only did states fight other states, but a new interstate order was created. Fortunately, nations will rally behind one unique goal; stop the global threat to expand. With that, the idea of sovereignty expanded. International entities and laws were created to protect the well being of oppressed groups. The focus was not on personal

citizenship but cosmopolitanism, citizens of the world. Phrases such as, “crime against humanity,” “ethnic cleansing,” and “genocide” became part of new dictionaries and encyclopedias. Treaties and conventions had to be written to ensure that the international community knew how to deal with these not-so-new concepts and atrocities. Intrastate conflicts also became a concern. Civilians had replaced soldiers, and they often took control of their own destinies, usually in tragic ways. These concepts might have existed centuries ago, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century they increased to alarming levels. The end goals of these atrocities were not only to satisfy the leaders’ desires, but, dictated by hatred, they aimed to suppress the others. Animosities were usually based on prejudice and discriminatory ideas, and the atrocities fueled by them had repercussions that often took decades to heal.

During atrocities such as the Holocaust, the Armenian, Cambodian, Bosnian, Rwandan, Darfur, and Syrian genocides, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, civilians often became victims of their own neighbors, friends, family, and governments. In the aftermath of these crimes, the general population, both victims and perpetrators, had to reconstruct themselves on the ruins of old memories and traumas. Psychological or physical stigmas were passed on generation after generation. In some cases, people sought justice or restoration; in others, people only wanted to forget their sorrows. In the aftermath of genocide, everything had to be rebuilt.

In the legal realm, it became clear that an international justice court needed to be organized with the purpose of persecuting the authors of these types of crimes. History books had to be rewritten and the world had to learn about the perpetrators’ actions. The

international community has supported the construction of these nations and lessons have been learned. In the individual realm, people dealt with the traumatic events differently. The trauma was passed on from generation to generation and the experiences parents lived were often transferred to their children, which affected not only the way the children grew up and identified themselves, but also their community's healing process.

### **Glance on Rwanda**

Rwanda is a fascinating, but very complex, country to properly understand. Probably the best-known thing about Rwanda is the genocide that happened in 1994. April 6th, 1994, is the darkest date in the history of Rwanda. While the rest of the world stood still, Rwandans began exterminating their sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers. In one hundred days, the beautiful plains and hills of this tiny country in East Africa were covered with blood and dead bodies.<sup>1</sup> Almost one million people were murdered in the name of ethnicity hatred and prejudice. Thousands of Rwandans became internally displaced persons (IDPs) and millions became refugees. In the aftermath, some returned to this changed country, while others decided that Rwanda could no longer be called home.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Phillip Reyntjens, "Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship," *African Affairs*, no.103 (2004), pp. 177-210

2 Gerard Prunier, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp.1-7

As the genocide progressed, the rest of the world struggled to understand how two tribes sharing a common language, culture, religion, and history could see themselves so different. This genocide not only shook Rwanda, it reminded the world that evil exists. It reinforced the knowledge that the Human Rights Convention should not only be a concept but must implement in order to avoid other genocides.

A new, post-genocide government mostly composed of Tutsis and former soldiers of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a pro-Tutsi militia led by current President Kagame, took over.<sup>3</sup> It faced the challenge of rebuilding a traumatized country. The international community also stepped in and brought humanitarian aid to help the victims survive.

In the wake of the Rwandan genocide, labels were created and fingers were pointed but it was understood that justice had to be found at any cost. Some called it the Rwandan genocide, others, a genocide against the Tutsi. Originally understood as a genocide against Tutsis and moderate Hutus, the concept and stories told about the genocide became more targeted—it became a genocide against only Tutsis. These different narratives transformed the already complex understanding of the events that led to these atrocities. The Hutus became perpetrators, *genocidaires*, while Tutsis were victims. These labels created an enormous gap that have and continue to shape the traumas of the Rwandan community.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 1-7

<sup>4</sup> Ervin Staub: Genocide and Mass Killing: Origins, prevention, Healing and Reconciliation,” *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (June, 2000), p.378

Millions of dollars were invested in the reconstruction of Rwanda, but the psychological trauma of Rwandans needed special attention. The International Tribunal for Rwanda and local Gacaca courts were created to make sure that justice would be served. While the world focused on Rwandans within Rwanda, the former refugees who became a diaspora had to learn how to deal with their own trauma. Using President Kagame's government, Rwandans within and abroad, and the common understanding of the 1994 atrocities, several narratives—the official, the globally recognized, hidden, the individual within Rwanda, and diaspora's—of the genocide can be observed, which have affected the emotional reconciliation most Rwandans had to make with themselves, the other tribe, and Rwanda as a whole.<sup>5</sup> Since the official narrative was that Hutus had killed Tutsis, Hutu Diaspora populations saw their identity and narratives compressed into a single category: the perpetrators. What was outside that box was unacceptable, denied, or even suppressed. This categorization was most observed in the last decade, where new generations of Hutus are growing up in this single-sided narrative. Those who were too young to understand the genocide have been confronted to a well-structured narrative of the events, and those who were born and/or grew up in host-countries experienced competing narratives of their ethnic identity. The label of perpetrator has influenced the identity formation of most Hutus in Diaspora.

Twenty years later, thousands of Hutus are still living abroad. Some are unwilling to return to Rwanda because they fear consequences of the “perpetrator” label. A common narrative is that the Rwandan government and its policies have created a

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 370

punitive regime, discriminating against Hutus. Therefore, it may be dangerous for them to go back, especially since the Rwandan government has implemented laws such as the one banning “genocidal ideology,” which states that people who speak negatively about the government in public or question the Rwandan government’s official narrative of the 1994 genocide are guilty of genocidal ideology.

Two decades after the genocide, the new generations of Hutus are facing a different dilemma. Caught between different narratives—official, their parents, their own—they have to reconstruct an identity based on their parents’ narrative of the events, potential transmitted “chosen trauma,” the label of *genocidaire*, and/or another identity. For these new generations of Hutu Diaspora, which identity has become salient in their struggle for recognition? How do these competing narratives affect their identity-formation processes vis-a-vis their parents’ identity?

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research aims to explore the formation of identity in three different generations among the Hutu Diaspora community in Belgium. The researcher was interested in comparing the generations’ understanding of selves and their roles as a diaspora community by looking at the different narratives to which they were exposed. The leading questions, and consequently themes, were centered on identity theory, narrative identity theory, diaspora dynamics, and coping mechanisms.

It is essential to create a safe space where constructive dialogue can take place in order to avoid a ‘time-bomb.’ What is needed is “to mediate between the individuals and

groups in a community,” so that the ethnic hatred and discriminatory messages that were promoted prior to the genocide and are still present in the current government will not “again fall on fertile ground.”<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the current environment in Rwanda does not allow for critical thinking. Therefore, the impact that diaspora communities, particularly Hutu Diaspora communities, will have on the future of Rwanda is still undetermined. What is certain is that Hutus have seen themselves categorized as the villains, which has marked their relationships to each other and to their homeland, and crystalized their chosen trauma. The younger generation of Rwandans in Rwanda and abroad will have the difficult choice of determining their homeland’s future. By ignoring the psychological impact that the labeling has had on the majority group, we set ourselves up to witness future atrocities in Rwanda, rather than conflict resolution interventions.

This study aims to identify the identity transformation of Hutus in Diaspora through the study of their narrative identity. Using a thematic approach, the researcher intended to determine the themes that emerged in the discussions of identity development and how people deal with their traumatic events. Therefore, the analysis of this particular community will be mapped around the importance of identity formation through stories/narratives, the analysis of the genocide framework, the notion of Diaspora, and finally through the coping mechanisms used to deal with stressful or traumatic situations. Of course, the history of Rwanda will also be presented as a history of traumatic events and threat narratives. The research consciously avoids elaborating on the politicization of

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<sup>6</sup> Susanne Buckley-Zistel , “Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post-Genocide Rwanda.” *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (2006), p. 147

the Rwandan history in order to focus on the individual understanding of identity and trauma.

## CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

### The Formation of Selves

The original conception of identity is related to the relationship each person has to itself and others,<sup>7</sup> which then gives the person a sense of meaning. By identity, we refer to “the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, identities are shape by society as well as the individual. They are formed or transformed by the internalization of self and the construction of particular meanings.<sup>9</sup>

The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework.<sup>10</sup>

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7 Sydney Schoemaker, “Identity & Identities,” *Daedalus*, Vol. 135, No. 4, On Identity (Fall 2006), 40.

8 Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010),

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9 Ibid, 7

10 Ibid, 7

Thus, we all possess a dual identity composed of a self, based on individual reflection of our personal meaning, and a social identity created and influenced by the society and culture we live in. Both self and social identities are not discrete but influence each other greatly to form our sense of individual identity. Within the perimeters of our historical context, our identity is dynamic and evolves constantly. Each of our identities helps us to progressively grow as an individual and as a society. Consequently, we do not exist as an individual, independent entity, but as a personal entity within a big structure. We live in a collective, as “social actor through which individuals reach holistic meanings in their experience.”<sup>11</sup>

When thinking about personal or individual identity, the common question we to ask is “Who am I?” This is a common but important question everyone has asked at one point of his or her life. This question is at the core of someone’s identity. What do we mean by identity? For this research, Judy Dyer’s definition will be used. She defines identity, as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space and how people understand their possibilities for the future.”<sup>12</sup> This multidimensional definition suggests that there is more than one identity within one person. One of the identities will be a personal, individual identity; another will be constructed by the world, by society, our group membership. The individual identity is created in the “process of self-reflection or the understanding of the ‘self.’”<sup>13</sup>

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11 Ibid, 10

12 Judy Dyer, “Language and Identity.” *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Taylor & Francis e-Library. (New York: Publizher, 2005), 103

13 Korostelina, Karina V. *Social Identity and Conflict: Structures, Dynamics, and Implications*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 36

Our individual identity exists in connection to the world. To understand ourselves and what we are, we need to understand what we are not.

Among the numerous identities we all possess, some will be salient and others not. The salient identities operate “like a self-schema in that it becomes a filter or lens that directs attention to controlling meanings in a situation that are consistent with the meanings held in the identity standard.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, salient identities influence our understanding of particular situations or events through the use of positive or negative identity/group comparisons, creation of specific meanings, and boundaries. Depending on which identity will be the most salient, people will understand, and consequently, act in particular ways that would be defined by that identity’s perceptions and understanding on the events. At the moment one identity becomes salient, it begins to help define the standards the individual will live by. Throughout our lives, we will see our self-identity evolve according to the social or group membership combinations we associate with. Our unique set of social connections will shape our individual identities.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, individual identities are formed by a set of meanings that are tied to and shaped by various roles and situations we encounter through the different social memberships we are affiliated with. Yet, in most cases, our sense of self will remain salient in all the membership identities we have.<sup>16</sup> The more committed we are to an identity, the more prevalent it will be, and the more effort we will put into promoting it.<sup>17</sup> The different

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14 Jan E. Stets, and Michael J. Cater, “The Moral Self: Applying Identity Theory,” *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (June, 2011), 195

15 Ibid, 225

16 Ibid, 229

17 Ibid, 232

identities that make up our sense of self—such as our mother, friend, employee, or student identities— are based on our social roles or relationships but combine to compose a very complex sense of who we are as individuals. <sup>18</sup>

In terms of group identity, two types of connections exist within two types of culture: collectivism and individualism. In a collectivistic society, the focus is on the well-being of the group and the individual identity is secondary. The individualist relationship is the opposite. The group focuses on individual needs rather than group ones.<sup>19</sup> Two important theories come from these self and group based identities. In the individual-based identity, “one’s self-concept consists of different stereotypes, attitudes, and values that one receives from memberships in groups. Some of these particulars may be more salient than others, but they all serve as parts of a single representation of the individual self.”<sup>20</sup> The group-based identity proposes, “one’s identity system depends on the social context but that some social categories can be relatively stable across time and situations.”<sup>21</sup>

Since we all possess multiple identities, one can wonder how they are connected. Stryker responded to this question by exploring the concept of “identity salience.” According to him, “various [identities] exist in a hierarchy of salience and that one identity can be invoked over others not only because of its salience but also because of

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18 Sheldon Stryker, “Developments in “Two Social Psychologies”: Toward an Appreciation of Mutual Relevance,” *Sociometry*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Jun., 1977), 151.

19 Korostelina, 40

20 James L. Peacock, Patrick B. Inman, and Patricia M. Thornton. *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 50

21 Ibid, 50

the person's level of commitment to that identity."<sup>22</sup> The hierarchy of identities is composed of "core identities," "short-term identities," and "situational identities." The core identities are stable and dominant. They have a long life expectancy and change only when there is an important shift in society. These "identities are sacred to their holders."<sup>23</sup> The short-term identities change constantly due to their inconsistency. Finally, the situational identities are closely connected to specific situations and vary according to those situations. Though the core identities are the strongest, all the forms are interconnected and can influence the development of each other. Each of them is formed as a result "of the individual's membership in an in-group and in opposition or comparison to the members of an out-group."<sup>24</sup> Therefore, "the term salience indicate[s] the activation of an identity in a situation. A salient social identity is 'one which is functioning psychologically to increase the influence of one's membership in that group on perception and behavior.'"<sup>25</sup>

The existence of these identities is defined by having a membership in a group. This membership will help define the "individual self-conception...of the self" and help set a "shared behaviors and socialization."<sup>26</sup> Being part of a group will allow the person to satisfy her or his needs of belonging, recognition, and security. Therefore, an

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22 Ibid, 52

23 Ibid, 221

24 Ibid, 51-52

25 Jan E. Stets, and Peter J. Burke, "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory," *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (Sep., 2000), p. 229

26 Korostelina, p.21

individual identity is a reflection of a larger group, creating social identity. Belonging to a group serves five psychological functions for the identity system:

1. Increases self-esteem
2. Increases social status
3. Provides personal safety
4. Provide support and protection from the group
5. Grants a sense of recognition<sup>27</sup>

As stated above, our individual identity is heavily shaped by our society, group membership, and consequently our social identity. In both the individual identity theory and social identity theory, the self is a reflection of the group's affiliations and the categories, reflection of the individual and the society. Both (individual and social) identities tend to influence each other. Therefore, the transformation of social identity will shape the members' identity, and consequently, the individual identity will also mold the social identity. In social identity theory, this process is called self-categorization; in individual identity theory, it is called identification through the process of self-categorization or identification, and thus an identity is formed.<sup>28</sup> Self-categorization is divided in three stages: first, "individuals define themselves as members of a social group"; second, "they learn the stereotypes and norms of the group"; third, "group categories influence the perception and understanding of all situations in a particular context."<sup>29</sup> Consequently, one person is viewed as part of a larger system of identity, no

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27 Peacock, 51

28 Stets, and Burke, 224

29 Korostelina, 25

longer as an unique unit. Individual identity, in comparison, is connected to self-categories and holds that every individual is uniquely different to the rest. The social identity is connected to the group or social categories; it is “us” category. The relationships among the members are based on their similarities and contrasts to other groups.<sup>30</sup> Self-categorization functions similarly—through the creation of similarities, the social comparison accentuate the perceived differences between the in-group and out-group.<sup>31</sup> These contrasts are ordinarily based on prejudices. Prejudices are defined as “negative attitudes, or as ‘antipathy based on faulty and inflexible generalization.’”<sup>32</sup> They help to differentiate one group from another. Prejudice allows people to maintain their group identities, which automatically support their individual identities.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, social identity is defined as being “constructed and influenced by the processes of existing social structures”<sup>34</sup> or “those aspects of the self-concept that derive from an individual’s knowledge and feelings about the group members that the person shares with others.”<sup>35</sup> It provides a sense of security from the risk of “interpersonal opposition and saves them from solitude by establishing boundaries and a sense of common space within a group.”<sup>36</sup> The group gives meaning to the social identity created by the in-out group relationships. Eight meanings were identified:<sup>37</sup>

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30 Peacock, 24-25

31 Stets, and Burke, 225

32 Korostelina, 128

33 Volkan Vamik, *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 113

34 Korostelina, 15

35 Peacock, 206

36 Korostelina, 15

37 Korostelina, 74-75

1. In-group traditions and values: its culture
2. In-group language
3. Characteristics of in-group members: in-group stereotypes
4. In-group history: historical events
5. In-group ideology: ideas, goals, and aspirations
6. Interactions with out-group
7. Reverberated identity: comparisons with the out-group
8. Out-group image: out-group stereotypes

By creating a collective, the in-group, we automatically create the other, the out-group.

The in-group/out-group dynamics and intergroup relations most likely help to shape an ethno-centric understanding of the group's roles and place.<sup>38</sup> That understanding exposes particular group behaviors, "such as solidarity, within our groups and discrimination against out-groups as a part of social identity processes, with the aim to achieve positive self-esteem and self-enhancement."<sup>39</sup> In the group identity, comparison and discrimination will not be done on the individual level but as a whole. If the salient identity is one promoting collectivism, the group will unify and react as an entity.<sup>40</sup>

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38 Stets, and Burke, 226

39 Sabina Trepte, "Chapter 15: Social Identity Theory," in *Psychology of Entertainment*, ed. Bryant Jennings and Peter Vorderer (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2006), 256.

40 Stephen Reicher, "The Context of Social Identity: Domination, Resistance, and Change," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 6, Symposium: Social Dominance and Intergroup Relations (Dec., 2004), 929

Based on the definition of social identity theory— a “person's knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group”<sup>41</sup>—our social identity can be understood as being composed of two distinct components: (1) our belief and knowledge that we belong to a specific group, (2) and the importance of that group’s memberships to us.<sup>42</sup> These memberships can be based on things such as national or political affiliations, gender or racial associations, or even territorial boundaries. Some of them “are optional and other[s] imposed.”<sup>43</sup> For instance, we cannot choose our country of origin or our skin color, but we can choose our political and social relations; we can chose to be part of a soccer team or an artistic circle. Interestingly, despite our self-categorization within a group, we most of the time need to have the group’s approval in order to fully acquire that identity.<sup>44</sup>

To illustrate the membership-affiliation dynamic, let’s analyze collective action taken by a politicized group. A group tends to be politicized when one of their identities is rooted in the belief that they are working toward a goal.<sup>45</sup> In these cases, the primary membership’s criterion, which is the goal they fixed, will define (1) their belief that they belong to a group, and (2) that the group and goal are important to them. Therefore, “Individuals must have internalized their group membership as an aspect of their self-

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41 Stets, and Burke, 226

42 Richard D. Ashmore, Lee Jussin, David Wilder, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Resolution*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 6

43 Ibid, 71

44 Ibid, 73

45 Ibid, 74

concept; they must be subjectively identified with the relevant in-group.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, it is by socially identifying ourselves with a group that we tend to create social or political movements.<sup>47</sup>

Consequently, in the construction of a social identity, power dynamics influence the context and situation that helps shape this socially constructed identity. Manuel Castells proposes three types of identity building processes and their forms:

- Legitimizing Identity: legitimizing identity generates a civil society<sup>48</sup>
- Resistance Identity: identity based on resistance leads to the formation of communes, or communities<sup>49</sup>
- Project Identity: projects identity produces subjects<sup>50</sup>

These distinctions demonstrate the influence and impact of society and group membership on the individual and social identification of a self. Our social interactions are organized around the “the formation, transformation, activation, and suppression of social boundaries.”<sup>51</sup> It can either happen on the interpersonal level, in an organization, or large scale. When the “us-against-them” boundaries become violent, it can lead to civil war, ethnic cleansing, or genocide.

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46 Henri Tajfel, and John Turner, Chapter 3: An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict,” in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. W.G. Auston and S. Warchel, (Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole, 1979), 41

47 Stets, and Burke, 226

48 Castells, 8

49 Ibid, 9

50 Ibid,10

51 Charles Tilly, “Social Boundary Mechanisms,” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 34, No. 2, (June 2004), 213

For the purpose of this research, we need to spend some time talking about an important social identity that has, many times throughout history, helped to shape conflict. Ethnicity or ethnic grouping is seen as “those who hold in common a set of traditions not shared by others with whom they are in contact.”<sup>52</sup> People sharing an ethnic identity usually share the same origin, cultural background, history, geographic territory, and so on. Ethnic identity has been a fundamental source of identification and meaning throughout history. It has shaped the social differences among groups, as well as discrimination and social recognition, in many societies.<sup>53</sup>

Ethnicity becomes the foundation for defensive trenches, then territorialized in local communities, or even gangs, defending their turf. Between cultural communes and self-defense territorial units, ethnic roots are twisted, divided, reprocessed, mixed, differentially stigmatized, or rewarded, according to a new logic of informationalization/globalization of cultures and economies that makes symbolic composites out of blurred identities.<sup>54</sup>

Ethnicity or ethnic identity is the perfect example of a socially constructed identity that creates an important bond between the members. In some circumstances, membership in these groups solidifies the “us-them,” or the otherness, concepts and tends to lead to conflicts—most of the time, violent conflicts.

In the cases where two ethnic groups are located on the same territory, conflict is very likely to rise based on the different stereotypes both groups have vis-à-vis the other.

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52 Volkan, 21

53 Castells, 56.

54 Ibid, 63

In regard to these cases, Vamik Volkan introduced the concepts of “chosen glory” and “chosen trauma.” According to him, chosen trauma is “a shared mental representation of the event, which included realistic information, fantasized expectations, intense feelings, and defenses against unacceptable thoughts.”<sup>55</sup> In other words; it is a “collective memory” of a specific event that once happened in the group history. The chosen glory is the opposite mental representation. It happens when an event has brought “feelings of success and triumph” to a large group.<sup>56</sup> Volkan continues by saying that in both of these events, one group will need to go through “mourning.” Mourning is an involuntary response to the loss of a loved one or possession. Its purpose is to help the group to adapt to the “changed reality.”<sup>57</sup>

In summary, changes in identity occur when the meaning that the identity used to have changes. Usually, small changes occur in our lifetime, but in cases of traumatic events, the short term and situational identities can move around, becoming salient ones depending on the situation, or a particular identity can become salient in the aftermath of a trauma. Peter Burke stated, “the identity standard, or set of meanings defining the identity, is part of a dynamic, self-regulating control system that operates when an identity is activated.”<sup>58</sup> There is an important link between our identities and our behaviors. We give meanings to our behaviors that correspond to the meaning of our identity standard.

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55 Volkan, 49

56 Ibid, 81

57 Ibid, 36-37

58 Peter J. Burke, “Identity Change,” *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (Mar., 2006), 82

## Identity Through Narratives

My life is a collection of stories (mine and those of significant others) that tells me where I am from, where I have been and where I am going. My true self is the one who sense[s] and understands the meaning and responsibility of these stories—stories that are ‘acquired, refined, revised, displaced, and replaced’ over time through introspection and continued lived experience.<sup>59</sup>

MacIntyre defines the human as “essentially a story-telling animal,” that makes sense of his or her life and the lives of others through storytelling.<sup>60</sup> Stories are essential to people’s lives; they are shaped by our actions, others’ stories, and the culture in which we live.<sup>61</sup> “People fashion and internalize life stories, or narrative identity, to integrate the reconstructed past and imagined future.”<sup>62</sup> These narrative identities are dynamic stories created to make sense of the world within and around us. They unify us, help us find purpose and meaning.<sup>63</sup> These life stories are created by our own daily interactions with the outside world, others’ perceptions and influences, and self-reflection that helps us understand new experiences, and revise older stories.<sup>64</sup> They will evolve throughout our

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59 Françoise Baylis, “Black as Me: Narrative Identity,” *Developing World Bioethics*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2003), 145

60 Donileen R. Loseke, “The Study of Identity as Cultural, Institutional, Organizational, and Personal Narratives: Theoretical and Empirical Integrations,” *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Fall, 2007), 661

61 Donald E. Polkinghorne, “Explorations of Narrative Identity,” *Psychological Inquiry: An International Journal for the Advancement of Psychological Theory*, Vol. 7 No. 4, (1996), 365

62 Jack J. Bauer, Dan D. McAdams, and Jennifer L. Pals, “Narrative Identity and Eudaimonic Well-Being,” *Journal of Happiness Studies*, Vol. 8 (2008), 82

63 Ibid, 82

64 Ibid, 85

lives based on crisis and challenges.<sup>65</sup> Every single one of us develops a sense of self by thinking of ourselves as the protagonist of the stories of our lives, such as love and marriage stories, family and professional obligation stories, or struggle and sacrifice stories.<sup>66</sup>

What, then, is the difference between narratives and stories? In *Speaking Violence: The Politics and Poetics of Narrative in Conflict Resolution*, Sara Cobb introduces narrative by saying that it “is structured via the act of sequencing events linked through a logic of action, populating these events with characters, embedding these characters in a moral framework such that their actions not only become sensible, but the point of the narrative...becomes clear.”<sup>67</sup> Therefore, narrative doesn’t only have a personal component; it is also constructed and influenced by society and the external world. Looking at the stories and narratives people tell, we can identify two categories: the lived and the told narratives. The lived narratives are those structured by personal experiences while the told ones are those created with and by others over a lifetime.<sup>68</sup> The terms story and narrative are often incorrectly used interchangeably. Stories can be seen as the sequence of events, while narratives are the “way the story is told.”<sup>69</sup>

As we can see, narrative and identity are closely connected. Narratives help shape identity throughout our existence. At the individual level, narratives are stories created by

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65 Jefferson S. Singer, “Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction,” *Journal of Personality*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (June 2004), 447

66 William H. Sewell Jr., “Introduction: Narratives and Social Identities,” *Social Science History*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn, 1992), 483

67 Sara Cobb. *Speaking Violence: The politics and Poetics of Narrative in Conflict Resolution*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 22

68 Ibid, 22

69 Ibid, 22

the self as “vehicles for rendering ourselves intelligible.” They help shape our personal identity. At the group level, they organize people and help create a common sense of identity. At the social level, “there are stories producing cultural identities, the imagined characteristics of disembodied types of people that simplify a complex world...and construct symbolic boundaries around types of social actors.”<sup>70</sup>

Consequently, each one of us is a self-narrator. Our identity within our stories and narratives “constructs sense of self-sameness, continuity and character in the plot of the story a person tells about him-or-herself. The story becomes that person’s actual history.”<sup>71</sup> Therefore, in order to understand the identity-formation process, we need to understand how stories are crafted and how these stories are told, either personally or to others, and how these stories can be applied to understanding ourselves, others, and the world around us.<sup>72</sup>

Given the importance we place on our stories, it is important to understand the “practical reasons why ‘experiencing a sense of continuous and individual self-hood’ [through narrative identity] has become challenging.”<sup>73</sup> Identities are not always protected by the family, group, communal, or social infrastructures. Take diaspora or immigrants for example: their identities and narratives will change and evolve through time, space, and location. Nonetheless, the individual will seek to reconnect with his coherent self, which will make his stories and narratives even more essential, especially

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70 Loseke, 661-662

71 Douglas Ezzy, “Theorizing Narrative Identity: Symbolic Interactionism and Hermeneutics,” *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), 246

72 Singer, 438

73 Loseke, 672

for the future generations.<sup>74</sup> Interestingly, the increased importance of the immigrant's narrative or the fact that his narrative changes impact on one person's stories will lead to the transmission of positive and negative life stories, chosen trauma, or chosen glory stories to the next generations in the construction of the individual or group identity. Storytelling and narrative are essential to the emotional and psychological development of human identity.

While our personal identity frames our morals and stories, most of us have competing narratives, which are influenced by our social context. Moreover, our stories about ourselves and the personal narratives we tell about ourselves are shaped by our interactions with the outside world and the cultural narrative our society promotes.<sup>75</sup> This implies that "identity is indeed formed in adolescence and young adulthood but is also revised throughout the life course as new experiences are integrated into one's understanding of self."<sup>76</sup> Therefore, one of the most challenging tasks in a person's development is reshaping his or her conception of self at different stages of his or her growth. Allowing self-narratives to evolve is similarly difficult.<sup>77</sup> This conception of self and narrative identity is not exclusive to individuals. Groups also must have an identity, which is created by the formation of narratives that become the group's history and culture. "The story of a group is constituted in time by a series of modifications to these

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74 Ibid, 672

75 Ibid, 676

76 Kate C. Mclean, "Stories of the Young and the Old: Personal Continuity and Narrative Identity," *Development Psychology*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2008), 254

77 Ibid, 254

narratives that both preserve and adjust that group's narrative identity. In other words, their narrated past changes in order to stay the same."<sup>78</sup>

In the context of a group or a society, the stories are "constructed, told, heard, and evaluated within particular historical, institutional, and interactional contexts, which include the background assumptions of storytellers and storyhearers as well as the prevailing norms of storytelling."<sup>79</sup> That society and its culture help answer fundamental questions such as, "who am I?" and "What is my purpose?" The society's structure allows individuals to evolve within personal and group narratives by communicating their answers through lived, heard, and told stories.<sup>80</sup> Most narrative experts emphasize that the collective created by a society guides people's actions by its social and cultural relationships, which are strengthened by the stories that constitute individual identity and not by the interests we put in the social interactions.<sup>81</sup> The various "network[s] of relationships and institutions in which the actors [individual] are embedded" allow us to create different stories that will be based on our social, political, cultural, and personal connection with others.<sup>82</sup>

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78 John Seed, "History and Narrative Identity: Religious Dissent and the Politics of Memory in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44 (January 2005), 46

79 Loseke, 663

80 Donald E. Polkinghorne, "Explorations of Narrative Identity," *Psychological Inquiry: An International Journal for the Advancement of Psychological Theory*, Vol. 7 No. 4, (1996), 365

81 Margaret R. Somers, "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (Oct., 1994), 624

82 Margaret R. Somers, "Narrativity, Narrative Identity, and Social Action: Rethinking English Working-Class Formation," *Social Science History*, (Winter 1992), 24

In times of conflict or in the aftermath of conflict, people are emotionally impacted by what they witnessed and did and/or did not do, which makes their stories even more valuable. These narratives of tragic events “tend to be evaluated as more important than those that seem peripheral to immediate concerns.”<sup>83</sup> Cobb emphasizes the importance of narrative during and in the aftermath of a conflict by stating that,

At the heart of any conflict are narratives, some spoken clearly, loudly, persistently, even articulately, backed by science and technology, and others seemingly absent or shriveled, partial, yet dense with meaning, materialized only through the presence of a wall, a shrine, a fire, or the machete arm of a young women.<sup>84</sup>

So, when one generation does not have the ability to share its stories, it impacts not only the identity of its members, but also the next generations’ identity formation. The next generations will be conflicted, torn between the narrative they hear—clearly, loudly—, which is the confusing older generation’s narrative, and their own—lived—narrative based on the world they know and their interpretation of history. This is where the “lived and told” narratives play an essential role. If a group’s narrative is absent or suppressed, the next generations will struggle to understand their group’s identity or to form an identity at all, given that “we are the narrative we tell.”<sup>85</sup> These narratives of “pain” became understood through the history, tragic experiences, and culture within the context

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83 Loseke, 665

84 Cobb, 23

85 Ibid, 22

of the person's understanding of himself or herself vis-à-vis of his trauma. The stories help to define what is or is not acceptable, and what should be changed.

## **The Story of Genocide**

Despite what we might think, genocide is not a new concept. It has been part of humanity since the beginning, since Biblical times. There has never been a society whose structure has prevented it from committing this crime.<sup>86</sup> It was seen as a factor for development and not an act of war.<sup>87</sup> It was in the twentieth century, however, that genocide became a “common occurrence; moreover, the forms it has taken are diverse and spring from different motives: there has been a convergence of destructive forces in our period.”<sup>88</sup> According to Camus, this century was an “age of murder...premeditated death intended to serve the ends of a state.”<sup>89</sup> Consequently, until mid-twentieth century, genocide was never prosecuted because it was usually committed by those in power.<sup>90</sup> In the twentieth century, over 60 million people perished from genocide.<sup>91</sup> This century was called the age of genocide. Due to the:

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86 Jean-Paul Sartre, “On Genocide,” *New Left Review*, Vol. I, No. 48 (Mar.-Apr., 1968), 11

87 Roger W. Smith, Chapter 2: Human Destructiveness and Politics: The Twentieth Century as an Age of Genocide,” in *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death*, ed. sidor Wallimann, Michael N. Dobkowski (NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 21

88 Ibid, 21

89 Ibid, 22

90 William A. Schabas, *Genocide in international law: The Crimes of Crimes*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.14-15

91 Smith, 29

Range of victims, the variety of forms that genocide has taken, the urge toward total destruction of whole groups, the elaborate technology that facilitates death and eases conscience, the concentration camp, and the radical evil that is inseparable from it, it is a unique age of genocide<sup>92</sup>

After the First World War, in response to the horrific human losses, peace treaties were drafted and an increased awareness of international human rights was born.<sup>93</sup> Prior to Lemkin's creation of the term, Winston Churchill described the Holocaust as "a crime without a name."<sup>94</sup> Seeking the "perfect" word to describe what had happened during WWII, Lemkin started by mentioning "denationalization," The term "mass murder" did not refer to mass killing of a specific group based on their race or religious affiliation.<sup>95</sup> Lemkin created the word "genocide" from "two words, *genos*, which means race, nation or tribe in ancient Greek, and *caedere*, meaning to kill in Latin."<sup>96</sup> According to him genocide is:

[A] co-ordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objective of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity and even the lives of the individuals belonging to

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92 Ibid, 36

93 Schabas, 15

94 Raphael Lemkin, "Genocide," *The American Scholar*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Spring 1946), 227

95 Ibid, 227

96 Ibid, 228

such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group.<sup>97</sup>

This new way of war and state-permitted killings needed a new term. Genocide was not a crime against the way war was conducted; it was a crime against people, against humanity.<sup>98</sup> The objective of such a crime was the “disintegration of the political and social institutions, or culture, language, national feelings, religion and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.”<sup>99</sup> In other words, it was to annihilate a specific group. Still, according to Lemkin, genocide was composed of two phases; first, the oppressor needed to destroy the oppressed group’s national patterns, and then it needed to impose its own. The oppressors’ behaviors would then be motivated by grievances against the oppressed.<sup>100</sup>

After creating the word “genocide,” Lemkin was actively involved in the creation of a convention that would promote legal sanctions for such crimes, which allowed him to assist in the establishment of the future Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, otherwise known as the “Genocide convention.”<sup>101</sup> Therefore, the 1948 UN Convention defined genocide as: “acts committed with intent to destroy, in

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97 Schabas, 25

98 Lemkin, 229

99 Schabas, 27

100 Bradley Campbell, “Genocide as Social Control,” *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 27, No. 2, (Jun., 2009), 155

101 Schabas, 24-25

whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such.”<sup>102</sup> Turning to the criteria established above, the Convention stated that the following are features of genocide,

1. Killing members of the group;
2. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
3. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
4. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
5. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>103</sup>

With Lemkin’s assistance, this convention’s genocide criteria are closely related to his definition. Also, it was established that genocide could be committed by groups such as militaries, armies, and militias. One key concept is that the groups needed to be organized in order to commit a genocide.

Despite the rigidity of Lemkin’s “genocide” definition, criticisms of it have risen. Some people have argued that “genocide” should only be used in references to the Holocaust.<sup>104</sup> Another primary criticism centered on the definition’s notions of “part” and “causing serious bodily and mental harm.” Scholars felt these notions were too broad and could encompass other crimes that should be not considered as genocide. “This lack of specificity has contributed to the Convention’s unenforceability. To date, no signatory to

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102 Scott Straus, “Contested Meaning and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 3 No. 3 (2001), 361

103 Campbell, 152

104 Straus, 359

the Convention has intervened to stop a genocide.”<sup>105</sup> Consequently, other scholars have created their own definition of genocide to remediate to the criticisms of the official definition.

Drost defined genocide as ‘the deliberate destruction of physical life of individual human beings by reason of their membership of any human collectivity as such.’

Charny argued that genocide is a “generic” term that should include ‘all known types of mass murder and mass death that are brought about at the hands of man.’

Kuper defined genocide as a ‘crime against a collectivity, taking the form of massive slaughter, and carried out with explicit intent.’

Chalk and Jonassohn defined genocide as ‘a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator.’

Fein defined genocide as ‘sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of the surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim.’<sup>106</sup>

This makes clear that the meaning of genocide was different to different people. To some people, it was an evil action; to others, it was another type of mass violence that needed special juridical attention. The context was also interpreted differently. In a court of law, genocide was a crime, a transgression; at the United Nations, it was an event that needed

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105 Ibid, 362

106 Ibid, 362-363

to be stopped.<sup>107</sup> With at least 21 different kinds of genocide, the convention's definition was considerate too broad, not specific enough, or too focused on the Holocaust.<sup>108</sup> In order to create a unified understanding of genocide among the different types, genocide scholars have determined three factors that can be used to classify the sub-types: "(1) type of victim group; (2) historical and social context; and (3) perpetrator objective."<sup>109</sup> Based on these factors, we can understand that the Cambodian genocide (1) targeted a political group, (2) occurred during the Communism revolution, and (3) was motivated by ideological beliefs. In Rwanda, (1) the victims were part of an ethnic group, (2) the genocide occurred during a civil war, and (3) the motives were to totally defeat the military.<sup>110</sup> The ideological motives have been important factors in identifying several sup-types of genocide, but the problem is that genocide does not have a common definition among all scholars.<sup>111</sup>

Once the convention was established, legal measures needed to be taken to ensure its implementation. The international community was beginning to recognize that it had to create a framework that dealt with genocide as an international crime and punished the perpetrators.<sup>112</sup> Lemkin agreed on the international impact of the crime of genocide, and stated that it was not a national or state crime. Genocide was, instead, a crime committed by a powerful group that was supported by the state, which meant that the more powerful

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107 Ibid, 359

108 Ibid, 368

109 Ibid, 368

110 Ibid, 368

111 Ibid, 369

112 Lemkin, 229

entity, the international community, was responsible for the care of genocide victims.<sup>113</sup> Given the impact the Holocaust has had on different victim groups and on the world, one can assume that creating a convention and prosecuting the “villains” was a significant milestone. Yet it took more than fifty years for the convention to be ratified by the most important players.<sup>114</sup> Because the term “genocide” carries heavy stigma in both the general population and the diplomatic world, numerous states were hesitant to sign the documents.<sup>115</sup> One solution would have been to edit the documents, but the convention was also repeated in the Charters of the International Courts and was recognized as a Customary international law, which meant that it was less likely to be altered because attempting to change it would have increased tension among the members who ratified the convention or would have made the definition of genocide too close to the definition of crimes against humanity.<sup>116</sup> The distinction between genocide and a crime against humanity is that genocide was an aggravated form of its cousin.

Whereas genocide involved the physical annihilation of the group, crimes against humanity covered a large range of acts, subsumed under such term as persecution. Genocide only covered groups defined by race, nationality, ethnicity or religion, whereas crimes against humanity extended to include political groups as well. But at the time they were devised in the mid-1940s, probably the most important difference was the fact that [crimes against] humanity, though broader in scope in

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113 Ibid, 228

114 Patricia M. Wald, “Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity,” *George Washington University Global Studies Law Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2007), 622

115 Ibid, 629

116 Ibid, 622

some respects, were also more limited, because they could only be carried out in time of armed conflict.<sup>117</sup>

The key words for genocide are intent and annihilation or destruction.

We have established that the twentieth century was the genocide century, but that was not only because of the Holocaust and the genocide convention. During this past century, approximately 187 million people died due to political violence, which is more death and killings than in any other century in the history of the earth:

... Approximately 1 million Armenians in Turkey between 1915 and 1916; nearly 6 million Jews and more than 200,000 Gypsies in Nazi-controlled Europe between 1939 and 1945; more than 100,000 Hutus in Burundi in 1972; more than 800,000 Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994; at least 50,000 Kurds in Iraq in 1988; and others.<sup>118</sup>

Despite the horror of just one of these events, we let genocide happen more than once, twice, or even three times. Genocide “passes across the television screens of those of us seemingly blessed with immunity from its catastrophic reality and consequences, continues to daze and bewilder.”<sup>119</sup> The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the colonization era had an important impact on the evolution of genocide. Genocidal acts proved to be common within the new states, which were engaged in community or state building. Most of the time, the states were in a transitional phase between their former

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117 Dinah L. Shelton, “Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity,” *George Washington Law Faculty Publications & Other Works*, (2005), xiv

118 Campbell, 151

119 Mark Levene, “Why Is the Twentieth Century the Century of Genocide?” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall, 2000), 305

occupation and their entry into the international system, which caused them to redefine and reformulate their sovereignty and autonomy.<sup>120</sup> The motives or mentalities in times of genocide were “closely linked with agendas aimed at accelerated or force-paced social and economic change in the interests of ‘catching up’ or alternatively avoiding, or circumventing, the rules of the system leaders.”<sup>121</sup> In the end, the states created labels or tags to fix to different groups that they perceived to be a threat to their agenda.<sup>122</sup> Sometimes, the groups that were targeted were not seen as the other, the enemy. In the case of Cambodia, the victims were part of the in-group. Staub calls that case an “autogenocide.” The Khmer Rouge committed mass killings against a huge number of other Khmer Rouge members “who were regarded as political enemies or incapable of contributing to the ideal of total social equality they envisioned. At the same time they engaged in genocide against ethnic minorities.”<sup>123</sup> These types of genocide are motivated by grievances. As Bradley Campbell stated, “Genocide is a form of collective violence characterized by an extreme degree of collective liability; accordingly, it arises in conflicts between members of highly polarized ethnic groups.”<sup>124</sup>

The words “Never Again” were expressed during the post-war period. The idea that those who committed atrocities would be prosecuted and punished was the driving force behind this new post-Holocaust energy. Yet, the legal system and international

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120 Ibid, 319

121 Ibid, 319

122 Ibid, 329

123 Ervin Staub and Daniel Bar-Tal, “Genocide and Mass Killing, Intractable Conflict,” In *Handbook of Political Psychology*. Ed. Sears, D. Huddy, L. and Jewis, R. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 368

124 Campbell, 160

community, which had the role of protecting innocents against genocide or simply preventing it all together, proved to be ineffective. The Cambodian Genocide happened. Later, the Rwandan Genocide took place, and so on. People could watch the Cambodian Genocide unfolding, yet did nothing. The Cambodian Genocide created a new term: “the killing fields,” and emphasized the lack of understanding people had of their international community and bystanders’ roles as well as the perpetrators’ and victims’ roles.

In terms of an international response, the Rwandan case was even more problematic because “an international military force was present and others available that might have stopped the genocide. Yet the atrocities continued without intervention until they had nearly run their course.”<sup>125</sup> Since the ratification of the genocide convention, the “Never Again,” has become “Again and Again.” The post-war initiatives to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity have failed.<sup>126</sup> The post-World War I attempts to protect minority groups were not as effective at restraining a state as people thought. One of the initiatives was the Minority Treaty, which was supposed to

Secure for certain elements incorporated in a State, the population of which differs from them in race, language, or religion, the possibility of living peaceably alongside that population and co-operating amicably with it, while at the same time preserving the characteristics which distinguish them from the majority, and satisfying the ensuing special needs<sup>127</sup>

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125 Shelton, xii

126 Schabas, 22

127 Ibid, 23-24

Unfortunately, the Holocaust proved that we needed something more powerful, more effective.

The Nuremberg Trial opened the door to a new way of thinking and applying international justice. It demonstrated that people could be held accountable for their actions; Justice was a reality. After the Nuremberg trials, it took few decades to see any other international justice system put in place. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) were the next milestones. Sadly, they faced important criticism due to “the costly and time-consuming process and its relative lack of impact on peace and reconciliation in the Balkans and Rwanda.”<sup>128</sup> The international community had set very high expectations and underestimated the impact the genocides had on their populations. Alternative ways of bringing justice needed to be explored.

The international community’s next two important steps were establishing The International Criminal court (ICC) and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Set up in 2002, the ICC is in charge of persecuting crimes that have taken place since the Rome Statutes (post 1998). It is a “complementary court designed to investigate and prosecute cases when states are unwilling or unable to do so themselves.”<sup>129</sup> Because of its complementary status, it has very limited power. The ICC can only consider cases under the following circumstances:

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128 Kerr, “Chapter 2: Ad Hoc International Criminal Tribunals: The ICTY and ICTR,” in *Peace and Justice*, ed. Rachel Kerr and Eirin Mobekk, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 30-31

129 Dawn L. Rother and Victoria E. Collins, “The International Criminal Court: A Pipe Dream to End Impunity?” *International Criminal Law Review*, Vol. 13 (2003), 192

1. The cases cannot be covered due to jurisdictional limitations,
2. The selectivity of cases that result from the complementarity of the Court as well as the discretion of cases [needed to be] selected by the prosecutor,<sup>130</sup>
3. If neither of the above conditions are met, The United Nations Security Council can recommend a case to the Court and authorize the Court's jurisdiction.<sup>131</sup>

The ICC's limited power to reinforce justice impacts its credibility among the general population as well as among states. Its inability to "to apprehend a suspect weakens the Court's credibility, legitimacy, and perceived certainty of capture and punishment."<sup>132</sup> In addition to that, the Court has been criticized as actually being a factor in the escalation of violence in certain regions. By applying political pressure and issuing warrants during negotiation, the ICC has "helped" create new circle of violence in already failing states.<sup>133</sup>

The International Commission of Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) first initiated the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in December 2001. It was supposed to represent a moral, legal, and ethical commitment the international community agreed to take on in order to prevent and protect civilians against four types of crimes: wars crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleaning, and genocide. After witnessing the atrocities committed in Rwanda, the UN understood the imperative need for an organization that

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130 Ibid, 198

131 Ibid, 192

132 Ibid, 198

133 Ibid, 200-201

would prevent such an atrocity from happening again.<sup>134</sup> In order to be effective, the R2P had to (1) evaluate the issues “from the point of view of those seeking or needing support, rather than those who may be considering intervention.”<sup>135</sup> This put the focus on the victims rather than the international community’s perceptions of its duties. It had to (2) acknowledge that its “primary responsibility in this regard rests with the state concerned, and that it is only if the state is unable or unwilling to fulfill this responsibility, or is itself the perpetrator, that it becomes the responsibility of the international community to act in its place.” It had (3) the responsibility, to protect, to prevent, to react, and to rebuild. It was the international community’s responsibility to help the victims to rebuild their community and heal from their trauma.<sup>136</sup> Since the majority of today’s crimes and violent conflicts are interstate, the UN has been struggling to protect civilians and maintain peace while acknowledging each state’s principle sovereignty. The task has been a challenging one.

## **What About Diaspora**

*Kundera (1980)*

*Remembering I shall never forget,*

*I am walking,*

*I am marching,*

*I am running,*

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134 Jakkie Cilliers, Sabelo Gumede, and Thembanani Mbadlanyana, “Africa and the ‘Responsibility to Protect: What Role for the ICC?’”, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, Vol. 20, (2009), pp. 55-6756

135 *Ibid*, 57

136 *Ibid*, 57

*I am flying,  
Toward my land, our homeland.  
Home is never too far away:  
Its distance is never too much.  
I shall,  
I must,  
One day, be home.<sup>137</sup>*

The term “diaspora” comes from the Greek word *diasporein*, which means “scattering of seeds.” It was initially used in reference to the Jewish communities that were living outside of Jerusalem, their Holy Land.<sup>138</sup> Robin Cohen suggested that based on its etymology, diaspora be used to describe the colonization of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean in the Archaic period (800-600 BC).<sup>139</sup> This idea opened the door to different possibilities. Cohen allowed scholars to expand the meaning and definition to people of “non-Jewish origin,”<sup>140</sup> and “their traumatic exile from a historical homeland and dispersal throughout many lands.”<sup>141</sup> It was only in the 1960s that the word “diaspora” became increasingly used to refer to every person living away from his or her

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137 Obioma Nnaemeka, “ Re-imagining the Diaspora: History, Responsibility, and Commitment in an Age of Globalization,” *Dialectical Anthropology*, Vol. 31, No. 1/3, In Memory of Six Eminent Igbo Scholars, Michael C. Mbabuike, Ikenna Nzimiro, Don Ohadike, Ezenwa Ohaeto, Victor C. Uchendu, and the Reverend Mother Mary Angela Uwalaka (2007), 131.

138 Arnold J. Band, “The New Diasporism and the Old Diaspora,” *Israel Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring, 1996), 325

139 Martin Baumann, “Diaspora: Genealogies of Semantics and Transcultural Comparison,” *Numen*, Vol. 47 (2000), 315

140 Ibid, 315-316

141 Steven Vertovec, “Three Meanings of ‘Diaspora,’ Exemplified Among South Asian Religions,” *A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol. 6 No. 3 (Winter 1997), 278.

ancestral homeland.<sup>142</sup> Once free from its Jewish community affiliation, its meaning broadened to be associated with “any processes of dispersion and to relate to countless so-called dislocated, de-territorialized communities.”<sup>143</sup>

The definition of diaspora has evolved over the last century. William Safran offers a “classic definition,” according to which diaspora “has been associated with the destruction of the home country of a community and/or its expulsion from it, an event accompanied by a collective trauma that remained embedded in the consciousness of the ethnic, racial, or religious community.”<sup>144</sup> Cohen has further elaborated on the term, giving it a more complex definition:

The idea of a diaspora . . . varies greatly. However, all diasporic communities settled outside their natal (or imagined natal) territories, acknowledge that ‘the old country’—a notion often buried deep in language, religion, custom and folklore—always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions. That claim may be strong or weak, or boldly or meekly articulated in a given circumstance of historical period, but a member’s adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link within their past migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background.<sup>145</sup>

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142 Baumann, 313

143 Ibid, 314

144 William Safran, “Comparing Diasporas: A Review Essay,” *A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter, 1999), 264

145 Philip Crang, Claire Dwyer, and Peter Jackson, “Transnationalism and the Spaces of Commodity Culture,” *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol. 27, No. 4, (2003), 445

In simple terms, diaspora is used to define people who were dispersed from their country of origin.<sup>146</sup> Some of the definitions of diaspora have created tensions because they are too broad and could encompass other immigrant groups. In order to rectify this misunderstanding, a few scholars came up with specific criteria or characteristics that a community or group needed to have in order to be called diaspora. Safran defined diaspora as an “expatriate minority community” that fit the following criteria:

- (1) They are dispersed from an original ‘center’ to at least two ‘peripheral’ places;
- (2) They maintain a ‘memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland’;
- (3) They ‘believe they are not—and per-haps cannot be—fully accepted by their host country’;
- (4) They see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right;
- (5) They are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; and
- (6) The group's consciousness and solidarity are ‘importantly defined’ by this continuing relationship with the homeland.<sup>147</sup>

Most scholars have agreed with Clifford and summarized diaspora’s identity and meaning into a few criteria, which are: dispersion—“forced or otherwise”—, “homeland orientation,” meaning that people in diaspora still associate to their homeland’s values, belief system, and identity, and “boundary-maintenance,” which means not being totally

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146 Kim D. Butler, “Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse,” *Diaspora*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2001), 198

147 James Clifford, “Diasporas,” *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Further Inflections: Toward Ethnographies of the Future (Aug., 1994), pp.304-305

integrated into their host-country's culture.<sup>148</sup> Kim Butler goes further and introduces a fourth feature. According to her, diaspora should have a "temporal-historical dimension" transmitted over at least two generations. Given that the term "diaspora" is applied in the context of groups who have been scattered for a long time or period, the next generations of diaspora will integrate their group's historical background, their homeland, and their own personal experience within the broader community.<sup>149</sup> This complex understanding of the diaspora community implies that diaspora is composed three factors relating to each other in the diasporic community's dynamic. The first level is the diaspora's global presence focused on a collective ethno-identification. The second level is their influence on their host country, and the last level is their attachment to a real or imaginary homeland.<sup>150</sup>

This notion of homeland is crucial to understanding the dynamic of diaspora's community. Robin Cohen emphasized the "ethno-national consciousness," which stresses the significance of a group's homeland, especially when the group does not have the option to choose between returning or "making a permanent home in diaspora."<sup>151</sup> In a lot of cases, the homeland takes on a mythical significance. The diaspora imagines what their home looked like and, due to the separation and tensions between them and their host group, their desire for another place takes over and creates an idealized image of

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148 Rogers Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (January 2005), 5-6

149 Butler, 192

150 Vertovec, 278

151 Butler, 192

their homeland.<sup>152</sup> Avtar Brah perfectly described diaspora's emotional attachment to their homeland. He said:

What is home? On the one hand, 'home' is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination. In this sense it is a place of return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of 'origin'. On the other hand, home is also a lived experience of a locality. Its sounds and smells, its heat and dust, balmy summer evenings, somber grey skies in the middle of the day...all this, as mediated by the historically specific of everyday social relations. In other words, the varying experiences of pains and pleasures, the terrors and contentments, or the highs and humdrum of everyday lived culture that marks how, for example, a cold winter night might be differently experienced sitting by a crackling fireside in a mansion compared with standing huddled around a makeshift fire on the streets of nineteenth century England.<sup>153</sup>

The homeland also influences the identity formation of the communities in diaspora. Since in most cases the first generation of diaspora was born in the homeland, the homeland creates emotional ties and holds a particular significance for the communities. Despite the distance, they seek connections and solidarity to their homeland, which provides a sense of empowerment. These connections are stronger among the first

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152 Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Africans in the Diaspora: The Diaspora and Africa," *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 395, Centenary Issue: A Hundred Years of Africa (Apr., 2000), pp.185-186

153 Roza Tsagarousianou, "Rethinking the Concept of Diaspora: Mobility, Connectivity and Communication in a Globalised World," *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2004) 57

generations. With time, many in diaspora come to identify with the host-countries or with the idea of their homeland portrayed by their parents, of it as an imaginary home.

Interestingly, only a few will express the desire to return; most will settle in the host-country and will feel disconnected to the real land their families left behind. Still, an emotional and magnetic field will always pull them in the direction of their homeland.

As previously mentioned, the diaspora community holds a particular identity due to their homeland separate from their home. Being considered as and feeling like an outsider in their host-country's society and culture might be the "most important feature of one's identity." This sense of difference is emphasized because diasporic communities have their own historical roots, culture, language, and values that are not necessarily compatible with the host country. They are seen as people from elsewhere, from a place that is completely different from where they currently are.<sup>154</sup> Because they tend to be the minority groups in their host-country, the diaspora's status is reinforced. Based on that, diaspora hold specific identities that "are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."<sup>155</sup> They are positioned within a geographic social identity that is composed on their own collectivism

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154 Iman Mersal, "Eliminating Diasporic Identities," *PMLA*, Vol. 123, No. 5, Special Topic: Comparative Racialization (Oct., 2008), 1586

155 Stuart Hall, Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford, (London: Lawrence & Wishert, 1990), 225

and shaped by the host culture, as well as multidimensional interactions and encounters within the local, regional, state, homeland, and globalized system.<sup>156</sup>

In the cases of diaspora, and identity becomes “a 'thing' to be possessed, owned, carried around and displayed, which divide[s] people, absolutely.”<sup>157</sup> Their identities are constantly produced, reproduced, shape, and reshaped by the dichotomy of dual homes, their homeland and host country, their identification and the identification placed on them by others. Therefore, their identity needs to be defined “not in terms of fixed, absolute essences but rather as creations of cultural discourses, history and the power. Cultural identity is not an essence but a ‘positioning.’”<sup>158</sup> This cultural identity based on a “travelling culture,” evolving and involved in the construction of their homeland’s culture but also in the reshaping of their host-country’s culture.

In addition to the host-country influences, diaspora communities have been shaped by globalization and new technologies, which has been very beneficial in fostering ties with their homelands.<sup>159</sup> This new era has allowed them to become transnational communities where “‘continuous circulation of people, money, goods and information’ through which ‘various settlements have become so closely woven together that, in an important sense, they have come to constitute a single community across a

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156 Robin Cohen, “Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944)*, Vol. 72, No. 3, Ethnicity and International Relations (Jul., 1996), 517

157 Sean Carter, “The Geopolitics of Diaspora,” *Area*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Mar., 2005), 55

158 Sunil Bhati, and Anjali Ram, “Theorizing Identity in Transnational and Diaspora Cultures” A Critical Approach to Acculturation,” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 33 (2003), 142

159 Michele Ries, “Theorizing Diaspora: Perspectives of ‘Classical’ and ‘Contemporary’ Diaspora,” *International Migration*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2204), 47-48

variety of sites.”<sup>160</sup> The new technologies have created bridges between relatives, community relations or networking opportunities, and economic and political activism.<sup>161</sup>

Due to several factors, diaspora has taken an important role in the political, economic, and legal components of the global sphere. First, diaspora communities have become economic assets and have created a power network that has the potential to be very influential in their homelands and host-countries. Second, diaspora has become an accepted phenomenon, which has reduced the hostility against them and increased their opportunities for success. Third, the new technological era has allowed them “to participate actively in their homelands' affairs and to maintain a virtual community across borders to a more significant degree than was possible at any earlier time.”<sup>162</sup> Fourth, due to the increased individual, minorities', and Human Rights campaigns, diaspora communities have voiced and fought for their rights to stay connected to their homeland. Finally, diaspora have become key players in either promoting peace or sustaining insurgency. “Their help may be critical to nation-building and state consolidation in the homelands, making the views of the diaspora regarding national conflict a weighty factor in the deliberations of home-land leaders.”<sup>163</sup>

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160 Crang, 440

161 Alison Blunt, “Cultural Geographies of Migration: Mobility, Transnationality and Diaspora,” *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol. 31, No. 5 (2007), 690

162 Anupam Chander, “Diaspora Bonds,” *New York University Law Review*, Vol. 76 (2001), 1011

163 Yossi Shain, and Aharon Barth, “Diasporas and International Relations Theory,” *International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Summer, 2003), 450.

## **Conflict-Generated Diaspora**

For the purpose of this research, I will spend some time talking about one sub-group of diaspora, the conflict-generated diaspora. Safran has also called them the “victim diasporas,” referring to mostly Armenian and African diaspora.<sup>164</sup> It was only in 1950s that the term “diaspora” started to be used in terms of African descent. “Pan-African” intellectuals promoting consciousness and solidarity “among Blacks across the globe” were the primary advocates for its use.<sup>165</sup>

Terrence Lyons has defined conflict-generated diaspora as “networks of those forced across borders by conflict or repression—[they] commonly have a specific set of traumatic memories and hence retain symbolic ties to the homeland.”<sup>166</sup> Due to their traumatic experiences, this sub-group of diaspora has the tendency to get involved in later civil wars going on in their homelands from their host countries, and “reinforce and exacerbate the protracted nature of conflicts.”<sup>167</sup> Based on their past and the circumstances of their departure, they transmit their chosen trauma to their children and future generations in order to preserve their grievances.<sup>168</sup> “One way to keep the past

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164 Safran, 256

165 Edmund T. Gordon, and Mark Anderson, “The African Diaspora: Toward an Ethnography of Diasporic Identification,” *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 112, No. 445, Theorizing the Hybrid (Summer 1999), 284

166 Terrence Lyons, “Conflict-Generated Diasporas and Transnational Politics in Ethiopia,” *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (2007), 530

167 Ibid, 530

168 Ibid, 532

relevant is to keep alive the hope of returning, once conditions allow, even if this aspiration is remote.”<sup>169</sup>

Because of their special position, they tend to be “a focal point of diaspora political action and debate.”<sup>170</sup> They develop networks to preserve their identities and sense of collectivism as well as to shape their homeland’s perceived legitimate political agenda.<sup>171</sup>

### **Coping with Traumatic Emotions and Events**

The concept of coping has been part of our general understanding of the healing process for a very long time, yet it was only formally rigorously developed in relation to stress and emotions in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>172</sup> Many scholars, such as Freud had already looked at ways of dealing with events such as the loss of loved ones, but it is Lazarus and Folkman who did the groundbreaking research that led to our modern conceptions of coping as a theory. Interestingly, in a world that had experienced genocide and mass killing, the concepts and research of coping was still very limited to the medical field. The field of social sciences had given limited attention to coping as a self-defense mechanism compared to the extensive attention given to understanding the circumstances that led to the stressful situations and the potential deterioration of the well being of the

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169 Ibid, 533

170 Ibid, 532

171 Ibid, 533-534

172 Richard S. Lazarus, “Coping Theory and Research: Past, Present, and Future,” *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 55, (1993), 234

people involved.<sup>173</sup> Still, today coping is predominantly view in terms of dealing of medical challenges such as illness or death. That is the reason Lazarus's theory on stress is the focus of this research. It explores coping as a concept lived daily and emphasizes the individual and environment coping mechanisms of situations that bring stress to individuals in all situations. This is important in the cases of second and/or third generation Hutus who had to deal with the aftermath of the genocide and the stigmas that came with it.

Therefore, our modern understanding of coping and the theory that derogated from it is the product of Richard S. Lazarus and Susan Folkman research on stress and its coping process. In their analysis, stress was viewed as a relational concept between a person and his or her surrounding environment. Contrary to the general assumptions, it was not defined as a "specific kind of external stimulation nor a specific pattern of physiological, behavioral, or subjective reactions."<sup>174</sup> The relationship between people and their environment was perceived as challenging and/or "exceeding a person's resources."<sup>175</sup>

Lazarus's theory identified "two processes, cognitive appraisal and coping, as critical mediators of stressful person-environment relationships and their immediate and

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173 Leonard I. Pearlin and Carmi Schooler, "The Structure of Coping," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Mar., 1978), 2

174 H. W. Krohne, "Stress and Coping Theories" retrieved from , [http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/schuez/folien/Krohne\\_Stress.pdf](http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/schuez/folien/Krohne_Stress.pdf)

175 Nikos Ntoumanis, Jemma Edmunds, and Joan L. Duda, "Understanding the Coping Process for Self-Determination Theory Perspective," *British Journal of Health Psychology*, " Vol. 14, (2009), 250

long-term outcomes.”<sup>176</sup> Cognitive appraisal was described as a process that occurs when people encounter stressful situations. In these scenarios, people were forced to evaluate the personal relevance and significance of a stressful situation, as well as the impacts of that situation on their personal goals and expectations.<sup>177</sup> Within this process, two kinds of appraisal were identified: primary and secondary. In the primary appraisal, “the person evaluates whether he or she has anything at stake in this encounter.”<sup>178</sup> Lazarus then identified different types of primary appraisal: “harm/loss; threat; challenges; and benign.” The first type of harm/loss was referring to damage whether it is a type of physical or emotional damage that had already occurred, such as losing a loved one or being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Threat was seen as a potential form of harm or loss. Challenges were opportunities for the person to grow, and benign referred to the stage where more decision-making needed to be done. Both harm/loss and threat were seen as negative emotional reactions, whereas challenges were more positive.<sup>179</sup> The different personality characteristics comprised within the primary appraisal were “commitments, goals, and beliefs about oneself and the world,” which were shaping the ways the person was seeing the relevant goals in that particular stressful situation.<sup>180</sup>

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176 Susan Folkman, Richard S. Lazarus, Rand J. Gruen, and Anita DeLongis, “Appraisal, Coping, Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (1986), 572

177 Nikos Ntoumanis, “Understanding the Coping Process”

178 Susan Folkman “Appraisal, Coping, Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms.” 572

179 Nikos Ntoumanis, “Understanding the Coping Process.”

180 Susan Folkman, Appraisal, Coping, Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms.” 572

The secondary appraisal in the Lazarus model was “consistent with arguments that emotions call attention to situations requiring changes in one’s action tendencies, and that negative emotions in particular signal situations requiring coping.”<sup>181</sup> His colleagues and himself insisted that emotions resulting from primary and secondary appraisals were automatically responsible for the person’s situational changes.<sup>182</sup> Therefore according to Lazarus, stress consists of a three part process; primary appraisal—the process to identify the potential threat—secondary appraisal—the decision making process to seek a response to the threat—and coping, which is the actual process of carrying on the response.<sup>183</sup>

Thus, Lazarus and Folkman defined coping as the “behavior that protects people from being psychologically harmed by problematic social experience, a behavior that importantly mediates the impact that societies have on their members.”<sup>184</sup> In other words, coping is what people do to avoid being harmed by stressful or painful situations. So, coping is essentially the development of potential outcomes of people’s struggle to move on with their life and live well. Consequently, it is understood that people strive to actively change their situations and when they cannot, they tend to use “cognitive modes

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181 Mary Frances Luce, “Choosing to Avoid: Coping with Negatively Emotion-Laden Consumer Decisions,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (March 1998), 410

182 Ibid, 410

183 Charles S. Carver, and Michael F. Scheier, “Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (1989), 267

184 Leonard I. Pearlin, “The Structure of Coping,” 2

of coping by which they may change the meaning of the situation.”<sup>185</sup> They rarely stay passive. The ways people will choose to cope with stressful situation, consciously or not, will determine their emotional responses. Because many of these stressful experiences are created by their society, understanding coping is a prerequisite to understand the way society impacts its citizens. Yet, our knowledge of the nature and development of the coping repertoire is limited, as well as our understanding of the “effectiveness of different ways of coping.”<sup>186</sup> What we know is that the people form protective instincts that can be manifested into three different ways; “by eliminating or modifying conditions giving rise to problems; by perceptually controlling the meaning of experience in a manner that neutralizes its problematic character; and by keeping the emotional consequences of problems within manageable bounds.”<sup>187</sup>

In addition to that, in his analysis and research, Lazarus pointed that coping is a process—“a person’s ongoing efforts in thought and action to manage specific demands appraised as taxing or overwhelming,” which means that it changes over time and according to the different stressful situations. Some coping styles are more stable than others.<sup>188</sup> Yet, there are no good or bad coping reactions, especially in the eyes of the

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185 Richard S. Lazarus, and Anita DeLongis, “Psychological Stress and Coping in Aging,” *American Psychologist*, (March 1983), 248

186 Leonard I. Pearlin, “The Structure of Coping,” 2

187 Ibid, 2

188 Richard S. Lazarus, “From Psychological Stress to the Emotions: A History of Changing Outlooks,” *Annual Reviews Psychology*, Vol. 44, (1993), 8

people that use the; some are better or worst depending on the emotional state of the person.<sup>189</sup>

Within the coping process, there are two different functions; problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. The ‘problem-focused’ coping alters the person-environment relationship. It aims to problem-solve or actively do something to change the source of the stressful situation. The reactions include “aggressive interpersonal efforts to alter the situation, as well as cool, rational, deliberate efforts to problem solve.”<sup>190</sup> This coping style usually pushes people to undertake actions such as “planning, taking direct action, seeking assistance, screening out other activities, and sometimes even forcing oneself to wait before acting.”<sup>191</sup> The second function, which is emotion-focused coping, aims to reduce or at least control the emotional reaction associated with the particular situation.<sup>192</sup> It “forms of coping include distancing, self-controlling, seeking social support, escape-avoidance, accepting responsibility, and positive reappraisal.” The responses to the emotion-focused style differ from person to person. Some used denial as a coping reaction while other uses positive reinterpretation or just seek social support systems. Denial has been a very controversial coping response. Often seen as a way to minimize the distress and facilitate the process, it has also been argued that denial does increase the problems because by denying the reality of the stressful events or even emotions, the

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189 Richard S. Lazarus, “Coping Theory and Research: Past, Present, and Future,” *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 55, (1993), 235

190 Susan Folkman, “Appraisal, Coping, Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms,” 572

191 Charles S. Carver, and Michael F. Scheier, “Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (1989), 268

192 *Ibid*, 267

events/emotions tend to become more serious, which would make the coping process even harder.<sup>193</sup> Unless the stressor can be completely ignored, denial is an alternative most people discourage. Therefore, both types of coping are often used, but in different ways. Problem-focused coping is used when people feel like something constructive can be done whereas emotion-focused coping is used when people feel like the stressor needs to be endured.<sup>194</sup>

In the light of these cognitive appraisals and coping functions, Lazarus “proposed the cognitive-motivational-relational theory (CMRT) of coping, which highlights the role of distinct positive and negative emotions in the stress appraisal process.”<sup>195</sup> According to him, this CMRT is a link between emotions and motivations, which emphasizes that those emotions are reactions to the “fate of active goal pursuit.”<sup>196</sup> So, when one person is seeking positive changes or goals, he or she will experience positive emotions, whereas a person with negative emotions will be trapped in a negative circle of coping responses. However since coping is a dynamic process influenced by intra-individual (emotions) and inter-individual (environment) variables, the coping mechanism used will change according to the person’s developments and understanding of his or her goals. This means that coping mechanism are not necessarily the same for everyone, in the same situation.<sup>197</sup>

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193 Ibid, 270

194 Ibid, 270

195 Nikos Ntoumanis, “ Understanding the Coping Process,” 249

196 Ibid, 250

197 Ibid, 251

Consequently, in order to measure the coping process in diverse situation, Lazarus and Folkman created *The Ways of Coping Questionnaire*, which “consists of 67 statements about thoughts.”<sup>198</sup> The questionnaire was focusing on looking at the thoughts and actions the participants had or did in particular stressful situations. The results of the interviews generated seven generalizations:

1. Coping is complex, and people use most of the basic strategies (factors) coping in every stressful encounter
2. Coping depends on appraisal of whether anything can be done to change the situation;
3. When the type of stressful encounter is held constant—e.g, work, health, or family related stress—women and men show very similar coping patterns, despite public prejudices to the contrary;
4. Some strategies of coping are more stable than others across diverse stressful encounters while others are linked to particular stressful contexts;
5. Coping strategies change from one stage of a complex stressful encounter to another. If we lump together the stages in a complex encounter we gain a false picture of the coping process;
6. Coping acts as a powerful mediator of emotional outcomes; positive outcomes are associated with some coping strategies, negative outcomes with others;

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198 Richard S. Lazarus, “From Psychological Stress to the Emotions: A History of Changing Outlooks,” pp. 8-9

7. The utility of any coping pattern varies with the type of stressful encounter, the type of personality stressed, and the outcome modality studied.<sup>199</sup>

These results allowed the future researchers or studies to have a basis of understanding of the coping process and more importantly, allowed people to broader idea of the coping styles, within the social sciences field, not only medical. In conclusion, Lazarus and Folkman research on stress and coping has influenced today understand of the different coping mechanisms used.

## **Conclusion**

The theoretical framework analyzed above is essential in the understanding of the case study this research is exploring. First, by defining and understanding the different components of an identity, the researcher sought to understand the fundamental conceptions behind the use of specific identities or group memberships. Since the participants involved in this study are in between two social structures (host-country and homeland), it was essential to comprehend their sense of belonging and affiliations to either society. Therefore, by starting with identity and what identify means, the study established a strong foundation that led to the next theory explored, which is narrative as a components of identity (narrative identity). The use of narrative and narrative identity in the analysis of identity formation allowed the research to create links between what people say about themselves and how they see themselves as individuals and members of

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199 Ibid, 9

a group or society. As Douglas Ezzy stated “narrative identity constructs sense of self-sameness, continuity and character in the plot of the story a person tells about him-or-herself. The story becomes that person’s actual history.”<sup>200</sup> So by creating a connection between identity and narrative, the researcher explored the idea of narrative as a mirror or as the voice of the identity. Narrative identity allowed linking what people say to how they see themselves, their ‘actual history.’ Most importantly, it allowed the research to follow the stories told and heard in the process of identity transformation of a society or group of people. Therefore, to grasp the identity formation of a particular group or individual allows us to “understand how individuals craft narratives from experiences, tell these stories internally and to others, and ultimately apply these stories to knowledge of self, other and the world in general.”<sup>201</sup>

With these theories in minds, the study explored the idea of genocide, and its legal and social implications. In order to understand and properly analyze the Hutu diaspora communities, it was essential to define these two important theories as well as genocide. In the case of identity, Hutu, as a social identity, shaped the 1994 genocide and more importantly transformed their understanding of themselves. Their narratives also changed based on the fact they are seen as the villains. Yet, what really shaped both their identity and narratives were the stigma lefts by the label of genocide. Consequently, it was important to discuss what the word genocide is, what the consequences of such act bring on a particular group of people, and the responses created in the aftermath of it.

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200 Ezzy, 239

201 Singer, 438

Then, after analyzing genocide, the study sought to comprehend the group of people that had been called diaspora and the reason behind that label and new identity. Because of the particular status the studied group has, the concept of diasporism, especially in the aftermath of a violent conflict such as genocide, retransformed their original identity and narratives. Their identities and narratives “are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically self-conscious, or culturally homogenous.”<sup>202</sup> Their sense of self is redefined by their new journey and intergroup’ interactions they experience abroad. Consequently, the theories used—identity and narrative—were reshaped after the introduction of genocide and diaspora. By deeply digging into the origin of this new identity, the different categories that comprise them, and the social and emotional impact of it, the research had a strong theoretical foundation that would allow the study to follow the participants throughout their self-identification.

Then, after exploring identity, narrative, genocide, and diaspora, the research concluded with the coping mechanisms. Assuming that the participants had to transform their identity and narrative, after the 1994 genocide, and became diaspora, it was essential to look at how they coped with the social changes caused by the experiences of their journey. Therefore, concluding with Lazarus theory of stress and coping set the stage to an interesting analysis of this selected group.

Consequently, by understanding the concept of genocide and the impact of being a diaspora community, researcher had a better idea of the implication of the Hutu identity within the diaspora community, that served as case study, as well as the impact narratives

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202 Lyons, 531

or stories have on the transformation of their identity in the last two decades. These concepts and theories do not follow a linear model; they are part of a very dynamic process. Coping could have come earlier in the theoretical framework or between each new concept explored. This researcher chose this order specifically for this case study, based on their background and history.

In the case of Hutus in diaspora, these different theories and concepts created very dynamic phenomenon. In the pre-1994 genocide, Hutus were the ruling ethnic group; their narratives and identity were the one promoted in Rwanda.<sup>203</sup> Then, the genocide happened and they were categorized within the villain archetype, which created new narratives and sense of selves.<sup>204</sup> Their identity was transformed based on the official narrative that was imposed onto them by those who then became the leaders. The ideas furthered them to create other narratives; where their own views and journeys were mirroring their tragedies.<sup>205</sup> Each generation was constructing its own stories based on the major narratives' labels, their memories, and the stigmas of their ethnic/group identity. Even people who were already aboard experienced the competing narratives, and by group memberships and affiliations, they connected to the Hutu 'struggle.'

Interestingly, due to their exposure to the host-country's influence and other narratives than the Rwandan government narrative, their perceptions and views of the

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203 Helen M. Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, (1999), pp.247-248

204 Ervin Staub, "Genocide and Mass Killing: Origins, prevention, Healing and Reconciliation" p.377

205 Helen M. Hintjens, "Post-genocide Identity Politics in Rwanda." *Sage*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2008), p. 8

genocide and its aftermath are quite different than the master narrative that is still promoted. As diaspora communities living away from home, their stories are not only focusing on the tragedies of 1994 but there are also based on the nostalgia of a time when their social identity and narratives were the dominant ones. Ergo, their newly formed narratives became stories of human and material lost as well as loss of a sense of self. In their host country, some narratives flourished while others disappeared. Over time, the competing narratives and memories of the genocide influenced and accentuated the differences within the group's social identity formation. Some people promoted a new group affiliation by emphasizing the host country national identity while others wanted to preserve their Rwandan links. More importantly, it influenced the different generations' understanding of what it meant to be Rwandan and Hutu.

In conclusion, the competing narratives within the same diaspora community helped create different understandings of what identity is and which identity each generation would take on. The definition of individual, social or ethnic identity in diaspora can have different, conflicting meanings when it is constructed through competing narratives of a community that is still seen as the 'villains.' In this case, the memories and narratives of the genocide shaped the identity formation of each generation, which led to problems in their definition of identity and sense of belonging to a particular community. Confronted with all this, each generation had to find coping meanings to deal with the past traumas and ongoing traumatic labels and situations. The stigma of genocide that has shaped their new identities and narratives has also influenced

the coping mechanisms each generation or person has decided to use to deal with the stressful connotations that has been theirs since 1994.

### CHAPTER THREE: THE HISTORY OF RWANDA AND CURRENT SITUATION

...Astounding as it may sound, to this day many Hutu will vehemently deny the reality of a genocide that killed an estimated 800,000 people (of whom approximately one fourth were Hutu from the south-central regions). Not that they would deny the existence of massacres; that they were systematically planned and executed is what they contest. The war, they say, was the principle cause of the massacres. Had the RPF not invaded the country, on October 1, 1990, the massacres would not have taken place. The onus of guilt, therefore, lies entirely with the RPF. Rene Lemarchand<sup>206</sup>

The history of Rwanda is dangerous. It has been interpreted in so many different ways. While scholars have debated its origin, Hutus and Tutsis have transformed it to create mythical narratives to defend their actions, belief systems, and values. The narrative presented below does not intend to increase the tensions already existing in regard to the political and controversial debate surrounding the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. Instead, it intends to explore the different narratives and counter-narratives using traumatic events to comprehend the current situation. It also aims to give a framework to analyze the Hutu communities this study is researching. Thus, the history presented is a foundation in the analysis and design of this study.

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206 Rene Lemarchand, "Genocide in the Great Lakes" Which Genocide? Whose Genocide?" *Yale Center for International and Area Studies Working Paper Series*, (1998), 6

In order to understand the competing narratives of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, current Tutsi government, and the diaspora communities of both Hutu and Tutsi populations, we need to explore the history of Rwanda, the genocide, and its aftermath. Despite that Rwanda is one of the few countries that has three ethnic groups that share the same language, culture, and values, its story is very complex. This analysis divides the history of Rwanda into six time periods: the pre-colonial and colonial period, the post-colonial period from the 1962 independence to 1990, the civil war, Burundi's influence between the 1970s and 1990s, the 1994 genocide, the post-genocide period, and finally the current time.

But first let's explore one important concept: tribe or ethnicity. For us to understand the Rwandan situation, the word "tribe" must be defined. The society, international understanding, uses the words "tribe" or "ethnicity" to define a group that shares the same background, cultural values, and ideologies. Gérard Prunier called Hutus and Tutsis "micro-nations." He uses the term "nation" because even though both groups shared the same language, territory, and values, they were separated by the colonists and classified as different. Having two nations within the same territory inevitably creates conflicts because each nation will tend to protect its citizens' interests. Nobody can say with certainty that the Rwandan Genocide was foreseeable, but genocide came to be an approach used to solve decades of old political, social, and identity-based injustices.<sup>207</sup>

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207 Gerard Prunier, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 5

## Pre-Colonial and Colonial Period

Understanding of the pre-colonial Rwanda is still very obscure. Scholars and historians do not agree on the origin and formation of Rwanda or even the origin of the three different ethnicities, Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. The majority of experts believe that Rwanda was governed by a monarch, more precisely, a Tutsi king. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Tutsis fleeing famine and drought in the North came to Rwanda and installed a cattle system. The Hutu, who had previously come to Rwanda from Central Africa, were farmers and worked the land. The inhabitants of Rwanda were the marginalized Twa—less than one percent—who were hunters. In the subsequent centuries, all the groups cohabitated together, to the point that they came to share the same language, culture, and belief system.<sup>208</sup>

In the nineteenth century, however, several issues arose. First, both Hutus and Tutsis contested the nature of or distinction between the three tribes (Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa). Hutus advanced the hypothesis that the groups were separate ethnicities, while Tutsis claimed that there were social-economic classes. The second hypothesis—the social-economic claim—which was promoted by the Tutsi, stated that “the categories of Hutu and Tutsi were largely occupationally defined: whoever acquired a sizable herd of cattle was called Tutsi and was highly considered.”<sup>209</sup> Hutus believed that Tutsis had invaded Rwanda and, “due to their sophisticated organization, managed to install a

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208 Peter Uvin, “Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide in Rwanda.” *African Studies Review*, Vol. 40, No. 2. (Sep., 1997), 92

209 Ibid, 92

system of centuries of oppression and exploitation.”<sup>210</sup> To support their narrative, Hutus cited proof of small Hutu kingdoms in the North-West, which had a certain amount of power. These kingdoms fought the expansion of the Tutsi kingdom, which occupied the rest of the country. It was only at the beginning of the colonial period that the Hutu kingdom was defeated by the Tutsi kingdom, which had the support of the German military.<sup>211</sup>

At the same time, with Bazungu (German) help, the control by the central Tutsi aristocracy over the territory of Rwanda greatly increased. Some small Hutu kingdoms in the Northwest were annexed and their land tenure systems brought under monarchic control, while the other peripheral regions of the country were brought more forcefully under centralized command.<sup>212</sup>

The Tutsi king convinced the Germans to believe that he had “God-given superiority,” and that he needed German support to reestablish the order and longstanding peace and harmony.. Accepting the king’s rule, the Bazungu helped him to expand his dominance and power to the North-West part of Rwanda.<sup>213</sup> Under German power, the power of the Tutsi increased. Privileged over the Hutu and Twa, the Tutsi were seen as more “intelligent, reliable, hardworking—in short, more like themselves [Bazungu].”<sup>214</sup> They were taught their language—French [language used by the elite—converted to their

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210 Ibid, 92

211 Ibid, 92

212 Ibid, 95

213 Ibid, 104

214 Ibid, 95

religion—Catholicism—and participated in German economic development.<sup>215</sup> Over the next several decades, Tutsi were treated and seen as the natural rulers, while the Hutu were excluded from any position of power.

The Belgians came next, inheriting the country after the First World War and German defeat. Their governance was more aggressive and racially prejudiced than the German regime. They introduced tests that were designed to scientifically separate the Hutu and Tutsi, as well as implemented identity cards bearing tribal membership.<sup>216</sup> The aggressive Belgian policies were greatly impacted Rwandan society. Instead of allowing for combined governance like the German had, the Belgians emphasized the division between the tribes by having the Tutsi govern Rwanda for them. Like the Germans before them, the Belgian explorers and missionaries believed that they had found a “superior” race in the Rwandan Tutsi. They wrote that Tutsis had migrated and dominated the lowly Hutu. For many scholars, “the origins of ethnic conflict and racism in Rwanda lie in this ideology cum practice of the Belgian colonizer.”<sup>217</sup> Because of the treatment they had received, the Hutu people developed animosity. The second colonization period saw the construction of deep cleavages that would shape each group’s perceptions of the other and also of itself. The Hutu community felt primarily hatred and grievances as they turned against Tutsi. These perceptions of each other and the socially constructed identities that grew up around them had been shaped by Germans and Belgians and created the seed for later conflicts.

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215 Ibid, 95

216 Helen M. Hintjens, “Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, (1999), 253

217 Peter Uvin, “Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide in Rwanda.” 85.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1962, Rwanda officially became an independent country. Following independence, Tutsis fled in neighboring countries, afraid of retaliation from those who were once seen as their inferior.<sup>218</sup>

### **From the 1962 Independence to the 1990s Civil War**

In 1959, Hutus orchestrated a coup, which was the first trigger toward independence. At the end of 1950 and the beginning of 1960, the politics and narratives of the Belgian government shifted. Most experts believe that the Flemish started to sympathize with those they had colonized because of the way the Francophone had treated them in the past. Flemish were treated as second class citizens in Belgium for decades, which allowed them to easily connect to the Hutu's struggles. Belgium was losing its power, while simultaneously a small group of educated Hutus was planning to overthrow the oligarchy the Tutsi had installed. It happened in the so-called "Social Revolution."<sup>219</sup> The narrative of Social Revolution was that

Rwanda belongs to the Hutu, its original inhabitants, who had been brutally subjugated for centuries by the foreign masters, the Tutsi; in 1959, the Hutu had wrestled power away from their former masters and installed a true democracy, representing the vast majority of the people.<sup>220</sup>

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218 Prunier, 1-90

219 Peter Uvin, "Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide in Rwanda," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 40, No. 2. (Sep., 1997), 96

220 Ibid, 98

This revolution was based on another discriminatory ideology that was, this time, against Tutsis. The new Hutu elite reproduced the same structural violence that they had experienced during colonization, such as limiting the power, social-economic development, and mobility to Hutu.<sup>221</sup> “It has been widely observed that the 1959-1963 violence against Tutsi was especially widespread in the North.”<sup>222</sup> This rebellious act led to about 50,000 Tutsi being killed. In the decade that followed, more mass killings, violence, and discrimination against Tutsi were committed.<sup>223</sup>

Independence brought a different regime to Rwanda. It went from being a monarchy to a republic. The first Republic, governed by Kayibanda (1962-1973), was followed by the second Republic, led by General Habyarimana (1973-1994), who was minister of Defense in the previous Republic.<sup>224</sup> Both Republics were military dictatorships. Kayibanda’s regime sought to imprison or eliminate the former Tutsi government as well as any Hutu or Tutsi politicians that were opposed to the new regime. Habyarimana’s regime was as authoritarian as his predecessor’s. He killed many of the former Hutu government officials when he took the power, and, for more than a decade, he kept tight control over anyone who could threaten his power.

Beginning in the late 1980s, several factors increased the social, political, economic, and ethnic tensions that were essential to establishing the setting of the

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221 Ibid, 100

222 Ibid, 94

223 Ervin Staub, Laurie Anne Pearlman, Alexandra Gubin, and Athanase Hagenimana, “Healing, Reconciliation, Forgiving and the Prevention of Violence After Genocide and Mass Killing: An Intervention and its Experimental Evaluation in Rwanda,” *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 3, (2005),

224 Uvin, Prejudice, 97-87

genocide. The first factor was economic hardship. Rwanda's economy was based primarily on its agricultural markets, which decreased exponentially in the second half of the 1980s. Starting in 1985, the food production levels dropped and the prices of coffee collapsed, which affected the import-export market and job opportunities.

After 1990, food production fell even more in the areas affected by the civil war, and hundreds of thousands of people lost their livelihoods. From 1985 onwards, millions of Rwandans saw their misery increase dramatically, while their prospects for the future disintegrated.<sup>225</sup>

This economic crisis, influenced by the drop in coffee prices, brought a period of political unrest in which the government had to seek a solution to satisfy the already tense population.

More issues contributed to the country's complex situation in the 1980s. Pressure from within and outside the country forced President Habyarimana to open a channel of negotiation, to diversify his regime, and to "move beyond the single party system, and to include members of other parties in the government."<sup>226</sup> The end of the Cold War did not only affect the West; it indirectly reminded the world that democracy was essential, which led the "international community" to put pressure on the Rwandan government to adapt its regime and negotiate with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). As a response to the imposition of political democratization, President Habyarimana's rallied "the majority

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225 Ibid, 108

226 David Newbury, "Understanding Genocide," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 41, No. 1, (Apr., 1998), 89

‘faithful’ against a purported common racial enemy, hoping in this way to prevent regional and class divisions from finding more open political expression.”<sup>227</sup>

The attempted democratization brought other conflicts to light. The dismantling of the single-party state that was Rwanda helped the long-standing territorial divisions to resurface. The tensions were not only between Hutus and Tutsis, but also between the long-ruling Hutu from the North and the Hutu from the South. “Southerners generally resented the dominance of a small group of Bahutu northerners in control of the top echelons of the army and administration, whilst northern Bahutu considered themselves purer ethnically, and historically less subservient to the Batutsi than the predominantly ‘mixed’ southerners.”<sup>228</sup> It was in this chaotic context that the Akazu (small house) surfaced. Akazu was a political and military organization created in early 1990s, composed of senior military official and powerful representatives and led by Agathe, the President Habyarimana’s wife. Its members claimed to be the legitimate and historical rulers of Rwanda since the time of the Hutu kingdoms.<sup>229</sup> Through Agathe, they had a tight connection to the government, and influenced the Arusha Accords peace agreement that would take place in 1993.

Along with the economic crisis and the political pressure, 1980s Rwanda was strongly influenced by the RPF invasion from the Northern borders. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was a rebel group composed of the children of the 1959-1963 Tutsi refugees, who had fled Rwanda during the transitional period that led to the

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227 Helen M. Hintjens, “Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, (1999), 242

228 Ibid, 259

229 Ibid, 259

independence. The RPF was a well-trained rebel group that “had learned to make war in the forces of the National Resistance Army, where they had helped Yoweri Museveni win control of the Ugandan state.”<sup>230</sup> Paul Kagame led the RPF; before doing so he acted as “head of military intelligence for the NRA,” and then took control of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), the military force of the RPF.<sup>231</sup> The RPA was composed of seven thousand soldiers. Most were Rwandan refugees who had left the Ugandan army and brought along their equipment.<sup>232</sup> In 1988, at a meeting in Washington, D.C., the RPF expressed its desire to return to Rwanda “by force if necessary.” Forced to negotiate an agreement, the Rwandan government, which was still stating that the country was overpopulated and that there was no place for the refugees, create a commission with the purpose of dealing with the refugee question. That commission met with the Ugandan authorities and seemed to make progress “in clearing the way for the refugees to return.”<sup>233</sup> Yet it was not enough. The RPF decided that it was time to go back home, with the goal of not just allowing refugees to return but overthrowing Habyarimana and establishing a democracy.<sup>234</sup>

They had come “by force into Rwanda at least in part because the government had not allowed Tutsi refugees to return.”<sup>235</sup> Their entry into Rwanda from the Ugandan’s

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230 Des Forges, Alison. *Leave None to Tell the Story*, p. 501, citing Human Rights Watch/FIDH interview, Brussels, December 12, 1995. Retrieved from [http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/Geno15-8-03.htm#P810\\_253140](http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/Geno15-8-03.htm#P810_253140)

231 Ibid

232 Ibid

233 Ibid

234 Ibid

235 Ervin Staub, Laurie Anne Pearlman, Alexandra Gubin, and Athanase Hagemimana, “Healing, Reconciliation, Forgiving and the Prevention of Violence After

border signaled the beginning of the 1990 civil war. Although the Hutu government was able to push back their first attack, the RPF maintained control of a small area in the Northeast, which made them a permanent threat to the government.<sup>236</sup> The regime was under attack from both the North and the South, and the ethnic card became a perfect tactic to suppress rebellion. Uniting the majority 85 percent Hutu behind one goal allowed the government to fight back against the RPF's attacks, increase the stigma against Tutsis, eliminate any opponent, and most importantly, "render elections impossible."<sup>237</sup>

In the next three years, thousands of Tutsis were killed by local governments. The government developed a "Hutu Power" ideology to increase the fear and dehumanization of Tutsis, which quickly grew strong.<sup>238</sup> Close to a million Rwandans, both Hutu and Tutsi became internally displaced people (IDPs) who had to resettle in camps near Kigali and depend on the government to meet their basic human needs. These "camps were to prove prime recruiting grounds for those who organized militias—just as refugee camps in Uganda had proved a fertile recruiting ground earlier for the RPF."<sup>239</sup> The political instability helped sow the seeds of extremism and radicalism among powerful elites. It was from within this group that the extremists raised, planned, and implemented the acts of the 1994 genocide.<sup>240</sup> These elite extremists' first tactic was eliminating any political

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Genocide and Mass Killing: An Intervention and its Experimental Evaluation in Rwanda," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 3, (2005), 299

236 Uvin, Prejudice, 108

237 Ibid, 109

238 Staub et all, 299

239 Newbury, 78

240 Ibid, 80

opponent that could possibly emerge. Their second tactic was targeting the Tutsi community as a whole in order to encourage the narrative of enemies and war. Additionally, the end of the Cold War had opened the door to the arms markets. This allowed small countries like Rwanda to go beyond their military needs and purchase weapons to arm the young militia, recruited from the camps, so they could kill for them.<sup>241</sup>

In 1993, caught in the midst of this instability and under pressure from the international community, President Habyarimana traveled to Tanzania to negotiate a peace agreement, called the Arusha Accords. Their aims were to democratize Rwanda. These negotiations came at a high cost because they required freezing the country's assets.<sup>242</sup> Unfortunately, opposition against the Accords developed, first from the Akazu, and grew. People, Hutus as well as Tutsis, in support of these agreements were seen as enemies of the state.<sup>243</sup> It was in this extremely conflicted environment that the genocide was organized.

### **Burundi: Rwandan's Reflection**

The story of Burundi is like a reverse mirror of the story of Rwanda. While Rwanda was governed by Hutus, Burundi was ruled by Tutsis, who privileged their own ethnicity.<sup>244</sup> These discriminatory regimes justified their actions by citing the treatment of

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241 Ibid, 90

242 Hintjens, Explaining, 258

243 Ibid, 258

244 Ibid, 276

their ethnic group, Tutsis, in other countries. Educated Hutu were usually persecuted, killed, or stripped of their rights to participate in the evolution of their country. Sadly, in both Rwanda and Burundi, massive violence has been perpetrated against both Hutus and Tutsis.

The Burundian civil wars impacted Rwanda. Each war helped escalate the levels of fear and sense of otherness needed to justify any atrocity. The events leading up to the 1994 genocide were the key stressors that shaped the way people acted. Mahmood Mamdani, an African scholar, claimed that there were several turning points that shifted the focus of the target from the battlefield to unarmed civilians: the 1972 and 1988 mass killings of Hutu civilians, and the instabilities in early 1990s

Scholars believe that, as in Rwanda and Tanzania, the Tutsi installed a cattle system in Burundi when they fled famine and drought in Northern Africa. They found Hutu and Twa who were already working the land in the territory that was Burundi. The socio-political classes, however, were not as distinct as in Rwanda. Tutsis were on top, Hutus were in the middle, and Twa were at the bottom of the social classes. Yet, a “fair number of people from the lower groups [were] involved in the exercise of various political functions, and many local notables were Hutu.”<sup>245</sup> The Burundi monarchy survived colonialism with its bi-ethnic political party intact. It in only when Prince Louis Rwagasore, who had been elected both during the colonial period and after independence, was killed, that competition between two Tutsi parties and a small group of Hutu elites developed. But, “after a coup d’état by Micombero (1966), the Tutsi-Hima, the group

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245 Peter Uvin, “Ethnicity and Power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different Paths to Mass Violence,” *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Apr., 1999), 255

that controlled most of the army, monopolized power. To do so, they excluded from political competition most other Tutsi and Hutu.”<sup>246</sup>

The events that took place in 1972 had an important impact on the future of Burundi as well as Rwanda. It was not the first military oppression Burundi had experienced. Back in 1965, the entirely Tutsi-controlled army squelched Hutu-instigated rebellion. In 1972, after two months of rebellion in the Southern part of Burundi, the army intervened and “100,000 to 150,000 Hutu, almost all educated Hutu in the country (teachers, nurses, administrators), were killed, and 150,000 more fled. This rampage created sufficient fear to suppress Hutu unrest for two decades.”<sup>247</sup> It also crystallized the different ethnic identities and created a permanent climate of fear.<sup>248</sup> Some scholars have called this little-known event a genocide. Stephan Weissman even called it “the first clear genocide since the Holocaust.”<sup>249</sup> Rene Lemarchand stated, “what many Tutsi have forgotten, or refuse to acknowledge, is that they, and not the Hutu, were the first to use genocide in order to consolidate their hold on the state.”<sup>250</sup> Under the Tutsi regime, Burundi experienced mass killings and witnessed the first genocidal action in the Great Lakes region. Hundreds of thousands of Hutu were killed in 1972.<sup>251</sup> Lemarchand and other scholars have referred to the mass killing that occurred in Burundi as an “ignored

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246 Ibid, 256

247 Ibid, 258

248 Ibid, 258

249 Lemarchand, Rene. “Genocide in the Great Lakes: Which Genocide” Whose Genocide.” *African Studies Review*, Vol.41, No.1, (Apr. 1998), 3

250 Ibid, 5

251 Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 195-234.

genocide” against Hutus. Since its independence, Tutsis had governed Burundi. When the Hutu population stood up to ask for equality, the regime targeted them. This “silent” genocide is regarded as one of the first catalysts, post-colonization, of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict. Hutus saw the 1972 Burundian civil war as foreshadowing of what they could expect to happen in Rwanda.

In Burundi, in 1988, based on rumors of corruption in the local Tutsi government in the Northern region, Hutu farmers killed around 3,000 Tutsi, which led to a military intervention aiming to restore order. The event resulted in a massive refugee’s exodus and took over 20,000 Tutsi lives.<sup>252</sup> This pattern continued over the years, in 1991, 1992, and 1993.

In June 1993, Melchior Ndadaye became the first elected Hutu president in Burundi. On October 21, 1993, four months after taking office, he was assassinated along with other dignitaries. This event was an important catalyst for subsequent civil unrest that would occur throughout the Great Lake region, including in Burundi and Rwanda. Following the assassination, unrest broke out and thousands of Tutsi were killed in the North and center part of the country. In order to reinstall order, the army intervened in the same way they had done it in 1972. Between 50,000 and 100,000 Hutus were murdered in a three-month period, over one million fled, and hundreds of thousands became IDPs.<sup>253</sup> What followed was total chaos.

The majority of Hutu live in constant fear of random reprisals by the army and the militia. Various Tutsi militia terrorize the Hutu population and kill with impunity.

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252 Uvin, *Ethnicity*, 259

253 *Ibid*, 262

Hate propaganda flourishes. Journals incite violence, publishing lists of Hutu administrators to be killed. The Hutu inhabitants of Bujumbura, the capital, have largely been chased out of the city due to a policy reminiscent of the ‘ethnic cleansing’ in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>254</sup>

The assassination of Melchior Ndadaye, the first Hutu president of Burundi, brought back memories of the 1972 Burundian “genocide” against Hutus. In this way, Ndadaye’s assassination became the first trigger leading to the Rwandan Genocide. It destabilized even more the region, unbalanced Burundi, and brought another ethnic war. This Burundian ethnic conflict increased the feelings of insecurity among the Rwandan government and its citizens. These events showed that an “ethnic reconciliation” between Tutsis and Hutus might not be probable. Hutus shouted statements such as, “back in 1972 they got us, but this time they won’t. Since 1972, it is our blood that’s being spilled! Now we heard the President Ndadaye has been killed. If they did that, that means we are next.”<sup>255</sup> For years, Burundi had been an example of what life would be like for Hutus if they remained under Tutsi governance, and the assassination and its aftermath set the scene for what would happen in Rwanda a few months later. Additionally, the 400,000 people who fled to Rwanda from Burundi further encouraged the anti-Tutsi narrative that was already growing strong in Rwanda.<sup>256</sup>

As we can see, the Burundian and Rwandan civil wars are contrasting examples of how warfare and genocide were perpetrated by extremist factions of both Tutsis and

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254 Ibid, 262

255 Lemarchand, *Genocide in the Great Lakes*, 10

256 Hintjens, *Explaining*, 278

Hutus. The Burundian genocide and civil wars help us understand the events that led to the Rwandan genocide a few years later. Hutus' fear was not only perceived but also real, and what they witnessed in their neighboring country increased the stereotypes of the Tutsi that were already in place. The accumulation of negative, evil images, starting during the colonial period and continuing through the Burundian civil wars, increased the strength of Hutu collective identity, which helped dehumanize the Tutsi, the "other" during the genocide.<sup>257</sup> "The establishment of Hutu governments by the majority votes in Burundi and Rwanda in the early 1990s was met by the Tutsi dominated military's violent tactics to undermine the stability of the newly established governments."<sup>258</sup> A hyper-nationalistic attitude, created by fears and hatred, took over, and helped "spark the most brutal form of violence."<sup>259</sup> Described as a destructive conflict, the 1990-1993 civil war escalated the spiral of conflict and increased violent and psychologically destructive behaviors. Caught in an intractable conflict, Hutus were driven by helplessness.<sup>260</sup> Their desperate measures were predictable; they were trapped in what looked like an endless circle of violence. Their extreme reactions were shaped by historical events.

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257 Ho-Wan Jeong. *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*. (Boulder, Colo.: L. Rienner, 2005), 13

258 Jeong, *Conflict Management and Resolution: An Introduction*. (London: Routledge, 2010), 8

259 Ibid, 59

260 Jeong, *Understand Conflict*, 13

## **The 1994 Rwandan Genocide**

On April 6, 1994, at approximately 8:20 p.m., the plane carrying Rwandan President, Juvenal Habyarimana, Burundi President, Cyprien Ntaryamira, and President Habyarimana's entourage was shot down over Kigali, Rwanda.<sup>261</sup> Following the shooting, the civil war, which began in 1990 and which the Arusha Accords of 1993 had supposedly ended, rapidly escalated. Genocidal, mass killings took the lives of more than a million Rwandans between April 6th and the beginning of July, 1994. Amnesty International reported that most of the killing occurred within the first couple of weeks of the massacre. The assassination was the last trigger needed to create an out-of-control circle of violence. Almost immediately after the crash, "road blocks were set up in the capital. Within hours, a systematic manhunt was underway for 'enemies' of the regime, almost all prominent Hutu politicians, including one of the first women Prime Ministers of Africa, Agathe Uwilingiyimana."<sup>262</sup> At the same time, killings were reported in the Northeast, where the RPF had previously invaded. The Eastern part of the country was also immediately affected.

The destruction was extensive, both because of the intensity of the militias and because it was quickly the target of the RPF response: credible reports suggest that killings of civilians occurred on a large scale on both sides, that of both the

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261 Scott Strauss, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, Press, 2006) 41.

262 Newbury, 80

internal militias and the RPF army, responding to the genocide and practicing vengeance over the next several months.<sup>263</sup>

The third phase of extermination, after the killing of politicians and the massacres perpetrated in the North and East, occurred in Butare. Situated in South-Central Rwanda, Butare was the country's second largest and most cosmopolitan city. It was seen as a safe haven, an example of mutual cooperation that could hopefully happen elsewhere. The Butare massacres reached new levels of cruelty. Following April 19, "the killings . . . reached new levels of scale and horror, as attacks were directed especially ferociously against those areas which symbolized ethnic sharing—schools, hospitals, churches, and missions were all targeted."<sup>264</sup> Between 5 and 10 percent of the total population was killed in the next month.<sup>265</sup> These atrocities led millions to flee the country. Some who fled were responsible for genocidal crimes, but many were simply trying to escape or "feared the incoming government of the RPF."<sup>266</sup>

The genocide occurred after a civil war, when the country was at its weakest point. A sense of solidarity and mourning mobilized Hutus behind common goals, such as having vengeance and stopping the Tutsi from taking Rwanda, for fear of Rwanda becoming a second Burundi. Seen as an action-reaction situation, the extremist Hutus felt that they had to react against another Hutu president being killed. It was the region's third presidential killing in less than a year.<sup>267</sup>

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263 Ibid, 81

264 Ibid, 81

265 Hintjens, *Explaining*, 241

266 Newbury, 82

267 Jeong, *Understand Conflict*, 92

The West's slow, almost nonexistent, response to the situation allowed for the atrocities to continue. Despite the fact that the violence was broadcast live on Western television, and focused almost exclusively on the Tutsi victims, the international community did nothing to stop the horrors. The UN peace-keeping mission UNAMIR, already present in Rwanda, informed the UN about the abominable crimes being committed, but it still took weeks for the UN to recognize and name the violence for what it was—genocide.<sup>268</sup> France, an ally of the Rwandan government, opposed some of the intervention tactics that the international community explored. Additionally, the idea of violating a country's sovereignty created a dilemma during the development of interventional actions. Sadly, "the Rwandan extremists were well protected: the field was clear."<sup>269</sup> Even the UNAMIR, the peacekeeping mission that was supposed to oversee and implement the Arusha Accords couldn't stop what was happening. Several factors limited the UNAMIR interventions and their role in stopping the violence:

1. The Secretariat, namely Boutros Boutros-Ghali's office and DPKO, gave the impression of distance and aloofness regarding the emerging tragedy, which only reinforced many of the Security Council's member states' disinclination to propose a greater role for UNAMIR.<sup>270</sup> Boutros-Ghali had travelled to Europe in early April, and the depravity happening back in Africa did not encourage him to shorten his trip. He opted to stay there.

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268 Phillip Reyntjens, "Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship," *African Affairs*, no.103 (2004): 177.

269 Newbury, 79

270 Michael N. Barnett, "The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda," *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 12. No. 4, (1997), 558

2. No country was willing to contribute its troops to an expanded operation or mandate.<sup>271</sup> This contributed to the UN's eventual decision to reduce UNAMIR's role.
3. With UNAMIR's mandate to oversee the Arusha Accords effectively over, with no country willing to send its troops into an increasingly chaotic environment, and with access to the airport increasingly precarious, the Security Council had to protect its peacekeepers and the UN's reputation. This was the line most forcefully argued by the United States; it and others consistently argued that the Security Council had a duty and obligation to protect the lives of the peacekeepers and that failure to do so would make it harder to obtain troops for future operations and, perhaps, further the decline of the UN's reputation.<sup>272</sup>

It was only in June, two months into the genocide, that the first UN intervention, led by France, took place. UNAMIR returned to Rwanda in the fall, long after the RPF had gained control of the country.<sup>273</sup>

While thousands were being killed between April and June of 1994, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) was advancing in Rwanda. Its goal was to acquire political power. From October 1990 to July 1994, Rwanda was caught within civil war and then genocide. The RPF was fighting against President Habyarimana's government, and won the war in July 1994 at the end of the genocide. According to Gerard Prunier, after the genocide, the RPF began to target real or perceived Hutus militants. Civilians

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271 Ibid, 559

272 Ibid, 560

273 Ibid, 561

were also targeted, as well as those opposed to their new government. The RPF committed widespread war crimes and crimes against humanity, mostly against Hutus. After its military victory in July 1994, the RPF inherited a devastated and traumatized country. In human terms, the consequence of the genocide was indescribable: about 1.1 million dead, 1.2 million refugees forced abroad, over 1 million internally displaced, tens of thousands of deeply traumatized genocide survivors, and over half a million “old caseload” (i.e., Tutsi) refugees returning to a chaotic country.<sup>274</sup>

On October 20, 1994, an Amnesty International report denounced the RPF’s killings and abductions. Some of the RPF’s crimes were committed earlier than April 6, 1994, under the former government. Those crimes were mostly arbitrary killings of Hutus while the RPF was taking control of new areas. The crimes committed during the genocide, however, were motivated by revenge. According to the report, the RPF conducted hundreds of deliberate executions and other crimes against unarmed civilians supporting the former, Hutu, government. But the RPF was not the only one committing mass killings; their supporters, including civilians, were allowed to kill any opponents. In addition, many Hutu prisoners suffered cruel and unusual treatment.<sup>275</sup> Unfortunately, most on these violations were unreported by Western media. In the middle of restoring peace and seeking justice, the newly formed Tutsi government was limiting the information sent to the rest of the world. This could be seen as a way of retaking control of Rwanda’s chaotic situation, but it was also a way to hide violations committed by new

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274 Prunier, 1-7.

275 Amnesty International. *Rwanda: Report of Killings and Abductions by the Rwandese Patriotic Army*, 1-3.

political powers. According to Africa Watch, the RPF was responsible for the killing of 100,000 Hutus between April and September 1994.<sup>276</sup> The RPF closely monitored the communication channels accessible to foreigners. No foreign representatives were allowed to talk to Rwandese citizens without an RPF official representative present. To ensure its safety, the group Human Rights Watch stated that there was no evidence of criminal actions committed by the RPF—a fact which demonstrates that communication was controlled by the RPF.<sup>277</sup> According to various testimonies, President “Kagame does not like NGOs, so he paralyzed them completely and terrorized them. If he did not like what they did with information, he kicked them out.”<sup>278</sup> But a report from Amnesty International asserts the opposite. According to it, the RPF started committing atrocities in 1990.<sup>279</sup> Yet, what the general public knows are the crimes committed during the genocide. Very few are aware of the actions undertaken and crimes committed post-1994. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the Tutsi government had control over what information could and would be released to the public. If the information put forth by the new government, which was predominantly Tutsi, was filtered or biased, it means that one side shaped the story told about the genocide. This has affected the reconciliation process and, even more importantly, distorted the truth.

In addition to the Amnesty International report, the Organization of African Unity reported that the RPF committed crimes against humanity as early as 1990. According to

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276 Reyntjens, 195

277 Ibid, 177-210

278 Ibid, 199

279 Amnesty International. *Rwanda: Report of Killings and Abductions by the Rwandese Patriotic Army*, 1-3

them, it is “unrealistic” to say that the RPF did not commit atrocities against the Hutus during and after the genocide.<sup>280</sup> The RPF abuses were of two kinds:

1. Indiscriminate killing of Hutu civilians
2. Incarceration of genocidal suspects in abominable conditions after the genocide

The RPF rebels were highly trained and disciplined, and their abuses were used as a political instrument. The troops had “little restraint in dealing with Hutu civilians’ and, in the process.” Since it was difficult for the Tutsi government to differentiate between the Hutu who were guilty and those who were not-guilty, all Hutus became suspects, and, therefore, enemies. The crimes against Hutu continued after the genocide in Rwanda and Congo. The perpetrators held the Hutu collectively responsible for the genocide instead of punishing crimes based on personal responsibility.<sup>281</sup>

In the light of these circumstances leading up to the genocide, one can infer that this genocide was really based on political disagreement and greed for power. The Hutu feared that if the Tutsi governed the country, the Tutsi-led power would again murder Hutus, like the Tutsi Burundian government did in 1972. “I regret what I did, [...] I am ashamed, but what would you have do if you had been in my place? Either you took part in the massacre or else you were massacred yourself. So I took weapons and I defended

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280 Rachel Murray, “The Report of the OAU’s International Panel of Eminent Personalities to investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwandan and the Surrounding Events.” *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (2001), 125.

281 Douglas G. Anglin, “Rwanda Revisited: Search for the Truth.” *International Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Winter, 2000/2001), 166.

the members of my tribe against the Tutsi.”<sup>282</sup> For many, the choice was either to defend themselves or be killed. Looking back at the situations in both Rwanda and Burundi, it is clear that these two small countries were the set of a very bloody conflict. Ravi Bhavnani and David Backer offered a very important summary of the different conflicts and their collateral damages.<sup>283</sup>

*Table 1: Selected Episodes of Ethnic Violence in Rwanda and Burundi*

Event (classification)	Sequence of Events	Scale and Scope of Violence/Displacement
Episode 1: 1963-1964 Rwanda (Localized Massacre)	The Rwandan army stymies an attack by Tutsi exiles after the rebel forces near Kigali. The government responds by ordering massacres of Tutsi, targeting politicians.	10,000-13,000 Tutsi killed; 150,000 Tutsi refugees
Episode 2: 1972 Burundi (genocide)	After a failed coup attempt by Hutu politicians, Hutu unrest erupts in Bujumbura (capitol), Cankuzo (east), and Nyanza Lac and Rumonge (south), during which rebels kill Tutsi and	80,000-200,000 Hutu killed nationally; 150,000-300,000 Hutu refugees

<sup>282</sup> Prunier, 247

<sup>283</sup> Ravu Bhavnani, and David Backer, “Localized Ethnic Conflict and Genocide: Accounting for Differences in Rwanda and Burundi.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (June 2000), p. 284

	Hutu detractors. The Tutsi-dominated army and Tutsi civilians eliminate Hutu, targeting educated elites.	
Episode 3: 1988 Burundi (localized massacre)	Elections that fail to produce a change in political authority prompt Hutu unrest. Tensions are highest in Marangara and Ntega, where army patrols spark Hutu violence against Tutsi. The army responds by massacring Hutu civilians.	20,000 Hutu killed in Marangara and Ntega, 50,000 Hutu refugees
Episode 4: 1994 Rwandan (genocide)	President Habyarimana, returning from signing an agreement to implement the Arusha Accords, is shot down over Kigali; President Ntarayamira of Burundi is also killed. Aided by civilian militias, the army massacres Tutsi and moderate Hutu	500,000-800,000 Tutsi killed nationally, 105,000 Tutsi refugees

## **The Post-Genocide Rwanda**

Johan Pottier has a different and very interesting analysis of the conflict that led to the genocide. According to him, “Rwanda’s bloodbath was not tribal. Rather it was a distinctly modern tragedy, a generated class conflict minutely prepared and callously executed. Most of the world failed to see it that way, and continued to think of a

conflict...in terms of ‘centuries-old tribal warfare.’<sup>284</sup> Several other scholars believed that because of the North-South conflict that had been overshadowed by ethnic conflicts, the genocide was more complicated than what was usually seen. Nevertheless, the aftermath of the genocide was handled as if ethnicity was the cause of all the struggles that both Rwanda and Burundi had and are still facing. Both Johan Pottier and Filip Reyntjens believe that “Kagame’s information strategy was ‘built around denial.’”<sup>285</sup> This strategy was to deny any issue that was not related to the ethnic discourse that cause the genocide, and succeeded by “apply[ing] moral argument by shaming the international community.”<sup>286</sup> They continued by saying:

This kind of manipulation was facilitated by the genocide credit the regime astutely maintained and exploited to escape condemnation. It was used as an ideological weapon allowing the RPF to acquire and maintain victim status and to enjoy impunity for its own crimes... Those who represent the victims of genocide are not to be challenged.<sup>287</sup>

This ideology helped develop the official narrative of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

In the months and years that followed the genocide, two important initiatives were taken to bring clarity and justice to what had happened during the 100 days of tragedy. The international community opened the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and later, the Gacaca Courts were reintroduced to Rwanda. “The ICTR was established at the request of the new government of Rwanda, although it later

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284 Johan Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 9

285 Filip Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth...* 26-27

286 *Ibid*, 27

287 *Ibid*, 27

raised objections as to its precise form and location.” The newly formed Rwandan government wanted to avoid a vendetta, bring justice, and promote reconciliation, so it reached out to the Criminal Court, thinking that doing so would provide an opportunity to prosecute the high-level officers who had fled the conflict.<sup>288</sup> The ICTR mandate was focused on individual responsibility rather “than collective guilt or innocence.”<sup>289</sup>

Established in 1995 following the Yugoslavian Tribunal, the ICTR was a response to the 1994 killings. Located in Arusha, Tanzania, the ICTR was in many ways “the forerunner of the International Criminal Court (ICC).”<sup>290</sup> It was created by the UN Security Council as a tool to “hunt down the architects of the Rwandan genocide, this court secured the first conviction under the 1948 genocide convention as well as helped the establishment of rape as a crime against humanity and “instrument of genocide.”<sup>291</sup> The successful establishment of this court expanded the scope of the international Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and “will form the basis of the legal process at the ICC.”<sup>292</sup> In terms of success, The ICTR received the “Friederish-Ebert Stiftung Human Rights Awards” as acknowledgement of its “unwavering support for the due process and law, and its contribution to the goal of national reconciliation following the

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288 Kerr, “Chapter 2: Ad Hoc International Criminal Tribunals: The ICTY and ICTR,” in *Peace and Justice*, ed. Rachel Kerr and Eirin Mobekk, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 33

289 Helen Hintjens, “Post-genocide Identity Politics in Rwanda.” *Sage*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2008), 25

290 Richard Vokes. “The Arusha Tribunal: Whose Justice?” *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 18, No. 5 (Oct., 2002), p.1

291 Ibid, 1

292 Ibid, 1

Rwandan genocide.<sup>293</sup> By 2002, it had been able to indict eighty persons “of whom sixty had been arrested and twenty remained at large; of the sixty imprisoned eight have been sentenced, one acquitted and the remainder are in ongoing trial or await trial in custody.”

<sup>294</sup> In 2003 and 2004, twenty-two judgments were released. George Rutaganda, a former businessman and political leader of the Interahamwe group, became the first war crime offender convicted by the tribunals.<sup>295</sup>

Nevertheless, it faced a lot of criticism. The first criticism came from the Rwandan government, which totally disagreed with the Tribunal’s form. This criticism hindered the Tribunal’s ability to bring justice and contribute to the peace and reconciliation process. The relationship between the ICTR and the Rwandan government became troublesome because the ICTR intended to investigate all the crimes that had happened between January and December 1994. This meant it would also investigate the war crimes the RPF had committed. It was reported that the RPF had committed war crimes by targeting and killing civilians, after they came to power. To stop the investigation, the Tutsi government suspended its cooperation and refused to provide a visa to Carla Del Ponte, who was the prosecutor for this new Court.

The relations between the Rwandan government and the ICTR got worse when Del Ponte announced on 4 April 2002 that she hoped to issue the first indictments against RPF suspects before the end of the year. She complained about the lack of cooperation on the part of Rwanda, and added that President Kagame did not

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293 Alana Erin Tiemessen, “After Arusha: Gacaca Justice in Post-Genocide Rwanda.” McGill University, 2001. (Master’s Thesis), p. 28

294 Ibid, 28

295 Ibid, 28

honour his promises; as a result, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) was forced to conduct its investigations into massacres by the RPF outside of Rwanda.<sup>296</sup>

In September 2003, Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte was removed from her role after repeated pressure from the Rwandan government. The Court's inability to process and investigate cases it thought should be brought to justice resulted in its being renamed in French "TPIH—le Tribunal Penal international pour les Hutus,"<sup>297</sup> or ICTH. By the end of 2003, the "Tribunal had convicted 10 detainees...and had incarcerated 56 high-ranking officials and leaders of the former regime," which were not considered effective results given the enormous number of people who had presumably participated in the genocide.

Throughout the 1990s, more than 100,000 waited in detention for trials to begin—a source of great social tension and an enormous burden on one of the poorest countries in the world. Some 10 years after the genocide, tens of thousands still await trial. Despite the release of 25,000 prisoners in 2003, as of January 2005, the International Committee of the Red Cross estimated that 89,000 were still being detained.<sup>298</sup>

Due to too high expectations and underestimations of the conflict's scale, the ICTR came to be considered too "costly and time-consuming," which encouraged the local

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296 Filip Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth, Dealing with Dissent, Domesticating the World: Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda*, *African Affairs*, Vol. 110, No. 438, (2010), 19

297 Eugenia Zorbas, "Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *African Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2004), 34

298 William A. Schabas, "Genocide Trials and Gacaca Courts," *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, Vol. 3, (2005), 2

government to seek “hybrid systems of domestic and international justice.”<sup>299</sup> The Gacaca courts followed a more traditional model.

In January 2001, the Gacaca—which means grass, or lawn—laws were adopted, but the courts only became operational in 2005. “Gacaca was devised as a middle path somewhere between the rigors of full-blown criminal prosecution and the moderate truth commission approach employed in many countries.”<sup>300</sup> Borrowing from old, traditional practices, these courts were created based on an ancient conflict resolution models used and administrated by the elders of the local communities. Historically, they were made to deal with interpersonal and property disputes, not large-scale mass killings.<sup>301</sup> Adopted by the Rwandan Parliament, the Gacaca courts were believed to be a move “towards reconciliation.”<sup>302</sup> It was a solution to “the question of genocide.”<sup>303</sup> Their aims were to encourage community participation in the “public confession and eyewitness account” as well as “speed up the dismal progress made in prosecuting the enormous number of prisoners.”<sup>304</sup> Contrary to the ICTR, the Gacaca courts were promoting restorative justice. These courts allowed the democratization of the justice system by recognizing women’s victimhood. “It is women in particular that have felt their experiences and testimony have been excluded from the international justice approach.”<sup>305</sup> Gacaca became a venue these

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299 Kerr, Ad Hoc, 30-31

300 Schabas, “Genocide Trials, 3

301 Ibid, 3

302 Coel Kirkby, “Rwanda’s Gacaca Courts” A Preliminary Critique,” *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (2006), p. 94

303 Ibid, 100

304 Ibid, 100

305 Tiemessen, 53

women could use to tell their stories and receive “compensation for their losses.”<sup>306</sup> In addition to that, it empowered Rwandans vis a vis the international tribunal slow pace and frustration. It was portrayed as a more effective local method of bringing justice to the victims.<sup>307</sup> Also, it is useful to compare the support given by Rwandans to the Gacaca courts as opposed to the frustration with and indifference to the international tribunal.<sup>308</sup>

Nevertheless, by reinstalling these courts, the Rwandan government opened a Pandora’s box. Rather than resolving the conflict and bringing justice to families, it actually increased the traumas since the parties were made to confess their crimes publicly, in front of the victims, and name other perpetrators.<sup>309</sup> Criticism arose immediately following the implementation of this new form of justice. The initial major problems were the violations of due process and intimidations witnesses faced.<sup>310</sup> The second controversy was that for a confession to be accepted, the perpetrators had to “include (1) all the information about the crime, (2) an apology, and (3), crucially, the incrimination of one’s co-conspirators.”<sup>311</sup> These courts helped increase the sense of fear and hatred that had existed in Rwanda for a long time. Since the perpetrators were all Hutu and victims were all Tutsi, the ethnic cleavages continued to grow.

As Carla Del Ponte said, the RPF did not have clean hands. They had committed war crimes before, during, and after the genocide. As Amnesty International and other organizations have pointed out, a vendetta took place in the DRC after the genocide.

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306 Ibid, 53

307 Ibid, 53

308 Ibid, 53

309 Ibid, 52

310 Zorbas, Reconciliation, 36

311 Ibid, 36

Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans were killed by the RPA (RPF army) in Eastern Congo, which created a new wave of refugees. Called the “soldiers without borders” by the Congolese, the RPA and RPF’s ideology was that “‘freedom fighters should have no borders, as long as there are still retrograde ideologies and oppressive regimes on this continent’, and as underlined ‘the stabilizing role of the new Rwanda throughout the region.’”<sup>312</sup> Consequently, “many of those who fled in 1994 ‘have never been located’, and [or] have simply disappeared without trace.”<sup>313</sup> Rene Lamarchand believed that what had happened in Eastern Congo should have been called a genocide. According to him,

Not one but two genocides have been committed, a genocide of Tutsi against Hutu, and of Hutu against Tutsi. More recently, human rights groups, most notably Human Rights Watch, have provided crushing evidence of massive human rights violations against Hutu refugees in Eastern Congo by units of the all-Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), thus adding a third genocidal massacre to the record.<sup>314</sup>

Kagame’s new regime targeted Hutus not only in Congo, but domestically as well. The government began targeting Hutu elites in 1995. They were victims of imprisonment, abuse, and even elimination. In the following years, anyone—journalists, civil society leaders, Tutsi politicians, teachers, judges, and so on—who doubted the government and its actions was killed.<sup>315</sup> “In the eyes of the regime, the elimination of the political

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312 Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth*, 25

313 Hintjens, *Post-genocide*, 26

314 Lemarchand, *Genocide in the Great Lakes*, 1

315 Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth*, 8

opposition was legitimate.”<sup>316</sup> The next presidential and parliamentary elections were marked by intimidation, arrest, disappearance, and manipulation. “During the 2003 vote, an EU observer mission saw fraud, intimidation, the manipulation of electoral lists, ballot-box stuffing, lack of secrecy of the vote, and lack of transparency in the counting procedure.”<sup>317</sup> Those who opposed the new regime’s views were just ignorant and disgruntled. The rest of the population lived happily and contributed to the reconstruction of the country.

In addition to controlling its own people, Kagame’s regime controlled the foreign organizations that were in Rwanda to help to rebuild the country as well as assist in the reconciliation process. International NGOs saw their activities taken over by the government and their assets frozen because of contradictory ideologies. In 2001, a law was passed that gave the regime full power to control “management, finances, and projects of national and international NGOs.”<sup>318</sup> The government did not stop there. The RPF accused France of having been actively involved in the genocide. That accusation was triggered by French judge Bruguiere’s issuing of arrest warrants against nine RPF officers who were believed to be involved in the presidential attack the started the genocide. Judge Bruguiere’s investigation pointed toward Kagame and the RPF. This led to an intense conflict between both countries.<sup>319</sup> Spain also saw its relationship with Rwanda come under attack when “Andreu Merelles [a Spanish judge] issued arrest

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316 Ibid, 10

317 Ibid, 11

318 Ibid, 13

319 Ibid, 22-23

warrants on 6 February 2008 against 40 officers of the RPF over both the killing of Spanish nationals and crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda and the DRC.”<sup>320</sup>

The RPF was initially seen as the hero, the entity that saved millions of lives by stopping the genocide. But it went from being the one protecting the oppressed to being the oppressor. The “genocide credit or excuse” allowed the government to avoid condemnation, maintain its status as victim, and “enjoy immunity for its own crimes.”<sup>321</sup>

## **Rwanda Today**

The current Tutsi regime was able to convince the world that they, and only they, “had the right to know and determine what was going on in those parts of the Great Lakes region they now controlled,’ and they achieved this through a strategy based on the ‘concept of morality, guilt and punishment.’”<sup>322</sup> They did it with several different laws and initiatives, such as imposing a national identity holding victims and survivors, who are mostly Tutsi, as superior, reshaping the national narrative of the genocide, categorizing the population into several groups, creating a structural violent regime that served the interest of President Kagame and allowed him to rewrite the history books, and so on.

Since 1994, when the RPF took control of Rwanda and established a new Tutsi government, the Tutsi-dominated legislature has voted on two important laws that have contributed to the evolution of the Rwandan justice system:

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320 Ibid, 24

321 Ibid, 27

322 Ibid, 27-28

1. Law N. 18/2008 relating to the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Ideology.

According to this law's definition, genocide ideology is an aggregate of thoughts, conduct, speeches, documents, and other acts aimed at exterminating or inciting others to exterminate people based on ethnic group, origin, nationality, region, color, physical appearance, sex, language, religion, or political opinion, committed in normal periods or during war.

2. Law N. 47/2001 of the 18/2008 on Prevention, Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Discrimination and Sectarianism. According to this law:

- a. Discrimination is any speech, writing, or actions based on ethnicity, region or country of origin, the color of skin, physical features, sex, language, religion, or ideas, aimed at depriving a person or group of persons of their rights as provided by Rwandan law and by International Conventions to which Rwanda is a party;
- b. Sectarianism means the use of any speech, written statement, or action that divides people, that is likely to spark conflicts among people, or that causes an uprising that might degenerate into strife among people based on discrimination mentioned in article one;
- c. Deprivation of a person of his/her rights is the denial of rights provided by Rwanda (sic) Law and by International Conventions to which Rwanda is a party.<sup>323</sup>

Both laws were created to restrict the freedom of speech that could potentially promote

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<sup>323</sup> Amnesty International, *Safer to Stay Silent: The Chilling Effect of Rwanda's Laws on 'Genocide Ideology' and 'Sectarianism.'* 2010.

hatred after the 1994 genocide. The vague language in the laws, however, has been employed to legitimize the government's using the laws to suppress opposition and censure human rights defenders and journalists.<sup>324</sup> With the laws in place, "Almost anyone could be accused of divisionism and harbouring a genocide mentality."<sup>325</sup> Law has become an instrument that the RPF uses to silence or eliminate dissidents and allow "the imposition of the RPF's reading of history and truth."<sup>326</sup> Those who questioned the RPF's narratives and actions slowly turned their back on Kagame's regime, and in response, he suppressed or denied their visa entry and they were "found unwelcome in Rwanda."<sup>327</sup>

The 2003 and 2010 presidential elections proved again that the RPF had control over Rwanda's political, social, and even media spaces. The RPF claimed that their control was the best way to prevent renewed violence, but it also created a repressive environment in which the Hutu majority feared speaking out. Amnesty International continued its critique of the RPF by saying that when political opponents, journalists, or anyone else doubted the regime and its implication in the genocide, they were either imprisoned without a fair trial or killed in mysterious circumstances. The aggressive behavior and asymmetrical power dynamic installed by the new Tutsi government created and will continue to create resentment "over the long haul."

Tutsis have been able to establish hegemonic relations with the majority of Hutus

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324 Amnesty International, Rwanda: Justice in Jeopardy. The First Instance Trial of Victoire Ingabire. March 2013, 7.

325 Hintjens, Post-genocide, 9

326 Reyntjens, Constructing the truth, 15-16

327 Hintjens, Post-genocide, 9

through their advantages in commerce and control of institutional power of the state. Indeed, Tutsis have monopolized strategic positions within the military and police in conjunction with their newly crafted state ideology that helps legitimize their domination over state institutions.<sup>328</sup>

The case of Victoire Ingabire is an example how the new Rwandan government policies have been implemented. In 2010, Mrs. Victoire Ingabire, a Hutu who was exiled in the Netherlands for sixteen years, returned to Rwanda as a presidential candidate at the head of the United Democratic Force Party. Since she addressed issues relating to Hutu victims of the genocide, her presence created controversy. Mrs. Ingabire called attention to the crimes against Hutus committed by the RPF during the 1994 conflict and sought justice for the Hutu victims by prosecuting the perpetrators. “In April 2010, she was arrested [by the Rwandan government] on charges of denying the genocide, spreading genocide ideology, [and] divisionism.”<sup>329</sup> She was held with Peter Erlinder, an American lawyer and law professor, who traveled to Rwanda to assist in Ingabire’s defense. Peter Erlinder was arrested and charged with denying the genocide. Both denied the charges against them. “Ingabire has consistently maintained that advocating for recognizing and prosecuting crimes against humanity that Tutsi committed against Hutu during the genocide does not constitute a denial that the genocide happened. The government disagrees and finds her talk of Tutsi massacres to be both a violation of Rwandan law and

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328 Ho-Won Jeong, *Conflict Management and Resolution*, 84

329 Amnesty International, *Safer to Stay Silent: The Chilling Effect of Rwanda’s Laws on ‘Genocide Ideology’ and ‘Sectarianism.’* (2010), 9-10

dangerous revisionism that could reignite conflict.”<sup>330</sup>

Kagame’s regime has been able to gain control of its citizens and their spaces of expression. “Rwanda is an army with a state, rather than a state with an army.”<sup>331</sup> Rwandan politics has become a game of which the RPF is the designer and dictator of the rules. The government claims that control is the best way to prevent renewed violence.<sup>332</sup> It has become a perfect “securocracy” by militarizing education, which Rwandans should and need to have. Only those who agree to not question the specific lines drawn by the RPF are tolerated.<sup>333</sup> Those who criticize Kagame and his regime, like Victoire Ingabire, are penalized, disappeared, assassinated, or forced into exile. Because opposition is not allowed in Rwanda, those who publically criticize Kagame have gone into exile.<sup>334</sup> The impact of Rwanda’s one-party regime is often seen abroad. In the last decade, Rwanda “twice invaded Zaïre/DRC, where it supported proxy rebel movements and committed massive war crimes and crimes against humanity, and it came close to waging a full war with its former ally Uganda.”<sup>335</sup> Also, evidence of ordered assassinations has been found in Kenya, Uganda, DRC, South Africa, and so on. According to Human Right Watch, “In addition to the repression of critical voices inside Rwanda, dissidents and real or perceived critics outside the country—in neighboring Uganda and Kenya, as well as

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330 Jennifer M. Allen and George H. Norris, “Is Genocide Different? Dealing with Hate Speech in Post-Genocide Society,” *Journal of International Law and International Relations*, Vol. 7, 149-151

331 Reyntjens, *Constructing the truth*, 2

332 Amnesty International, *Rwanda: Justice in Jeopardy. The First Instance Trial of Victoire Ingabire*. March 2013, 7.

333 *Ibid*, 11

334 Hintjens, *Post-genocide*, 7

335 Filip Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth*, 24

farther as in South Africa and Europe—have been victims of attacks and threats.”<sup>336</sup> Patrick Karegeya, Charles Ingabire, and Seth Sendashonga are a few names among the many dissidents who were either murdered or threatened in the neighboring countries.<sup>337</sup>

The government expresses the “need to avoid another genocide as the purported justification for such repressive measures.”<sup>338</sup> A 2002 survey illustrates the extent to which the Tutsi hold power in Rwanda (“returnees” are mainly Tutsi exiles who returned to Rwanda after the RPF came to power in July 1994):

- Of Rwanda’s twelve prefects, seven are Tutsi, five are “returnees,” and 11 of the 12 prefects are members of the RPF;
- Of the twelve commissioners on the NURC, nine are Tutsi and four are “returnees” (no political affiliation is cited);
- Of the twenty-two Supreme Court Judges, fourteen are Tutsi and fifteen are “returnees” (no political affiliation is cited);
- Of the twenty-eight heads of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), twenty-three are Tutsi and twenty-four are members of the RPF (no figure available for “returnee” proportion);

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336 Human Rights Watch, Rwanda: Repression Across Borders.” January 2014 Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/01/28/rwanda-repression-across-borders>

337 Ibid

338 Ibid, 13

- Of Rwandan's fifteen ambassadors, thirteen are RPF members, and twelve are Tutsi (no figure cited for "returnees")<sup>339</sup>

Clearly, the Rwandan government was able to not only dictate its will and policies to its citizens; it was also able to control the narrative of the genocide by creating entities that were governed by its own people. Over the years, instead of working toward reconciling people and creating a stable, secure country where people would be able to move on and forget their trauma, this regime became more and more retributive.

Another example of the Tutsi-dominated narrative and government is the categorization of people as victim/perpetrators rather than as part of an ethnic group. For the public sphere, the government created new, official categories of self-definition. While erasing the ethnic or tribal identities, the Rwandan government created political identity.<sup>340</sup> Now Rwandan citizens are divided into the categories of perpetrators and victims. Mahmood Mamdini, along with Eugenia Zorbas, explored this categorization of Rwandans not only socially, but also in the legal system of the new Tutsi regime. They stated, "the state language in Rwanda, and the language one hears from all officials, and also from many who are not, divides the population into five categories:"<sup>341</sup>

1. The *returnees* are mainly Tutsi exiles who returned to Rwanda after the RPF came to power in July 1994. They have not experienced civil war or genocide and their English (or Swahili) is frequently better than their Kinyarwanda.

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339 Zorbas, Reconciliation, 44-45

340 Ibid, 13-14

341 Mohamad Mamdini, 266

2. The *refugees* can be either Old Caseload (OCL)—pre-1994, mostly Tutsi—refugees, or New Caseload (NCL)—post-1994, mostly Hutu—refugees.
3. The *victims* are both Tutsi and moderate Hutu. Surviving victims, however, are only Tutsis who either survived the genocide or who had survived previous anti-Tutsi massacres (OLC refugees). *NCL refugees are not considered victims, or survivors.*
4. The *survivors* are only Tutsi. The logic here is that the genocide was aimed only at Tutsis. It follows that any Tutsi who was in Rwanda at the time of the genocide and who is alive today is a survivor. The word is not used for any Hutu who was in the country during that same period.
5. The *perpetrators* category is perhaps the clearest evidence that the Hutu/Tutsi dialectic endures, despite the official national unity ideology. ‘The assumption is that every Hutu who opposed the genocide was killed. The flip side of this assumption is that every living Hutu was either an active participant or a passive onlooker in the genocide. Morally, if not legally, both are culpable. The dilemma is that to be a Hutu in contemporary Rwanda is to be presumed a perpetrator.’<sup>342</sup>

These categories have helped crystalize the divisions between Hutus and Tutsis, as well as Tutsis who were in Rwanda during the genocide and those who returned later from their host countries. Over time, the number of suspects has become bigger and bigger, while the number of victims has become fewer and fewer. While the highest estimate of

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342 Zorbas, *Reconciliation*, 46-47

Hutus who committed atrocities in 1994 is 10 percent (350,000-600,000) of the Hutu population, Kagame and his government claim that two million Hutus were actively involved in the killing of Tutsis.<sup>343</sup> Interestingly, about 85 percent of the population in Rwanda, the Hutu population, is neither victim nor survivor. The Hutu moderates who were murdered during the genocide and all who were targeted and eliminated in the next 20 years are denied their victimhood. The categories also denied victimhood, or simply forgot, the Hutus who sacrificed their lives to save Tutsis. These categories have undermined the government's goal of unifying the country. By dividing people into victims and perpetrators, all the categories have done is limit the healing and reconciliation processes Rwandans need in order to "overcome their past and live together without violence."<sup>344</sup>

The categorizations also replaced the ethnic identities, which became illegal. This created controversy. As we all know, Rwanda was and still is composed of three tribal groups: Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. Post-genocide, the Tutsi government officially prohibited the use of ethnic identifications, based on the argument that the genocide had happened due to "the racialized mentality of the past."<sup>345</sup> The new government emphasized a national Rwandan "identity, hoping that [citizens could] replace ethnicity as a basis for identity."<sup>346</sup> Talking about ethnic identities became illegal because it was presumed that Belgian colonizers had installed them. Consequently, in order to enlighten and help the

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343 Hintjens, Post-genocide, 23

344 Ibid, 34

345 Ibid, 6.

346 Hilary Power, "Unresolved Identity Conflicts as a Barrier to Reconciliation in Rwanda." *International Public Policy Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (June 2013), 5.

country to progress and free itself from old mentalities, the Rwandan rulers erased the initial, ethnic identities of their citizens.<sup>347</sup> Yet, though tribal identification was prohibited, it remained in private spheres and continued to structure people's lives. Unfortunately, "it can be said that the act of genocide and its memory have strengthened the boundaries and the self-identification on either side of the divide even as ethnic categories have disappeared from identity cards and official social and political engineering."<sup>348</sup> In fact, due to the government's imposition of the collective identity, the ethnic categories have become increasingly important, even more so than before the 1994 genocide.<sup>349</sup> In her article, "Unresolved Identity Conflicts as a Barrier to Reconciliation in Rwanda," Hillary Power stated that "such deep-seated identities and attitudes cannot be expected simply to disappear; though they may be publicly silenced, they may remain intact. Failing to address them negates the possibility of dismantling and neutralizing them."<sup>350</sup> One major criticism of the imposed, unified Rwandan national identity is that, by silencing people and erasing their former identities, it promotes a one-dimensional narrative created by the government. Therefore, the common narrative that is shaped with the stories of Tutsi victimhood and the different categories that represent the new political identities is helping to crystalize the already well-organized, single narrative of the genocide. Any other interpretation or even counter-narrative is dismissed and seen as illegal. Even though the ethnic identities are no longer legal, however, people are still

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347 Hintjens, *Post-Genocide*, 10

348 Andrea Purdekova, "Beyond De-Ethnicisation in Post-Genocide Rwanda: Deconstruction of Identity Discourse, Reconstruction of a Political Community." Department of International Development, Oxford University, 2

349 Hintjens, *Post-genocide*, 8

350 *Ibid*, 6-7.

discriminated against and even persecuted based on the Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa identities.

The Rwandan government generally avoids using Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa as political identities. But it has adopted a “genocide framework,” from which it categorizes the population politically, meaning that “the 1994 genocide is a singled out as an event producing the only political[ly] correct categories for identification and guidelines for state policy.”<sup>351</sup> By dividing the Rwandan population into victims and perpetrators, the government undermines the process of overcoming the trauma of the genocide and any past suffering the country has experienced. Suppressing the ethnic identities creates obstacles to the reconciliation process. It also deepens the societal and identity-based separations among the ethnic groups, and creates new trauma by forcing people into categories. The Rwandan national identity framework was not created to provide equal opportunities to every Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, but to be a political tool that allows the government to show the international community that it is creating a brighter future for the country, while hiding its chosen trauma, chosen glory, and human rights violations.

As a result of the different initiatives and laws that the government imposed, a specific narrative was established that helped to legitimize Kagame’s regime, impose its will on its citizens, and dictate the future of Rwanda and Rwandans to the West. The official narrative of the genocide, the one promoted by government, is that, filled with hatred, Hutus decided to kill Tutsis. That narrative is based and formed almost exclusively by Tutsi survivors. Therefore, “the RPF regime has elevated Tutsi into victims, even those not directly targeted in the genocide. And Hutu, even those who

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351 Mamdini, 266

refused to kill, become suspected accomplices at best, and genocidal killers at worst.”<sup>352</sup>

This fixed narrative has pushed people to hide their true feelings when in public spheres. Twenty years later, the genocide is still a big part of Rwandans’ daily lives. Using the atrocity as a bridge to power, Kagame rewrote the history and the “truth.” According to him:

‘It is the white man who has caused all that, children of Rwanda. He did it in order to find a secret way to pillage us. When they [the Europeans] arrived, we were living side by side in harmony. [...] They invented different origins for us, children of Rwanda...but we have overcome the white man’s trap [...] So, children of Rwanda, we are called upon to unite our strength to build Rwanda.’<sup>353</sup>

This claims that Rwandans were unified and lived in harmony before colonialism reinforced Kagame’s right to be in power. He created a new history that fit his constructed idea of what Rwanda should have looked like in the past. This narrative of the past and of the genocide has created an “ethnic amnesia...[that] only served to veil the fact that rule by a minority of the majority ethnic group was replaced by rule by a minority of the minority ethnic group.”<sup>354</sup>

The genocide label had a great impact on the Hutu community and continues to, twenty years later. The Hutus who lost loved ones cannot overcome the indignity of not being recognized as victims of the genocide by the Rwandan government or the West. Hutus who are innocent have to live with the label of perpetrator, while Tutsis are the

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352 Hintjens, *Post-Genocide*, 32

353 Zorbas, *Reconciliation*, 42

354 Reyntjens, *Constructing the Truth*, 30

victims. If Hutus in Rwanda try to uncover the truth or even express an opinion that might not be popular, they will most likely be incarcerated. Those outside the country cannot obtain access to the important documents that will allow them to uncover the truth, since the Rwandan government employs strict censorship. The government controls what information is released to the public and, perhaps more importantly, who has access to that information. Interestingly, today, Rwanda is seen as a model for other African countries.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY**

### **Problem Statement and Research Question**

Twenty years after the Rwandan genocide, the trauma is still deep. In the last twenty years, we have seen the narrative of the genocide become increasingly narrowed and controlled. Freedom of expression, speech, or assembly is slowly disappearing in Rwanda. For Rwandans at home or abroad, this past decade has been associated with authoritarianism, censorship, and real or perceived fear of President Kagame's regime. The Rwandan government has been in control of the narratives and information that are available to its citizens. This research targets diaspora communities that have access to different narratives of the genocide and the current Rwanda.

Researching the identity and narrative of Hutu in diaspora adds a different complexity to what has been previously studied, because the tension between Hutus' ethnic identity and their narratives is very important and controversial. Based on the national identity policy in Rwanda, ethnicity is supposedly unimportant, but those who live abroad, especially the Hutu, still face stigma and negative treatment based on their ethnicity. The official narrative of the genocide introduced in history books labeled them as perpetrators, which tends to be different to the narratives young Hutus may have heard from family members. One of the problems the new generations of Hutus have to face is the disconnection created by the different narratives of the genocide and their effect on

the formation of individual identity in the Hutu collective society into which they were born. Knowing that the official genocide narrative is based on Tutsis' stories, it is important to study the Hutu perceptions of themselves as well as their view of Rwanda and the world around them. The generations that were born either right before the genocide or in the refugee camps and host-countries have to face double-sided prejudice and discrimination based on both their Hutu affiliation and their African refugee identification.

Most of the diaspora Hutus that grew up in individualistic European/Western societies are still shaped by their ethnic group's collectivistic beliefs. As Diaspora communities, their identity is closely related to their homeland. Therefore, their ethnic and/or new identity, based on their host country, cannot be seen "in terms of fixed, absolute essences but rather as creations of cultural discourses, history and the power."<sup>355</sup> Consequently, the younger generations do acquire a new identity in the host country, yet they are still influenced by their parents' identity, their homeland. These new generations of Hutus have struggled with the little information they received while shaping their identity. They have encountered two dominant, yet competing narratives; one coming from their parents and one promoted by the Rwandan government. In addition to that, each family had its own narrative of sufferings and journey to escape the atrocities. The official narrative, which is the Rwandan government narrative, told them that one day their parents decided to exterminate another ethnic group, the Tutsi. Another narrative,

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355 Sunil Bhati, Anjali Ram: *Theorizing Identity in Transnational and Diaspora Cultures: A Critical Approach to Acculturation*, (142)

the one told by their parents, taught them that they have been victims of the (Tutsi) people's hatred, and had to escape and abandon their country in order to survive.

Consequently, these two narratives created a third one, which is a primary feature in the identity of the new generations. This third narrative is created by internal conflict from attempting to navigate the two previous competing narratives. All these narratives created a crisis of conscience. All these different stories lead to an internal struggle between what young Hutu are told and what they want to believe.

This research sought to understand the ways these new generations dealt with their internal conflicts and what coping mechanisms they have used to strengthen their individual or group identities. Analyzing the consequences of these different components of identity formation, in a situation in which narratives are suppressed, denied, or competing, is important for the field of Conflict Resolution since every conflict creates collateral damage and the winner usually imposes its dominance and marginalizes the other group. Therefore, the question that has led this study is:

What impacts did the competing narratives have in the identity formation and coping mechanisms of three different generations of Hutus in diaspora in Belgium, post-1994 Rwandan Genocide?

## **Research Design**

This study was composed of three different types of data collections. First, a survey of 25 questions was compiled in order to “provide a good look at the distribution

of opinions in [the] group and...reveal important sources of variation.”<sup>356</sup> The questions were divided into four different categories: identity formation, Rwanda and homeland, narrative and transmission of information, and coping mechanisms. These themes were determined by the research question as well as the roadmap of the literature reviews. Second, in-depth one-on-one interviews were conducted so that the research could have extensive data. The interviews aimed at a more complex study on identity through the stories and narratives the participants provided. The interviews were also divided using thematic approaches. Eight principle questions were complementing the surveys’ information centered on the same themes as the questionnaire surveys. Finally, due to the extended period the research intends to stay among these communities, the researcher was able to conduct observational data collection.

## **Participants Descriptions**

### **Approach 1: Questionnaire Survey**

From end of June, 2014 to end of September 2014, a questionnaire survey composed of twenty-five questions was distributed online via [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com). The questions were divided into two categories, identity and narrative. Requirements for participation were: that the participants live in Belgium, are older than 18 years old, and identify themselves as members of the Hutu community. The snowballing selection process was used with the aim of avoiding the observer’s effect and increasing objectivity. Initially, the questionnaire was to be administered online, however, many

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356 Rothbart & Korostelina, 310

participants were reluctant to provide any personal information online. They were afraid that the information would fall into the hands of the Rwandan government, or would be used against them. In order to get participants to fill out the survey, the researcher had to personally hand it to them. Consequently, two identical surveys were distributed, one online and one on paper. As result of the dual distribution method, ninety-nine participants filled out the online survey; of them, 48.5% were men and 51.5% were women. Fifty-five participants requested a hard copy. Of them, 63.6% were men and 36.4% were women. The minimum age for filling out the surveys was 18 years old.

### **Approach 2: Semi-Structural Interviews**

Interviews were conducted in July and August of 2014. The participants were divided into three age groups: from 18 to 30 years old, from 31 to 45 years old, and 46 years old and older. The first age group was composed of young adults who were either very young at the time of the genocide or born in host countries. They were mostly influenced by their parents' narratives and the media since they either did not experience the atrocities or were too young to understand what was happening. The second group was a little bit older. They were teenagers or young adults at the time of the genocide. They have a personal understanding of the narratives of the genocide, but still have been influenced by their host countries' narratives and cultures. Their narrative is based on their own understanding, the narratives told by their elders, and the external world. The third group was the parents and grandparents. At the time of the genocide, they were actively part of Rwandan society. Politically, socially, and economically, they were

citizens. They were the group that lost the most and have deep chosen traumas that they could transmit to the younger generations. Also, this older group has nostalgia for their lives before the civil war and genocide. Their narratives, understanding of the conflict, and roles in the Rwandan community are valuable.

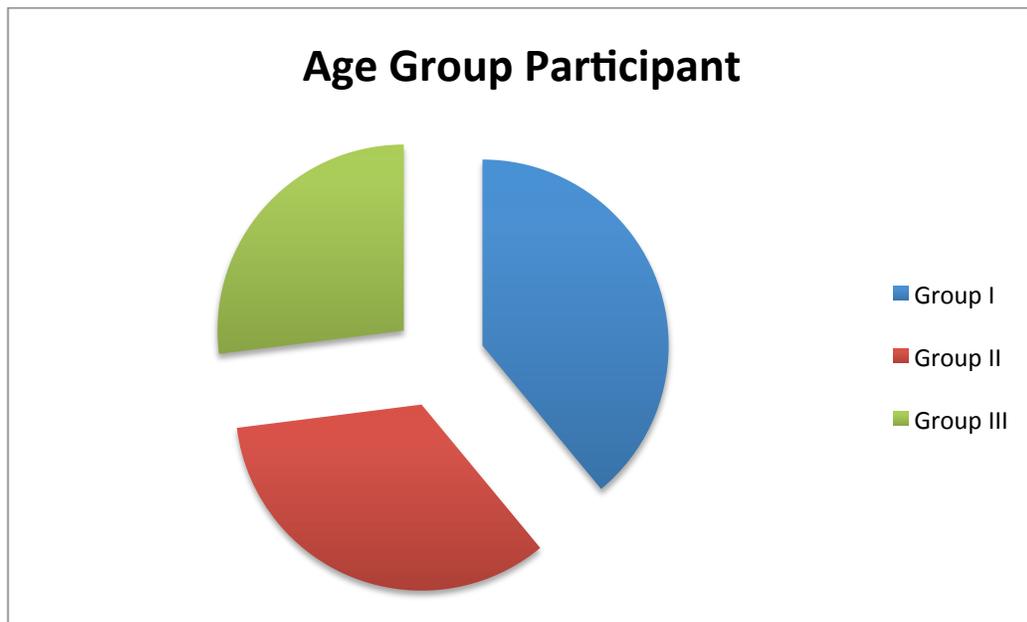
The researcher spoke to members of all three groups in one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Some participants were both interviewed and given survey questionnaires, since security issues were raised with the online survey approach. Given the sensitive nature of the research, the researcher wanted to avoid harming the people involved as well making them feel uncomfortable. Consequently, the participants usually decided the location of the interviews. On many occasions, the researcher had to go to the participants' homes to ensure privacy and trust. Most interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, and were semi-structured and flexible, which allowed the participants to express their opinions. With the interviewees' permission, the researcher electronically recorded the interviews, but in some cases, when the participant demanded it, the researcher did take notes. Analysis of the data collected during the interviews was done simultaneously and continued throughout the process. For the interviews, participants were divided into three distinct age groups. The first group was composed of young adults between 18 and 30 years old. Among the forty-six participants, eighteen (39%) were part of this group. The second group was composed of people between 31 and 45 years old. Sixteen (34%) of the participants were part of this group. The last group, which was composed of the parents and grandparents who were 46 years old and older,

represented 27% of all the participants. With all three groups combined, the total number of participants was forty-six: twenty-three women and twenty-three men.

*Figure 1: Participants Groups Affiliation*

Group I: 18-30	Group II: 31-45	Group III: 46+
<b>Group I Participants</b>	<b>Group II Participants</b>	<b>Group 3 Participants</b>
2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24, 32, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41	1,3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18, 19, 22, 25, 26, 33, 34, 36, 45	16, 17, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, 42, 43, 44, 46

*Figure 2: Age Group Participant*



### **Approach 3: Observation**

The third research approach was very flexible and unstructured. The researcher spent almost two months in Belgium living among the Hutu community. During this time, she was invited to five social gatherings, three with the first, young group, and two with the middle group. She also had the opportunity to talk to several members of the oldest groups. She was invited to attend a birthday celebration, as well. These six events provided the researcher with observational materials. In addition to those larger social gatherings, she was invited to spend time with families, within the comfort of their homes, where she was able to interact with them in a more intimate, private manner. These opportunities, which took place mostly in Flanders, but also in Brussels and Wallonia, allowed the researcher to discuss her topic as well as the living conditions of the Hutu diaspora community and their attachment to their homeland.

### **Ethical Issues**

This study raised several ethical issues. First, the study itself was challenging for certain people. Security was a very important concern for some participants. The researcher had to take additional precautions to assure the participants that the information would not be shared with anyone other than the researcher herself. The Do

No Harm policy helped reassure the reluctant participants as well as give the researcher a framework for research. To increase the sense of security, the information obtained during all three approaches was confidential and required no identification. Given the sensitive nature of this research, all the participants, in the surveys as well as the interviews, remained anonymous. In the case of the interviews, participants signed a consent agreement. All three groups had the choice to skip or not to answer any question they found hurtful, inappropriate, or irrelevant.

The second concern was related to the personal bias of the researcher. Given that the researcher is a member of the Hutu Diaspora herself, ethical issues could have arisen if she had transferred her own life experience and expectations onto the answers the participants provided and onto her interpretation of the collected data. Despite that concern, it was essential to carry on with this study. Almost nothing has been done to identify the identity process of the Hutus in diaspora and allow them to share their narratives. In order to avoid personal biases, each day the researcher allowed herself one to two hours to reflect on her own experience and how she felt about the different interviews. Combining questionnaire surveys and interviews helped her to be more data-orientated and link the data collected. By using more than one method of data collection, she aimed using the triangulation method to identify keys concepts, patterns and different ideologies that could enrich the study and allow the participants' voice to be heard. The researcher wanted to minimize her voice and maximize the participants' involvement in the process and study findings.

Also, due to the fact that she was working with young adults to whom she was indirectly connected, the researcher was afraid that the participants would not be as real and opened to share their thoughts, concerns, and aspirations, as they might otherwise be, because she was not a total outsider. Therefore, to avoid internal vulnerability and the observer's effect, she used the snowball method to conduct the questionnaire surveys and the semi-structured interviews. Giving participants more decision-making power allowed them to feel more in control and more comfortable. Also, emphasizing that they are not required to answer any question they found inappropriate created trust between the interviewee and interviewer. The researcher's being part of their community and understanding their struggle and journey allowed for many participants to feel comfortable enough to reach out to her and open up.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### Introduction

This study targeted Hutu Diaspora living in Belgium. The data collection and analysis took place between June 2014 and November 2014. Divided into three sections—surveys, interviews, and observations—this research looks at the identity formation of three different generations of Hutus. The total number of participants is between 150 and 300 people. The range is very wide because the researcher was invited to different social gatherings and celebrations. Each method was shaped to satisfy the participants' need for privacy, security, and confidentiality.

### Thematic Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher needed to identify the themes by which to analyze and interpret the information obtained from all three approaches. As Robson stated, “data in their raw form do not speak from themselves. The messages stay hidden and need careful teasing out. The process and products of analysis provide the bases for interpretations.”<sup>357</sup> Therefore, in making sense of the information, the researcher needed to create clusters of themes. Based on the research question, which had three different components: identity, narrative, and coping mechanisms, the researcher was able to use

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357 Colin Robson. *Real World Research*. (Cornwall, UK: Wiley, 2011), 408.

exploratory analysis that allowed the data to tell a story.<sup>358</sup> The researcher grouped the themes into the study's three different categories by using coding to create patterns. The coding process helped redefine what the data were about.<sup>359</sup> Rapidly, the same themes started to appear.

In this analysis, the researcher will divide the data into categories based on identity, stories and transmission of information, connection to homeland, and copying mechanisms. In the first analysis, of the survey, the three main themes are identity, homeland, and narrative. In the interview analysis, identity, narrative, copying mechanisms, and homeland are the clustered themes. Finally, in the observational structure analysis, the researcher identified identity and homeland as the themes. Given the mixed methods used in this study, thematic analysis will be used to interpret the data collected as well as create links between the recurrent themes within and among the different age groups.

## **Quantitative Methods: Looking Beyond the Numbers**

### **Online Survey**

A total of 149 people participated in the survey. Ninety-nine people filled out the online questionnaire and fifty-five people filled out the hard copy questionnaire. Among the ninety-nine participants who filled out the online survey, 51% were women and 49% were men. Over 65% of the participants identified themselves as part of the first, young

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358 Ibid, 419

359 Ibid, 474

adult, age group (18-30 years-old). Thirty percent belonged to the second age group (31-45 years-old), while only 3% were in the third age group (46+). A large majority of all the participants had at least attended high school. Over 80% of them were born in Rwanda, and 45% identified themselves as Rwandans.

When it came to how they identify themselves and which of their identities is more salient, the online survey participants put their Rwandan identity before their Hutu identity. Over 80% chose Rwandan as their primary identity, while 24% chose Hutu. When it came to their level of affiliation with their homeland and national identity, 55% acknowledged their involvement in the Rwandan community, and 94% said they practiced at least at some of the traditional rituals once practiced in Rwanda. Rwanda holds a special place for Hutus in diaspora. Over 75% of the participants in the online survey believe they will, and want to eventually, return “home.” About 96% of the participants still have family members in Rwanda. Also, they think that their experience of returning will be somewhat positive. In addition to that, they consider Kinyarwanda their mother tongue. And when it comes to Rwanda and its language, over 93% said that it is important to them that their children know about Rwanda and speak its language, Kinyarwanda.

Given that they live abroad, this community found it essential to connect their homeland to their new identity through constructing a narrative. When asked where they get their information about Rwanda, almost 50% said newspapers, while 37% mentioned family and friends. Because of their diaporic situation, around 80% tend to seek information spontaneously. Also, about 90% think that it is important, on some level, to

know about the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. Thirty-eight percent learned about it through the media, and the rest learned about it through family or community discussion, or they experienced it. When asked what they would like to know about the genocide, one-third was curious about the history of Rwanda, 23% about their own family history, and the rest about the causes of the genocide and the rivalry between the ethnic groups.

### **Paper Survey**

In terms of demographics, the sample size was smaller. There were fifty-five participants and the group was a little more male-dominated and older. Sixty-four percent of the participants were men. In the first group, only 26% were male. Of all the participants surveyed, 47% of the men belonged to the second, middle-aged group, and 25% belonged to the older group. The level of education was high school and above, as it was with the younger group. Also similarly to the previous group, a large number, 73%, were born in Rwanda. The first major difference between the online and paper surveys appeared around the issue of identity. While the first group privileged their Rwandan identity, in this group, 74%, affiliated themselves with their ethnic, Hutu, identity. Also a larger number, 18%, admitted to not practicing any traditional rituals once practiced in Rwanda; only 3% of the online survey participants said this.

Additionally, a larger number, 56%, believe that they will not return to Rwanda. Accordingly, some believe that if they do return, their experiences will be somewhat negative. Despite that, around 60% of them want to return. This desire might be justified by the fact that 90% still have family members in Rwanda. In terms of language and the

importance of Kinyarwanda, 91% still speak it and 91% said that Kinyarwanda is still their mother tongue. Also, it is important for 82% of them that their children speak the language.

For information about the current situation in Rwanda, most participants read newspapers and rely on their family and friends. Sixty-seven percent spontaneously look for information. When asked about the genocide, one-third said they do not think it is important to learn about the genocide. This is due to the fact that 78% of these participants experienced the genocide. Additionally, 55% majority said they do not think there is anything else they want to know about the circumstances that led to the 1994 atrocities. Those who do want to know are mostly interested in the history of Rwanda. The last question of the survey was, “were you able to share your family history and background with others, non-Rwandans?” Seventy percent of the online survey participants said, yes, they were able to do so. Only 51% of the paper survey participants said they were able to share their story with outsiders.

### **Surveys Findings**

Based on the necessity of having two different channels for administering this questionnaire survey and the participant’s demographics, it is easy to assume that the older group has security concerns. They were reluctant to participate to the online survey, afraid that the Rwandan government, or anyone who could harm them, would be able to connect them to the information given. In the interviews, many pointed that they had concerns when it comes to their safety in relations to anything that is connected to

Rwanda. This is one of this study's most important findings. As diaspora community that enjoys legal and civil rights in their host country, one would assume that they would be secure in expressing themselves and voicing their opinions for or against their homeland regime. It appears, then, that fear and caution are important to this older generation. This finding emphasizes the importance of homeland for diaspora communities, but it also presents an interesting paradox. Despite their fears and concerns, this generation wants to go back to Rwanda, but they think that they will most likely never return, or if they do, their experience will be negative. To reconnect with their homeland, they get involved in their Hutu community, practice some of the traditional rituals, teach Kinyarwanda to their children, and follow the current situation in Rwanda. Because they lived through the genocide, a lot of them are critical of information broadcasted about the atrocities; they still cannot share their stories with outsiders.

Interestingly, the surveys divided the age groups differently than what the research had intent. Instead of having three groups, only two emerged from the responses. These groups emerged from the online and paper surveys. It appeared that people between age 18 and 35-36 had mostly filled the online survey, while participants between ages 36 and above filled the paper survey. Participants within the first group (18-35) were gendered equal, 49% men and 52% women, while participants in the second group were a little more divided. Also, interestingly, 18 % of the second group was young people between age 18 and 20 and the rest were 36 and older. This group had more men (64%) than women (36%). A majority of the first group (49%) has obtained at least a

Bachelor degree. In the second group, equal numbers of participants (36%) have obtained a high school diploma and a Bachelor degree.

The younger generation, the first age group, is a little bit more nuanced in their understanding and approaches in dealing with Rwanda and the genocide. A large majority of them were also born in Rwanda and identify themselves as Rwandan, while for the other group; their Hutu identity is more salient than their Rwanda identity. Similarly to the elders, this younger generation still gets involved with their Rwandan community and practices traditional rituals. The online survey was mostly filled out by the younger generations who stated that 81.80% of them were in fact born in Rwandan and only 45.40% saw themselves as Rwandan. When asked what is the most important identity(ies) between Rwandan, Belgium, Hutu, and other, 24.20% of the participants chose Hutu as the most important identity. In the older generation that filled out mostly the paper version of the survey, 73% said that they were born in Rwandan and 18.20% were born elsewhere (not in Rwanda or Belgium). Also, 74.50% identified themselves as Hutu.

Many of them decided to fill both Rwandans and Hutus explaining that being Rwandan does not stop them from being Hutu, vice versa. Among the younger generations, the same among of people (15.10%) identify themselves as Belgian or with a different identity than Rwandan, Hutu, and Belgium. Knowing that many of them grew up in Belgium, it is interesting to see that only 1/6 of the young Hutus do see themselves as Belgians. The same among of people (54.50%) across all generations is actively involved in their Rwandan community; a large number of the younger generation

(93.90%) stated that they practice some of the traditions once practiced in Rwanda and only 73% of the older generation practice them.

This clearly means that a sense of collectivism has built bridges between the different generations. Interestingly, the younger generations reported a higher rate of traditional ritual practice than the older. This can mean two different things; first, as a way to connect with a land they either don't know or have very little memory of, the younger generations have held onto things that will help them create a sense of belonging. Second, this could be a discrepancy. Assuming the older generation is composed of their older siblings and parents, it is interesting to think that the youth take part in rituals and practices their elders don't. Yet, it is also believable that it is a way for them to discover or rediscover their motherland through positive initiatives. It may also signify that the younger generations are slowly getting involved or advocating for their rights as Rwandans and/or Hutus by educating themselves about their homeland. This can be emphasized by their use of Kinyarwanda, the different elements of Rwanda they are interested in learning about, and their willingness and eagerness to go back "home."

Among the younger generations, over 50% are certain that they will return to Rwanda and less than 20% are not sure. This, combined with their desire to learn their mother-tongue and learn about Rwanda, brings to light a thirst for belonging. Over 80% of the younger participants declared fluency in Kinyarwanda as well as a second language, French or Dutch. Their connection to Rwanda is also due the fact that a large number of them, 96%, still have family "back home." Even more interesting is that what these new generations want to know about is the history of Rwanda and their own family history,

more than the causes of the genocide. Talking about the genocide with their elders who lived through it has given them a nuanced understanding of the atrocities. Therefore, what they know is based on what their family support systems and what the media convey. Having a circle of people who survived the atrocities has given them a different perspective.

Even though the different generations seem to agree on their perceptions and ideologies, nuances are still found. For example, among the younger participants, 85% said that they were born in Rwanda, yet only 45% identify themselves as Rwandan while 24% use their Hutu identity. 3% of the youth were born abroad (neither Rwanda nor Belgium). 15% decided to use a different national identity. Within the older generation, the trends are inversed. 73% of them were born in Rwanda and 75% did use Hutu as their salient identity. When community engagement and sense of ‘groupness’ or social affiliation are compared, most of them (94%) did state that the sense of social affiliation is still important whereas half of the younger generations admitted to not participate in initiatives organized by the Rwandan community.

Also, their narratives of the genocide and the current situation in Rwanda are very interesting. When asked about the genocide, 70% of the younger participants think that it is important to know about the genocide and about 10% stated no. When asked where they get their information from, about half of the youth state their family members or friends, and 38% say media. None of them mentioned school, which should have been an important channel in the younger generations’ personal development. In the older generation only about 30% say it is very important to know about the genocide. The

argument the other 70% provided is that they knew everything about it already. They had lived through it and did not need anyone to tell them what happened and how they felt. So when asked what information they wanted to have in regard to the genocide, the young generations are divided. About 25% seek information about their own family, 17% are interested in the cause of the genocide, 33% just wanted to know more about the history of Rwanda, and only 10% seek other type of information. Within the older generations, as stated before, more than 80% had experienced the genocide, therefore, a big majority of the participants do not seek any more information, only 9% are still interested in the cause of genocide, and 16% want to know more about the history of their homeland.

Finally, as diaspora, their attachment to their homeland is essential, which was the source of few additional questions focusing on their intent to visit or move back. When inquired if the participants had gone back, only about 25% of the participants, across the generations, did in fact visit Rwanda. Within the first group, about 60% 'definitely' want to go back, while 12% do not, and another 12% are uncertain. Around 34% think that their experience will be positive if they go back, 28% are not so sure, and 22% state that their experience will be negative. In the older group, 60% want to go back. 43% expect the experience to be positive, and the remaining are not so hopeful. These results, based on the surveys, will be more nuanced in the one-on-one interviews.

As we can see from these findings, the generations acted and reacted differently to their new situation. The younger generations started to look for a sense of collectivism and belonging by connecting or reconnecting with the homeland in a broad way, using

both personal and familial narratives, and social and national identities. It seems that there is a growing awakening among the younger generations, and it will be interesting to see where it takes them. The older generations, who survived the atrocities, have a more fixed, defined sense of self and collective. They privileged their ethnic identity rather than their national identity. Their perceptions of their homeland and desire to return are more ambiguous. Yet they still want their children to connect to their homeland, through family support, language, and rituals. Finally, most of them still don't feel like they can share their story, even after twenty years.

### **Qualitative Method: The Voice of Otherness**

Forty-six people were interviewed for this qualitative data collection. Four important themes based on the research question led the discussions. They were: identity, narrative, homeland, and coping mechanisms. Within each group (group I – 18-30, group II – 18-45, group III – 46+), nuanced responses were observed within each group. In terms of the identity theme, the participants used very determined identities; some also rejected either their individual identity or their group membership, social identity. Additionally, negative terms or terms related to otherness or unwantedness were used to describe how they felt, who they have become, and the social identity society has imposed upon them. In their stories of themselves—narrative identity—“trauma” and/or victimhood were the dominant themes. Many recognized that they have not yet overcome their own traumas. Their chosen trauma has increased in recent years based on the competing narratives they have been facing. Also, the politics of labeling and the stigmas

that come with them have shaped their understanding of themselves and consequently have transformed and reshaped their own stories. Thus, the single-sided narrative of the genocide has made their narratives into counter-narratives, a narrative of identity. In terms of Diaspora and homeland, they feel closely attached to Rwanda and its politics. Interestingly, the genocide itself is contested. Finally, the different coping mechanisms they found to deal with the competing narratives, and unresolved or chosen traumas are clustered into four categories: family or social support, the act of moving on, a sense of activism, and self-destructive behaviors.

### **The Transformation of Identities**

As stated above, the Hutu identity in diaspora has been shaped and transformed by the official narrative of the genocide as well as by the social labels and stigmas that came with it. Some have ignored or rejected their ethnic or even their national, Rwandan identity, and others have embraced it and adopted it as their salient identity. Among all the participants, the youngest had created the most radical responses to their socially constructed understating of what the Hutu and Rwandan identities were supposed to be. Yet, it is clear that identity or the lack of “chosen” identity has affected the entire diaspora community. A very interesting example of identity struggle within the younger group was given by participant 4, when she stated, “I don’t see myself as more Rwandan than Dutch or Belgian. I know I am because of my parents, but it does not define me.” In reaction to the different narratives that dictate her identity, she has chosen to accept or reject all. Others, like participant 5, have not even tried to be immersed in their parents’

cultural identity. He stated, “I did not even know that I was Hutu. I knew that I was Rwandan and that my father was Hutu, but never really made the connection.” Both participants 4 and 5 emphasized the saliency of their Belgian identity by stating things like, “I created myself here, I can’t see my plans coming true in Africa,” and “I live here, grew up here, that’s all that mattered.” This idea of not belonging to a single identity or nation is not specific to the younger group; participant 34 said, “I stopped asking questions about my Hutuness and embraced the life and blessings I have now. I try to avoid conversations on identity and Rwanda.” Similar to both participants 4 and 34, participant 46 stated, “We should stop talking about Hutu, Tutsi, or even Rwandans. It does not help us to rebuild ourselves.” This idea of moving away from the identity debates was not very common, however. Of all the 46 participants, very few disassociated themselves from their identity—ethnic, national or other.

Rather than rejecting or reshaping their identities to fit society’s expectations or their new lives built in the aftermath of the genocide, a large number of the participants have embraced their national and ethnic identity as a way of reconstructing themselves. Some have taken on their Hutu identity and made it salient in reaction to their lack of acknowledged victimhood. Others have adopted the national identity. Participant 10 reflected on his identities by stating, “Among my numerous identities, the Rwandan is the strongest; sadly, I cannot embrace it... yet my Hutu identity has influenced my life in particular ways.” Participant 11 explained that first of all he is Hutu, because that was what shaped him, then he is Rwandan, then a refugee, and, last of all, a Belgian. Participant 33 supported the argument that part of her identity was formed and shaped by

social pressures and stigmas. She stated, “I am the soul of my loved ones. Don’t ask me to change who I am because someone blames them for the worst. I am proud to be a part of them.” Participant 17 explained his identity transformation by saying,

I felt Rwandan thinking that I was Rwandan, but quickly, I was persecuted because I was Hutu. Not long ago, I learned that there was a geographic land called Ubuhutu. Since I learned that, I don’t identify myself or don’t want to be identified as Rwandan, I am a Hutu...I refuse to be called Rwandan, I am a Hutu.

Participant 38 expanded that idea by saying,

People like to tell me what to think, what to say, and how to act, just because I am perceived as the enemy, just because I am Hutu... but I am Hutu because people don’t allow me to choose. It was an action reaction. I don’t deny or reject my parents’ identities. I am who I am and who my parents wanted me to be.

The idea that they did not ‘choose’ or acquire their identity is very interesting. Participant 9 stated, “we do not choose to be Hutu, so why should I apologize for mistakes committed by others.” Participant 20 elaborated by saying, “we are Hutu, and it would be against nature to deny our ethnicity.” According to participant 16, from a legal stance, “the identity you give when you are a refugee is first that you are Rwandan, and then Hutu. Officially you are a Rwandan, but you know that you are a Hutu.” During the resettlement process, while people had to register as refugees, the identity that was asked was their national identity. Many had to use their ‘Rwandan.’ Yet, they were categorized as either ‘Hutu Rwandan’, ‘Tutsi Rwandan,’ or Twa Rwandan. So according to participant 16, their Rwandan identity was the one used to describe them in most settings,

still their Hutu identity was part of who they were and influence their environment.

Legally, Hutus are called Rwandans, but their Hutuness is still influencing the ways they live and understand their roles within their given society. Participant 2, who was born and raised in Belgium, emphasizes this idea of socially, forced dual identities, by stating:

Because I am black, people always ask me where I am from. I usually just say Rwanda, but then the famous questions are always asked. ‘Are you Hutu or Tutsi?’ And ‘Aren’t the Hutus the bad people who one day decided to killing their neighbors?’ Without even wanting it, I am labeled and classified by others.

Thus, many participants struggled with their identity. Participant 9 explained that despite her new Belgian identity, she was still not completely Belgian. She felt the same about her Rwandan identity; because it had been so long, Rwanda did not really seem like home either. She said, “here you’re [black, Rwandan, Hutu] are a stranger because of your skin color; there you are stranger because you are not from there anymore.” Participant 21 emphasized this idea of belonging nowhere when she said, “despite the fact that I’ve lived here for three-fourths of my life, I am not Belgian. If I go back to Rwanda, I will not be Rwandan either.” She used the terms “damaged or troubled identities” to define who she has become and how she sees herself. Participant 32 explained her struggle by saying, “I traveled the world looking for myself, until I realized that I had lost my identity 20 years ago. Now, I am an empty vessel, a product of others’ mistakes.” Participant 18 also explained her current struggle when she stated,

I am scared to let people, outsiders, know that I am Hutu because of the stigma. I don’t even recognize the genocide. Based on my experience, there was not

premeditation. Before of the war, we used to live together and we were fine.

When the RPF attacked Rwanda that is when the ethnicity became salient. Before then, we were fine. Now I have to choose an identity, I have to take on the stigma the government has imposed on us. So there it be, I am Hutu before all.

“The question of identity is very complex, especially for Rwandans...the society will always define you as an outsider...which makes me seek that outside land, which is Rwanda,” stated participant 15. He continued by saying, “for people like me, we would like to define ourselves as Rwandans, but we don’t know that country; we would like to define ourselves as Belgians, but the society does not define us as such; it is like we are stateless.” This idea of being stateless, an outsider, or even unwanted has prevailed in many interviews. Participant 11 used it when he stated, “I identify myself as a Belgian, originally from Rwanda; as a refugee because I am not home.” Participant 15 said, “I see myself as a Belgo-Rwandan, a refugee, as a young activist who loves his country...but when I was young, I couldn’t say I was Hutu.” It is clear that, as participant 15 stated, “the question of identity is very complex, especially for Rwandans.”

In conclusion, within the identity framework, different subthemes emerged and created a complex understanding of the Hutu identity with this Diaspora community. It showed that there is not one big picture that can incorporate all members of this diaspora. Some have decided that they wanted and needed to move on and forget the past, which also meant getting away from this ethnic/national identity debate. Others said they could not escape those stereotypical understandings of what Rwandans and Hutus are. They had to live with it. Finally, others decided to embrace their Hutu identity because it was

imposed onto them by ways of promoted stereotypes and developed stigmas that have been affecting them for years. This last group has struggled with the sense of belonging and ‘homeness.’ They see themselves as stateless, caught somewhere in-between.

### **Counter-Narratives of the Unwanted**

The official narrative of the genocide has traveled the world and transformed the lives of millions of Hutu refugees and diaspora communities. This narrative has suppressed any counter-narratives and consequently has silenced many people who wanted and needed to talk. Participant 19 stated that “Tutsis have the power on their side, so no matter what we [Hutus] say or do, they always win... when we try to voice our stories, we are called genocidaires.” Participant 15 continued, “Those who have a different story to tell cannot find the channels. Only the Rwandan government is allowed and controls the stories that are broadcasted and available.” Participant 10 elaborated by stating, “the issue in the Rwandan case is that if you want to believe in a one-sided story, you will find enough evidence to reinforce your beliefs.” Consequently, according to participants 5 and 11, with the help of the international community, more particularly “the bad friend that is the US...this regime [Kagame’s regime] wants to maintain Hutu prisoners of their propaganda and selected narrative in order to divide and reign.” The idea has been reinforced by the different governments during times of commemoration. Participant 11 continued, “When you want to commemorate your lost one, most of the time, several authority agencies stop you because it is supposedly for only Tutsi victims.” Therefore,

We [society] are completely forgetting the Hutu communities and help stigmatize them even more. By putting all this pressure and propaganda, it implies that [the] only clear hands are Rwandans', therefore, Hutu are not and cannot be seen as Rwandan. That is the strategy used behind that all Hutus need to apologize.

The labels of genocide, perpetrators, and/or genocidaires have affected all the different generations of Hutus. Participant 2 stated, "I was born here [in Belgium], grew up here, but I still have to justify myself...because of my family name, my look, my parents' history, I am put into a box and labelled as a bad person." The labels and their impact on people's lives revolt participant 36. She stated, "people should stop using labels to define others. What good has it done so far? While the worst dictator governs Rwanda, people continue to talk about what happened 20 years ago and continue to blame Hutus for all the wrong in this world." These labels have rendered some people unable to create a positive Rwandan identity to the point that they have denied or rejected it. Participant 39 explained that "after a while, it was too painful to keep following the atrocities committed in Rwanda. I was tired of people assuming that I was a bad person, so I just stopped. I don't follow or even want to hear about Rwanda." She went on by adding, "I don't want my child to grow up in the same circumstances as I did, and because I want something better for him, I avoid the Rwandan community and anything related to Rwanda."

Numerous initiatives have been implemented in Rwanda to help victims and survivors, all Tutsi, to deal with their trauma, but nothing has been done to help Hutu within Rwanda and abroad. Therapy is not part of Rwandan culture, stated participant 27.

Participant 20 emphasized the psychological impact of not having gone through the trauma-healing process, saying, “Now, we can see a desensitization; people have seen too much, witnessed death, now, they are numb.” When asked what is needed to forget the pain, and overcome the trauma, most responded that it is impossible. It’s been twenty years now, and those twenty years have added to the trauma. These traumas have accumulated and complexified the meanings of their stories and narratives of identity. As participant 20 explained, there is a sense of numbness when it comes to the stories needed for healing and reconnecting to others. Participant 12 even stated, “It is impossible to forget because we have all lost people. It was not an illness, it was a massacre. People tend to force themselves to forget but it is practically impossible.” Participant 43 said,

Not talking about it does not mean it is gone. It just means it is too hard to voice, too hard to explain, too hard to even comprehend. Most of us have seen evil in the eyes and cannot forget that moment when they wanted to die because it is too painful to live without loved ones. Now, we are only surviving, leaving day by day, hoping that it will not take too long.

Participant 43 explained that they are narratives or stories that are too painful to explore. Those narratives have shaped their trauma in a way that has influenced their understanding of themselves. Participant 18, who lost all the males in her family, stated,

For many it is only a matter of time. We are already dead inside. What we are waiting for is our final day, [when] the day the pain we feel inside will give us release. We stay strong for our children, give them the best education we can,

promise them the world, and allow them to grow and find themselves. That is the only thing we have left.

Trauma, chosen, physical or emotional, is still very present. Unfortunately, the trauma is helping to keep the hatred alive in people's hearts, explained participant 18. That trauma made their connection to Rwanda, their homeland, even more important in their individual and collective developments.

### **Nothing is Better than Home**

When someone thinks about diaspora and homeland, what comes to mind is well described by Participant 19. She said, "20 years ago, I lost my home. Now, I have a normal life here in Belgium, a family and a good job, but yet, I still feel empty inside because there is nothing better than home." The idea of home, this magical place where one felt so safe, has a challenging, paradoxical connotation when it comes to Hutus and Rwanda. As explained above, their narratives and recent identities have been formed by and in response to the labels and stories their homeland has promoted about and against them. Participant 45 explained the dilemma he has constantly faced. He said,

Home, where is home? Rwanda has taken away our pride, our heritage, and our loved ones. President Kagame has rebuilt the country on the blood of innocent Hutus, so how can I call Rwanda my home? Yet, it seems like I am thorn. It is in my heart; it is who I am. My Rwanda might be not the same as before, but Rwanda is still the place [where] my parents taught me my values, principles. Rwanda is the heritage I want to leave for my children.

As participant 45 stated, for the Hutu Diaspora, their homeland is source of pain, but it still is their homeland. Participant 28 reaffirmed this idea of homeland as a special place when she stated, “I am my country; I am my ethnic group. It is on my mind, my language, my dreams, and blood.” She went on, “what saddens me is that I will probably die here, away from my country.” Even the younger people who were born in their host countries or were brought there at a young age have an interesting connection to Rwanda. Participant 23 elaborated on Rwanda by saying, “I am a Rwandan, who was born in Belgium, grew up in Belgium, but Rwanda is my heart, my blood, and it is my heritage.” Perhaps accepting that Rwanda would most likely never be the same, participant 16 said, “Rwanda is not the Rwanda we knew back then. The only thing we can pass on to our children is their brain.”

Sadly, according to the participants, Rwanda has become a faraway, almost unreachable homeland for Hutus. Its president and politics have limited critical thinking and open dialogue. The few that had gone back said that Rwanda was not what they knew once, or what they had hoped. Participant 4 explained that there is “still pain in the air, even on the surface, we can feel unease.” Participant 12 said, “Rwandan politics is a lost cause. Look at those who go back and try to change things, they end up in prison.” This sense of unease is mostly based on the facts that Rwanda is not a democratic country, its laws are discriminatory, and its president is believed to have committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide crimes. Participant 14 expressed his concern when he stated, “it is like genetics, people just say and think that all Hutus are genocidiaries. It is like saying all Germans born prior to the Holocaust are all

genocidaires.” Consequently, Rwanda and its narrative have become very heavy burdens for the new generations. Participant 15 described the dominant and oppressive environment that has been imposed onto them. He stated,

When we hear ‘Rwandan,’ we hear genocide. I don’t think that there is a Rwandan on the earth who is proud to hear the word genocide, which made them deny their identity. When we hear ‘Hutu’ it is even worse. People see genocidaire; if you did not commit the genocide, your parents did.

Therefore, though they are in diaspora, Rwanda’s politics still affect them. One important point of agreement for all the participants is the role of President Kagame in the atrocities committed prior, during, and post-1994 genocide. Participant 3 raised several questions in which President Kagame was portrayed as the source of all conflict. He said, “What did Rwandans do, what did we do to God to give us a criminal like Kagame... Kagame is not only a criminal, he is a genocidaire... how can the international community support a genocidal regime?” Participant 14 continued by saying, “President Kagame committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and even genocide. He does not hide it in his speeches. Those who believe that he did not are mistaken.” Participant 7 stated, “Justice in Rwanda needs to be based on democracy and there is no justice in Rwanda, it is only partial. Because the current government was involved in the genocide, justice can’t happen.”

Therefore, according to the participants, a new regime needs to be established, and Kagame and the RPF won’t be part of it. Rwanda need to become democratic and most of all needs to have real justice, not the form of it created and implemented by

Kagame. Participant 40 believes that “as long as Kagame is in power or protected by the international community, we [Hutus] are doomed to be the villains.” Participant 17 went on, “Today, we are the Palestinians; the only problem is that we don’t have intifada and don’t have terrorists. Who knows, maybe we are creating the terrorists of tomorrow?” This distinction between Hutus and Tutsis goes against the Rwandan government’s national identity policy. The policy might seem like a step toward reconciliation but it was very widely criticized by all the participants. Here are some of the responses collected during the interviews:

Participant 5, from the younger group, stated, ‘they don’t want to create a Rwandan identity. They want to create a Tutsi identity and call it Rwandan. That could provoke another war... they are so corrupt; we can never have peace.’

Participant 7, from the second group, said, ‘national identity does not say that the ethnic identity needs to disappear. I don’t understand this game.’

Participant 11, from the second group, explained that ‘there is not national identity; it is a strategy to require all the Hutus to ask for forgiveness for crimes they did not commit. Crimes are personal, so if the parents are the ones that committed crimes, they have to be judge individually, not impose this philosophy to the next generations.’

Participant 15, from the first group, stated that ‘the national identity is a lie; the message behind that policy is created to marginalize Hutus, because it implies that Hutus owe their freedom to Tutsis so they have to constantly apologize.’

Policies such as the national identity have increased the criticism of the government and cast shadows over the justice system. Most participants thought it was contradictory for the government to use Tutsi narratives to present or portray the genocide and then legalize the use of ethnicity, since Hutus are not seen as victims of the atrocities. According to participant 7, this has made the reconciliation process unsuccessful. Participant 10 stated that “in the case of Rwanda, many feel that there was not justice. The Hutu, as a victim, he was never been heard in the local, regional, or international court.” He said of the term “genocide,” “The problem is its application. The discussion is that the amount of death responds to the criteria, but the circumstances were so mysterious that it does not always fit the criteria.” Participant 15 also stated that “the Gacaca justice is completely biased; it is a justice of the winners. The international justice is politicized. Justice never existed and I don’t know if it will ever exist.” Therefore, as participant 16 emphasized, justice systems such as the Gacaca courts or ICTR “did not help to unite and reconcile Rwandans, it divided them even more.” In terms of reconciliation, participant 10 believed that “reconciliation is not possible as long as we don’t recognize people who were real victims, Hutus and Tutsis.” Participant 20 summarized Rwandan justice by calling it “the law of the strongest, the winner, and the [most] powerful.” Looking at homeland as a mythical place diaspora communities aspire to go back to, most of the participants struggle with the idea that their homeland is not the place they want it to be. Very critical of the different laws and initiatives the international community and President Kagame have established, the participants are emphasizing the importance of mutual dialogues among both Hutus and Tutsi as groups and not under the

umbrella of the imposed national identity policy. Many people stress that the recognition of their ethnic victimhood is essential for the reconciliation process and the creation of a new homeland.

### **Homeland and Victimhood Narratives**

Before exploring the idea of homeland and victimhood, it is essential to mention that not everybody associates these two ideas (homeland and victimhood) with each other. Many did distance themselves and try to move on. Yet, the idea of the real victims led a lot of the interviews. Participant 10 shared his opinion, saying, “I just want the world to know that I am innocent. I shouldn’t apologize for other’s mistakes... my family lost loved ones, where is the justice there?” Participant 32 also shared her pain by saying, “What about my loved ones who were murdered? Because I am not Tutsi, I cannot be called a victim.” Participant 41 expressed his dilemma by stating,

I have a hole in my heart. I grew up without my parents, so what kind of man am I supposed to become? If I am my father’s son and my grandfather’s grandson, then I am nothing more than a memory. My identity was shaped by my lost ones and the lies people tell about my people. I am a victim.

Participant 18 explained the level of trauma and victimization that most Hutu have to live with. According to her, “Now people called what happened to them a ‘Hidden Pain.’ We are only surviving. There is not justice for Rwandans, only Tutsi justice. We show a good image but what is in our heart is not that, we are hurt, we have hatred.” Because of that, she believes that people cannot forget. “How can I forget that my parents were killed, that

my brother disappeared, that my loves one were killed that same day? I cannot forget.” Participant 38 also said that “many want to believe in forgiveness and forget what happened, but the situation and their lack of victimhood will not allow it.” Participant 11 raised some important questions when he asked “When people ask to forgive, I always wonder, forgive what? Forgive who? Why would I ask for forgiveness? The ones that should do it are Kagame, those who committed crimes, and the RPF.” According to him, his victimization was taken away by the same people who should be apologizing to him, and all the Hutu victims.

In addition to feeling a lack of victimhood and believing that Kagame and his regime need to change, most participants struggle with the term “genocide.” They have a hard time agreeing on using the term and its meaning in the case of Rwanda. Some denied it and others talked about a double genocide. For some, even the definition of genocide is problematic. Participant 10 explained, “we still need to work on the definition of genocide in Rwanda, because many people’s stories don’t fit the narrative.” Many of the participants reject the idea that what happened between April and July of 1994 was premeditated or deliberate, which is essential in the definition of genocide. Participant 18 elaborated this idea by saying, “based on my experience, there was not premeditation. Before the war, we used to live together. We were fine. When the RPF attacked Rwanda that is when the Ethnicity became salient. Before then, we were fine.” Participant 11 expressed the same concerns when stated “the word genocide is not properly used, but that is because of [the] media and propaganda. The RPF [was] the one that premeditated the genocide and helped it take place.” Participant 18 also said,

I don't recognize the genocide. Yes, there was massacre of Tutsi, [but] the Hutu massacres [were] worse. My entire family got slaughtered, so where is their stories? There [were] more Hutus killed than Tutsis, but only the Rwandan propaganda and selected narratives [are] heard... what is happening now is worse than genocide. What has been happening these past twenty years is an extermination against Hutu. People, the international community, should be ashamed of itself.

Participant 5 also believes that “the Rwandan case was not a genocide, it was a horrific and tragic war.” In order to really understand the civil war and genocide that took place, we should not limit the discussion to 1994, believes participant 45. Participant 11 added, Too often, people limit themselves at the 1994 period, and there forget the 1990 civil war and after July 1994. There have been other atrocities, so it is difficult to forget. We can even overcome our trauma if we are allowed to mourn, and move on, but we are still stigmatized and called genocidaire.

On the other hand, others believe that a genocide did happen in 1994, but it was not the only genocide Rwanda and the Great Lakes region experienced. Many struggle with the idea that people focus on the atrocities committed during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, but only few examine what took place during the civil war and after the genocide. By focusing on one particular series of events and dismissing the rest, it has not allowed them (Rwandans) to forget, as Participant 11 explained. The memories of the genocide, the stigmas, and labels that were created have not allow Hutus to move on or even mourn their loses. A large number of the participants blame the Rwandan government for

institutionalization of the genocide narrative not only within Rwanda but also abroad. However, It appears that the general understanding on the genocide and the world's attitude toward the victim and perpetrator labels have helped shape the dominant categorization created in the post-Rwandan genocide. By not linking the civil war and the atrocity's that took place after July 1994, it reinforces the separation between the victims (Tutsi), and perpetrators (Hutu).

Participant 16 stated, "In Rwanda [there] was a Tutsi genocide, but there was also another genocide that started in 1990 that continued until 1999, against Hutu. Using the term 'double genocide' is not denial [of] the Tutsi genocide. One genocide plus one genocide equal two not zero." The same participant, participant 11, continued, "the term 'Rwandan Genocide' does not make sense, because we will need to know who and against who. It is more appropriate to say genocide against Hutu and a genocide against Tutsi." Participant 14 stated that "there was a Tutsi genocide in 1994, and a genocide of Hutu in the refugee camps and DRC, post-1994." Participant 17 found the term "Rwandan Genocide" paradoxical. He said the government told Rwandans, "there is no more Hutus and Tutsis, only Rwandans. Then they say that there is a Tutsi genocide. [That] is how the Rwandan problem was created." Therefore, according to him, "Rwanda has one problem, the genocide."

Interestingly, even the initial date of the genocide is contested. Participant 3 stated that "April 7<sup>th</sup> [the day the genocide started according to the Rwandan government] does not represent anything; it is only a political move made by the RPF and Kagame." Participant 7 elaborated by saying that "April 6<sup>th</sup> is a dangerous date for the RPF because

two Hutu presidents were assassinated. On this date, it is implied that justice is needed, which scares Kagame.” Both participants point out that Rwanda is very politicized. The dates that are supposed to be representing the beginning of the genocide are contested among the groups. According to participant 3, the date that should be considered is April 6<sup>th</sup> not April 7<sup>th</sup>. Participant 7 states that April 7<sup>th</sup> was chosen in order to hide the shooting of the presidential plane, which was according to him, executed by the RPF. It helps forgetting that the genocide started with the killing of a Hutu president. In their interviews both participants stressed it is a political move the RPF made in order to hide their actions and suppress the Hutu victimhood.

Finally, the participants feel that even their status as a diaspora community is controversial and contested by the Rwandan government. Participant 17 explained by saying that “according to the Rwandan government, diaspora is only for Tutsi. You and I [Hutus] are not recognized as diaspora.” Participant 11 added,

Here [in Belgium] the diaspora is composed of the embassy representatives or RPF allies. It is like we are not allowed to be called diaspora. For example, if there is a celebration, you cannot go because you don't belong or are [not] recognized as diaspora. If you go, you can be physically harmed.

Participant 13 stressed the issue of diaspora by stating “diaspora, which diaspora are we talking about? Last time I check[ed], diaspora is only for Tutsi. Here, I am a Rwandan who is not allowed to be himself and enjoy his heritage.” Yet, they used the word “diaspora” to describe Hutus. Participant 17 said, “as diaspora, the first responsibility is

to understand why we left home, the second is to accept his or her Rwandan identity in exile, and the third is to understand why we are Hutu in exile.”

### **Coping Mechanisms to Deal with the Unthinkable**

One of the first and most important coping mechanisms participants used to deal with their genocide trauma, as well as their resettlement, was family support. Participant 1 explained that it was with her family’s moral support that she was able to have a normal life and look forward. Some parents have tried to focus on the present and their children’s future without communicating or explaining to their children about the actions that pushed them to flee. Some believed that “to transmit the ideas of the genocide was to perpetuate the hatred.” So, they avoid the discussions. Others wanted to talk about it and make sure that their children knew where they came from and what had happened. Participant 14 stated, “the parents’ narrative [and chosen trauma] has an essential impact on the children. What matters is the story parents usually choose to tell about themselves and their life.” Participant 15 continued by saying, “I don’t think information/history is well transmitted. Many parents choose to hide their path and past because they want to move on. When the younger generations will become adults, they won’t know their stories, their parents’ journey, the history of Rwanda...” When asked parents about their coping mechanisms and the transmission of information among the different generations, most participants responded that they did the best they could. Participant 30 stated that she was only trying to provide for her children:

I did the best I could have done in that situation. Nobody should blame me. What mattered was that my children were safe, had food on the table, and could go to school. Also, I have lost my family members, and my life was transformed into chaos. After a while, it was too late to explain. All the children were old; were married and had children. It seemed that it was never the right time to talk about it. Now, I know I was wrong. The two youngest, who were 9 and 10 when the genocide happened, have blamed me for taking away what they call their stories. I barely see them now.

On the other hand, some people think that the children needed to take active roles in seeking information. Participant 14 believes, “youth do not really make the effort to learn about what happened. There is a problem on both ends: youth and parents.” Participant 15 said that “the Rwandan problem seems so complex for some young that they don’t want to tackle it. They choose to ignore or deny what their parents lived and experienced. That is the danger among younger generations.” Regarding those youth who have chosen to ignore or deny their parents’ experiences, participant 7 claimed, “they are completely lost. It is only when we will have a real democratic regime in Rwanda that these new generations will understand themselves and where they really come from.” Therefore, no matter how painful it is, “the younger generations need to know the truth about the history of Rwanda,” said participant 18.

Other popular coping mechanisms, especially with young adults, were alcohol and drugs. In order to forget, remember, or just live day by day, many started drinking or smoking. A few even left home, became homeless, committed suicide, or were

incarcerated in juvenile prisons. Understanding of these destructive copying mechanisms is less developed than it is of the others due to the close families and collective bonds that encourage families to keep information private. A few participants mentioned these behaviors in very illusive ways.

### **Coming Home**

When asked if they will return to Rwanda, few said they would. Participant 2 said she would never go back. What she saw and felt terrorized her. Participant 20 questioned the motives of those who went back. She stated, “People who decided to go for vacation, it unease me [sic] because people are living in poverty and struggle. I cannot go for vacation. I will go to help and improve people’s lives.” Others like participant 19 asked, “Why would I return? I know that I am Rwandan, my family name reminds me that I am Rwandan; I don’t need to go back to know who I am.” Participant 40 believed the same as participant 19. She said, “the past is in the past. I have a new life, and that’s all that matters.”

Some, however, planned to go back and enact positive change. Participant 14 explained that nothing is stopping him from going back, but he will most likely be a target due to his political opinions. Participant 15 also contemplate the idea of going back.

Before, I believed that I [would] never go back to Rwanda, but with time, I started to think that we will need to confront the situation. I will go on the ground, justice or not, to bring HR [human rights] in Rwanda, knowing that there might be

physical danger. . . I am just waiting to construct myself, finish my education, and gain a strong support from here, and then I will go.

A growing sense of activism has empowered the younger generations to be part of the change they want to see happen in their homeland, or to just be the change themselves.

Participant 10 concluded this analysis by reflecting on the last twenty years and predicting what future holds. He explained that when they [Hutus] left, they thought it would be temporary, and that they would come back a few months later. Now it's been twenty years. What he sees happening in the future is:

The younger generations will personify the Rwandan conflict because they are excluded from the discussion. They are the real victims because they inherited the chaotic situation. The solution might be for both Hutus and Tutsis to create peaceful dialogue... We will less likely have a democratic result in the Rwandan conflict. We will have another conflict, a diplomatic or armed conflict. Those who talk about it, they are predicting to have something worse than 1994.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the same themes are dominant in all age groups. Yet, the question of identity is more problematic within the first group. Divided into three different sub-groups, this generation is caught between who they want to be, who the society tells them to be, and who their parents say they are. Since identity is shaped by the personal experiences, society, and aspiration for the future, many in this generation see themselves as having a 'damaged identity'. Within that generation, some have 'decided' to just

distance themselves from the Hutu or Rwandan community and rebuild themselves in the new host-country. Others did embrace this dual identity (Hutu and Rwandan) as part of their principle, salient identities. The second age group is more conscious about who they are. Most were old enough to have had a sense of self when the genocide happened, so they aspire to recreate themselves and have a normal life, still they have an important influence and are influenced by the first group. The older generation's identity has been reinforced by the genocide. They took on their Hutu identity as the salient one, despite their efforts to move on and forget about their past.

When it comes to narrative identity and the stories they tell to others and to themselves, the inverse process is observed. The younger generations have stronger and louder voices. The youth has faced competing stories, which have pushed some to choose one and stick to it. Some decided that their own narrative, created by their new experiences in the host country, would be the dominant narrative, so they distanced themselves from their parents' community. Others decided that their Hutu or Rwandan identities were an essential narrative at itself, and they embraced it and decided to promote or fight for it. No matter what narrative they promote, the first generation is the loudest. It is seen in their political involvement and actions. Those who are engaged in the 'Hutu struggle' are the youth who organized themselves and are bringing awareness on the human rights violation of the Rwandan government. They have become Kagame's private watchdog. The second generation is following the steps of their younger brothers and sisters. Despite that they are not as active, they encourage them and find other ways to provide support. Their narratives are more influenced by the actions and demands of

the first generation. The third generation's narratives are almost non-existent. They have used coping mechanisms that were suppressing their own stories, which with time has silenced them. Most young activists have complained that when the elders decide to come to the different initiatives, they come alone, sit, listen, and leave. The idea that it is time to empower the new generations has silenced the elders' narratives. It has also increased the generational gap. These silenced narratives or voices are an interesting part of this older generation, which has created tensions when it comes to the generational relationships each age group has with the others.

Finally, the understanding on homeland also differs from generation to generation. Both the first and second groups are affected by the notion of 'home away from home.' For those youth who have adopted Belgium as their home, Rwanda is a source of headaches, something they do not want to think about. But for those who hold on to their Rwandan or Hutu identity, Rwanda represents a constant fight for freedom. Using terms such as refugees and stateless reinforces their desire to go back 'home.' Yet the land they knew is not the same as the current Rwanda. That is an understanding the third, older generation, has gained. Despite the fact that most of them would like to return to Rwanda, only few say that they would if they had the chance. The second group said the same. Most of them have created a life for themselves in the host country and cannot imagine leaving everything behind to go back to a country that is synonym of tragedy. It is within the first generation that we can find the large number of people who want and are determined to go back one day. The Rwanda they know is shaped by the different narratives they heard, by the human rights violations reports they read, and by the idea of

the mystical land of their ancestors. Willing to give up everything to go explore the land that defined who they are and how they are treated, this first age group represents the future of Rwanda. Yet, they still need to define if the future will be peaceful or not. Participant 36 offered a good overview of the diversity of opinion this diaspora community has faced when she said, “people should stop using labels to define others. What good has it done so far? While the worst dictator governs Rwanda, people continue to talk about what happened 20 years ago and continue to blame Hutus for all the wrong in this world?” This Hutu identity is still a synonym of and labeled as the villain, and because of that it does seem that there is a struggle between those who want to let go and those who want to remember. Most do agree that Rwanda is a dictatorship, yet people focus on the past and can’t really or are not allowing themselves to move on. This community is unified in their diversity of views.

## CHAPTER SIX: REFLECTING ON OBSERVATION

### 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party

The first event the researcher attended was the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of one of the members of the community. The dominant themes that emerged from this observation were social structures, nostalgia and trauma, chosen trauma, and emotional trauma. “Social structures” refer to the divisions or boundaries created by the collective culture, as well as social identifications. Though there were interactions between members of the different groups at the party, they maintained a level of separation based on gender, age group, and cultural exposure. In terms of gender, the elders sat according to their gender. Men sat with other men and women sat with women. When the children were troublesome, the women were supposed to deal with it; it was their role as mothers. But the younger generations, especially young girls and women, were primarily in charge of caring for the children. Though this responsibility was not assigned to a particular person, the children started to complain to one younger woman who immediately became the point-person in dealing with the children. Parents or guardians agreed with whatever measure that person took to punish any disobeying children. Also, the younger girls were expected to participate in the different tasks that needed to be done. The notion of “guest” had a different meaning than its Western one. It was about the collective good. Therefore, the partygoers naturally agreed upon the different gender and social roles they assumed

based on their social and cultural understanding. In examining the groups' generational and cultural adaptations, it is interesting to note that the young couples that were formed in the host country were grouped together between the elderly, gendered-separated group and the youth. These couples' roles and discussions were about bridging the elderly's concepts of gendered duties and responsibilities with the young people's untested ideas about collectivist culture.

In addition to having a strong sense of culture-based collectivism, the community expressed a deep sense of sadness based on their homeland nostalgia. At one point people were invited to give speeches about the birthday person. The speeches focused on shared, past experiences that demonstrated the commitment and dedication of the person. Looking back at the past, the speakers shared memories of a time where things were different. Additionally, during the dancing and entertainment part of the evening, most of the songs that the elders requested were older, traditional songs that could be considered negative songs by the current Rwandan government. These songs were written pre-1994 genocide and talked about a time when Hutus were the ruling ethnicity and things were "better." During that part of the celebration, people were really interacting, discussions were animated, and even the younger generations were participating, to their parents' and relatives' excitement.

This idea of nostalgia brings us to the concepts of trauma, chosen trauma, and emotional trauma. At the party, it was clear that the wounds are still deep and that people haven't gone through the healing process. During the speeches, some people talked about their inability to go back home. They were saddened by the fact that it has been twenty

years. Some even mentioned that when they fled the country they thought it was going to be for a few weeks or months, but never years. Others were pessimistic about their chance of returning one day. Their testimonies and interactions made it clear that Rwanda has become a faraway land where they left their hearts. A few people had political debates about the current situation in Rwanda and what they wished was different. When the mood was nostalgic, their chosen trauma surfaced most strongly. Their emotional attachment to Rwanda and the life they had lost was given a very interesting narrative that showed where they are now as individuals and where they think they should be, or would like to be as a group.

### **Social Gathering with the Younger Group**

The three social gatherings with the younger generations were quite distinct. One group was in their early twenties (18-23 years old) and had embraced their new culture and land. The second group was a little bit older (24-26 years old) and was one of the most engaged and involved groups the researcher encountered. The third group was predominantly older (28-31) years old) but still had a few members in their late twenties.

The first group meeting happened in a park in downtown Brussels. The five participants had planned on meeting and the researcher had asked to “tag along.” Initially, the conversation was centered on normal young people topics: boys, school, family, and fashion. After a while, however, the young people started asking questions about the study, its goals, and its purposes. The researcher took the opportunity to initiate a conversation about the young group’s perceptions of themselves, their collective or

social mixed identity as Belgians and Rwandans, and, finally, their narrative of the current situation in Rwanda and how it affects them. At first, there was a sense of unease and some of them were uncomfortable. When it came to identity, three of them clearly stated that what mattered was who they were as individuals. They are Belgians, living in Belgium. They do not know Rwanda and do not really care to know. They were trying to get away from their parents' past because, according to them, it only created more conflicts and hurt their families. Their narratives were created in reaction to this rejection of their Rwandan identity or heritage. They rejected any affiliation to the Rwandan community and focusing on "now, today." One person explained that what is happening in Rwanda is sad, but they do not want to be part of it. Yet, they attended some of the Hutu community gatherings. According to them, this was out of respect for their parents; they still felt obligated to minimally participate, when their parents requested it.

The other two people felt more connected to their African identity. They used the word "African" because they did not completely identify themselves as Belgians. Despite the fact that they grew up in Belgium, they felt that they were still treated as outsiders because of their skin color. So, they were African. Their Belgian and Rwandan identities were evolving in separately but still connected. They felt that they were living in between two worlds and they could not take a side. Their parents' influences and past were helping them to redefine who they were and who they want to become. They were interested in the current Rwandan situation and had asked their parents about their experiences during the genocide. They had tried to create a dialogue in order to better understand their heritage and family history. Their narrative was very interesting. It was

based on their parents' stories. When education and school were mentioned, they expressed concerns about what the Belgian educational system is teaching people. They explained that on numerous occasions, they had to publicly disagree with what the teachers said. They have had to take on a defensive or justification narrative in order to fight against the stigmas they constantly hear about their Rwandan and parents' Hutu identities. Therefore, their narrative and identity were formed in response to the social perceptions of who they ought to be.

The second group was totally different in the way they see themselves, their response to Rwanda and what they think should and will happen. It was composed of eight young adults, mostly women (six women and two men). They invited the researcher for a late dinner at a quiet restaurant in the Northern part of Brussels. The group identified themselves as activists and wanted assurance that their identities would remain anonymous. This group of young adults identified themselves as Rwandans, more specifically, as Hutu-Rwandans. Their ethnicity was very important to them. According to them, it is part of who they are and who they want to be and nothing can change that. Most of them grew up in Belgium and it was only within the past decade that they "consciously woke up." After numerous discussions with their families and other members of the Hutu community, they decided that things needed to change. Also, the lack of public spaces and dialogues where they could raise their questions increased their search for answers. They confronted different narratives and turned toward Rwanda to find a truth. When they learned about the policies and ideas that are promoted in Rwanda, they decided to fight against them, a decision that reaffirmed their ethnic identity. Despite

the fact that they have no way to really change anything, they have found that it is important for them to meet and talk about their concerns. If the Rwandan genocide ideology policies and ideas applied to them, they would be seen as negationists or divisionnists, because they have questioned the official narrative of the genocide and have gone on to say that if a genocide did happen, it was not against Tutsi, but against both Hutu and Tutsi; against Rwandans. Consequently, according to many participants, denying Hutu victimhood is in itself committing genocide. Their narratives were very thoughtful and they had legal and civic arguments to collaborate what they said. It was clear that they had thought about the meeting and had a message to deliver.

The third group was in their late twenties and early thirties. In terms of their opinions, this group was a mix of the previous two groups. They were aware of their differences from others based on their competing narratives, and their attachment to Rwanda. Given that they were at a critical age—around 8 to 11 years old—when the genocide happened, they had some memories of it and had personally experienced the resettlement process. Most of them had been old enough to comprehend what had happened. Having personal memories of Rwanda and the genocide, their Rwandan identity is very important to them. It is how they identify themselves and how they want society to identify them. When needed, they do use their Hutu identity but they do not see it as their most important one. Based on their experiences, the Hutu identity is too controversial and polarizing, which does not allow for positive and effective dialogue. Consequently, during the resettlement process, they made the conscious choice to create a bridge between who they were (Rwandan and Hutu) and who they needed to be

(Belgian). Given that, they had to decide what they would do with their parents' and their own narratives. Because of the traumatic events they experienced and the residual trauma that still affects them, some of them decided to have the least amount of contact with the Rwandan community as possible. They formed new ties with other cultures and even chose to enter into relationships with people who were not associated with their community. Mixed coupling became a copying mechanism.

All three social gathering groups have proven to be very interesting in the way they understand their connection to their new identity as well as their Rwandan one. What they have in common is the way their narratives and consequently their identities were shaped by the genocide and the social pressures it created. Some decided to reject their Rwandan identity because they saw the past and its stigma as a burden that was creating an oppressive and destructive cycle. Others decided to embrace their Rwandan heritage and were empowered by it. By seeking answers, they created a particular identity that is in opposition to what the Rwandan government promotes, yet, it allowed them to create a collectivity that became their support system. Others decided to take the best of both worlds. They kept their Rwandan identity but adapted to their new lives. They saw themselves as cosmopolitan first and foremost. In all cases, the groups did react to the different connotations and stigmas that were associated with their ethnic group.

### **Social Gathering with the Middle Age Group**

The researcher attended two different social gatherings with this age group. The gatherings had two themes in common, the connection to the homeland and the sense of

otherness. The groups were composed of people in their late thirties and early forties. The meetings happened in people's houses, their comfort zone. The talks were centered on Rwanda, its current politics, the government's crimes and violations of human rights, and the international community's complicity in different crimes. The groups were also concerned about their ignored victimhood, their children's future in a country that does not recognize their pain, their memories of another Rwanda, and the future of Rwanda, about which they were pessimistic.

In terms of Rwanda and its politics, the group agreed that President Kagame's initiatives are based on a discriminatory system that aims to oppress Hutus. The lack of counter-narratives and recognition of Hutu victims in the new narrative of Rwanda have polarized the debate and closed doors to open dialogue. Along with that, the imposition of a national identity on a country that is ruled by a small minority and denies basic needs to the large majority is believed to be a political move to hide the government's true face and its crimes. The group was united in stating that Rwanda has created a game based on collective guilt that has been imposed on everyone. This game used the word "genocide" to justify the Rwandan government's actions

Additionally, very important narratives of conspiracy, generational guilt, and Hutu victimization came up over and over again. Many contested the idea of genocide itself, or at least a single genocide. The groups agreed that the actions that took place in 1994 were very tragic and connected to the 1990s civil war that devastated Rwanda, but the groups did not, however, think the 1994 events should be called genocide unless the RPF's actions in Rwanda and DRC post-1994 were also called genocide. They expressed

having a hard time comprehending the idea that Rwanda is ruled by people who committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and that it seems totally acceptable to the international community. Even more challenging for them is the idea that the same people who committed those crimes and later ruled Rwanda have defined what justice should be, who should obtain justice, and who the victims and perpetrators are. As we can see, Rwandan politics has a prominent place in the Hutu Diaspora community's many debates. Talking about politics and President Kagame united people. One of the most agreed-upon ideas was that President Kagame is "the greatest genocidaire." According to the groups, President Kagame and the RPF were the ones who initiated the civil war that led to the genocide. They were the ones targeting people and creating the fear of otherness. They committed mass killing before, during, and after the genocide. With their victory and military coup to gain control of Rwanda, they invented a conspiracy theory and brainwashed people into believing them. This is very interesting; it reemphasized the in-group/out-group dynamics and reshaped the different memberships. By redefining the role of the RPF and President Kagame and assigning them the role of villain, it helped justify their narrative of victimhood. It allowed meta-contrast— "differences within an in-group are smaller than those between in-group and out-group" – views, which explained and helped unite the community behind one ideology or goal.<sup>360</sup>

One recent way of confirming the conspiracy theory is using collective guilt and generational guilt. The Gacaca court is an example of the creation and implementation of

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360 Korostelina, 25

a culture of submission that aims to stop counter-narratives and oppress Hutu. The fact that only Hutus can be seen as perpetrators has imposed a sense of guilt onto the Hutu community. Even those who did not commit any crimes are still seen as guilty because they are Hutu. This perpetuates the idea of generational guilt. A few years ago, President Kagame made a speech claiming that every single Hutu alive, no matter their age or implication during the genocide, needed to apologize to the Tutsi for crimes committed in their name. This speech not only crystalized the labels of Hutu-perpetrator and Tutsi-victim, it created controversial debates among the Hutu Diaspora community in Belgium. Already stigmatized, this community sought to reaffirm their victimhood, and, more importantly, the idea of individual rather than collective responsibility. According to the groups, Kagame's speech damaged some of the individual and social identity affiliations to Rwanda. "Rwanda is not for Rwandans anymore, no matter the ethnicity; Rwanda is for Tutsi. Hutu and even Twa have no place there," said a father of four in his early forties.

The final essential element of the groups' discussions was nostalgia related to the past, which impacted their ideas of the future. The idea that once things used to be different, that people used to trust and respect each other, was the core concept to which the community returned over and over. The elders among the groups talked about their childhoods and how things used to be easier. The idea of being "home" in the land of their ancestors shaped their discussions on their collective missed pasts. They also said they blame the RPF for starting a war that led to so much loss, both human and property. Though they were gratified by remembering their pasts, doing so also made them

remember the people they had lost and their inability to properly mourn them. Considering the policies that have been implanted in Rwanda and the destructive pasts that both Hutus and Tutsis possess, almost all the members of the groups were pessimistic about finding common ground for productive dialogue and mutual understanding. According to them, as long as their victimhood is not recognized and their children are not safe to be both Hutus and Rwandans, the future of Rwanda will remain uncertain or even become worse.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **Discussions**

The three methods used to collect data explored the spectrum of the Hutu Diaspora's comfort zones. From an impersonal survey and semi-structured one-on-one interviews to social gatherings, the researcher was able to explore, analyze, and comprehend the different factors that influenced the formation of the participants' new identities, as well as grasp their narratives of Rwanda and reflections on their situation. It appeared that the younger generations struggled with adopting one particular identity. As part of a diaspora community, they have been confronted with at least two identities, their parents' identity and their host country's identity. In the case of the Hutu identity, things got more nuanced and complicated. Not only did the younger generations have to navigate both their Rwandan identity and their Belgian identity, because of what their families experienced, the official narrative of the genocide, and the national identity imposed by the Rwandan government, they have had to create a self among the older generations' experiences of having "damaged" identities. First, they had to make the tough choice between embracing their Hutu identity or their Rwandan identity. Society told them that being Hutu was being part of the perpetrators' group; their homeland told them they could not be seen or treated as victims because they were not only Rwandans, they were also Hutus. Therefore, in response to the social pressure, some decided to compromise and adopt only the Rwandan identity, while others decided that precisely

because they were discriminated against based on their ethnic identity, they would let this identity define them and they chose to embrace it. Second, they had to make the choice between being Rwandan or Belgian. Similarly what we saw in the first case, some people did not want the stigma that was associated with the Rwandan identity, so they adopted the Belgian identity because it was what they knew. Most of them had left Rwanda when they were very young or had been born in the host country, so they did not really recall or have personal experiences with Rwanda. Others, however, decided to take on their African, Rwandan, and Hutu identities because they did not feel at home in their host country. “Stateless” and “refugee” were two words often used to describe how they felt about being home away from home. Such struggle has affected their formation of their young identities, their connection to their community, and their understanding of their roles in the future of Rwanda.

The young generation that has decided to take some distance from the Rwandan identity has done it by ‘escaping’ from the Rwandan community. They had chosen to completely integrate; used more often French and Dutch than Kinyarwanda, date and get married outside the community, and created a support system within this new chosen identity. Yet, despite these coping styles, all still have to confront the stigmas of their country of origin and ethnic affiliation. Even with their efforts to integrate, they are still seen and treated as outsiders within the host-country, and they constantly come in contact with their Rwandan community due to the large number of Rwandans in Belgium. Time that has passed, yet the Rwandan genocide is still very present in people’s minds and the Rwandan government helps maintaining this constant reminders.

The older generations have more fix identities. Members of the second, late-twenties group were old enough to understand the genocide at the time it happened and remember the aftermath and resettlement. The second group has a better understanding of the challenges their family had to face in order to survive. Also, they tend to be more aware of and involved in the political debate surrounding Rwandan. As with the first group, their identity was shaped by both Rwandan and Belgian societies, but the Rwandan narrative was the stronger influence. Also, they tend to see themselves not in terms of Rwandan, Hutu, or Belgian, but more as a bridge between both worlds. They have become bridges through the way they have adopted the new culture while still remaining part of the “old” one. Some of them married outside their ethnicity. They also used words such as “stateless” and “refugees” to characterize their evolution through the last couple of decades. Despite their sense of security and stability, they have recognized that they do not belong anywhere anymore.

The ones that have chosen their ethnic identity had to face other struggles. Some felt isolated because they were asking unwanted questions and ‘disturbing’ the elders who had decided to move on. They created support groups and organizations that would allow their voice to be heard, more importantly, they are politically and socially involved in the potential future of their homeland. These young people have created the new face of the opposition, which has led many of them to get into trouble of the Rwandan Embassy in Brussels. Despite the danger of their decisions, these young people are determined to be part of a much large picture. They aim to gain a sense of control of the

life they were deprived two decades ago. Some of them are just waiting for the right moment and opportunity to go back to Rwanda and contribute to a change.

The third group is settled in their identity. Most of them described themselves as Rwandan in public, but identified themselves as Hutu in private, behind closed doors. This is due to the Rwandan government's treatment of Hutus over the last two decades. This sense of self-preservation was exemplified during the questionnaire survey process, when many participants did not want to fill it out, especially online, because they were afraid of being targeted by the Rwandan government. Also, because they have lived through more stable times, the civil war, and the genocide, they have memories, good and bad, of what Rwanda once was and who they once were. For all the participants, one thing is clear: one's identity cannot be imposed. It can be chosen or transmitted, but not imposed. By imposing a national identity, President Kagame has united all the Hutus in the diaspora in Belgium against it. The imposed national identity raised the question of identity itself and what it means to have a personal and/or collective identity.

Even though President Kagame did unite the generations behind one single purpose, enormous gaps are still dividing them. Most elders do think that the younger generations are lost. These assumptions are based on the fact that many youth have decided to distance themselves from their community while others have taken on a more active, sometimes seen as radical, position. Either way, communication gaps have separated them. Also, the Rwandan and Belgian cultures are different; some of the behaviors acceptable in Belgium are seen as un-Rwandan. So for the young generations that grew up in Belgium, their elders' expectations do not always meet their new views of

the world. Also according to them, the communication gaps lie on the choices the elders made without consulting them. The elders decided that in order to survive, they would move on; forget the past and live day-by-day, which is what some of the youth rebuke them. With time, the elders never really got the opportunity to open up about their suffering. This increased the tensions between them and their children. In their search for belonging and answers, the youth felt deprived of a part of themselves, a part of their stories, so they blamed their parents.

Kagame's identity policy crystalized the ethnicities' perceived differences but also encouraged analysis of the narrative of Rwandans both in-country Rwanda and abroad. It did this by calling into question Rwandan Hutus' sense of homeland and belonging. Their struggle between the official narrative and their own counter-narrative affected the younger generations. Growing up with constant reminders of the genocide and fingers pointed at them because of it led some people to get reject their "Rwandaness" or "Hutuness." As participant 21 stated, "When people hear that I am from Rwanda, you can see in their eyes either compassion or fear. Then they immediately ask you the famous questions: Are you Hutu or Tutsi? Aren't the Hutus the ones who committed the genocide against the Tutsi?" It seems like no matter what the young decide, whether to reject the Rwandan part of their life and identity or to accept it, they cannot get away from the stigma of the Hutu-perpetrator that has dominated the genocide narrative. Those who do accept it and find ways to deal with that past usually face other struggles.

Because they are interested in President Kagame's politics and the RPF, the youth are seen as radical. Because they seek answers to disturbing questions, and doubt what they have been told, these young generations are seen as a danger to the unity and reconciliation process in Rwanda and among Rwandans. Many of them have been threatened, intimidated, and experienced other types of intimidation from the Rwandan Embassy in Brussels and Rwandan government sympathizers. They tend to follow the current situation in their homeland, engage in debate, and educate themselves in order to understand their past, live their present, and hope for a better future. Unfortunately, many questions remain unanswered. They struggle with the big concepts society has constructed to overcome tragedies, concepts such as justice, healing, victims, and democracy or global governance. For them, justice is only an ephemeral concept because it does not exist in Rwanda. As participant 7 explained, "Justice in Rwanda needs to be based on democracy and there is no justice now, it is only partial because the current government was involved in the genocide, so justice can't happen... we cannot be perpetrators and judge at the same time." By questioning the system and its rulers, these generations are bound to be seen and called negationists. Despite that, they still voice their indignation and anger at President Kagame. For them, he is the trigger, the instigator, the one responsible, and the perpetrator of both genocides that took place between 1994 and 1999. His dictatorial government is still responsible for thousands of disappearances and deaths.

The older generations face the same struggles, minus the existentialist questions. They experienced the genocide first hand and remember what they had to go through to

move on and survive. Unlike the younger generations, their narrative is not based on heard and told narrative identities, but mostly on lived narratives and experiences. Their counter-narratives are primarily based on the comparison between the current government and their nostalgia of old times when things were different. Their counter-narratives are also based on the fact that their ethnic identity and sense of victimhood have not only been denied; they have been made illegal. Hearing about how their family in Rwanda cannot be themselves and cannot use their ethnic identity helped shape their narratives. Furthermore, being denied their victimhood and watching the younger generations be the target of the government's created collective guilt has made many of them negationist. Participant 15 explained "what happened in Rwanda is so traumatizing that we still have people crying at nights, people who had to escape through the forest and nearly die. To forget is not possible, maybe in a century or more." Added to their unrecognized victimhood, these types of traumas have deeply affected the community. Participants 43 and 44 explained that they had to move on and reconstruct lives for themselves and their family. But this does not mean that they have forgotten or dealt with the trauma. Rather, it has manifested itself in the younger generations, generational gaps, and misunderstandings that have torn apart many families.

Finally, when one talks about diaspora, he or she also needs to talk about the community's homeland. The Hutu Diaspora status is contested. According to many participants, the term "diaspora" is solely used in reference to Tutsis and cannot be applied to them. This belief is based on the history of Rwanda and the idea that its only diaspora communities are those who fled during the 1959-1965 period of instability and

revolution. Those who are still abroad have chosen to be, since Rwanda is presumably a safe country to live in. In addition to that, the narrative of ‘all’ Hutu perpetrators or accomplices has led people believe that those who do not want to go back have a good reason, or are guilty of something. President Kagame’s “We are Rwandans” speech sparked this idea. By stating that all Hutus alive needed to apologize for the genocide because it was done in their name, Kagame fueled the debates and solidified the connections Hutus have to their homeland. Participant 9 responded to the Rwandan president by stating, “We did not choose to be Hutu, so why would we apologize for mistakes committed by both tribes... I will not apologize, you can torture me, and I will not do it.” Even the younger generations who had rejected their Rwandan identity and affiliation struggled with the idea that they were seen as guilty of something. Paradoxes surround their Hutu identity, its relationship to their Rwandan identity, and Rwanda itself. Interestingly, many believe they will eventually return to Rwanda, but there are many conditions to that return. They believe that Rwanda will have to be completely reformed in order for them to go back, they say that they have made a life for themselves in their host country, and they don’t see their projects succeeding in Rwanda. Those that are determined to go back are clearly aware that they will be putting themselves in a dangerous situation. Victoire Ingabire’s fate brought to light the struggle Hutus will have to face if they decide to go back. Participant 16 explained the reality of the dilemma by saying, “They [the Rwandan government] don’t want intellectuals, people who can tell the stories. The government dictates and imposes its will.” Now, it

seems that those who want to change Rwanda will have to choose between an uncertain future and accepting the situation.

## **Recommendations**

In order to break the self-destructive cycle of violence that has been part of Rwandan history for so long, honest dialogues need to happen. These dialogues have to be multi-dimensional. Instead of focusing on the old Tutsi-victim, Hutu-perpetrator narratives, the dialogues need to empower all the communities, allowing them to move beyond the labels and stigmas. Also, the diaspora communities need to be involved in these dialogues. In many cases, they financially assist their families back in Rwanda, and in some cases, they represent the future of the country. Participant 18 traveled to Rwanda to help her family there, and while there she saw and shared their pain and disappointment. According to her, they think that she and her children represent the future of Rwanda. They are the ones who have the opportunity and the duty to save them from the misery that President Kagame has inflicted. Ultimately, it is essential to create bridges between Hutu and Tutsi, as well as between diaspora communities and Rwandans within Rwanda.

Unfortunately, the current situation in Rwanda will not allow such initiatives to take place, due to the narrative that was constructed and promoted by the RPF and the Tutsi regime. In order to admit that Hutu were also victims, Rwanda would have to change its politics, narratives, and accept some part of the responsibility. Since this seems unlikely, there are three alternatives. First, the international community could forcefully

push Rwanda to create a market place of ideas where people would be able to express themselves without fearing the consequences. Yet, given the divisionist and negationist policies, this seems unlikely to happen. Second, a delegation of Rwandans, both Hutu and Tutsi, could be created outside Rwanda and protected by the UN. Fear of assassination and disappearance could discourage such a delegation from forming, however. Third, the diaspora community could become involved in the dialogues. The younger generations of Rwandans need to be empowered and allowed to come together and find common solutions. We should focus on the next generations of people, who have the opportunity to distance themselves from the hatred that led to the genocide and to build a country where they can live together, separated from the history of violence as well as the nostalgic and glorious times their parents tend to grasp. As participant 17 stated, the problem in Rwanda is the genocide. The genocide, used as an excuse, has cast shadows on the reconciliation processes and has left the older generations unable to see or build a common country. One group has imposed its will and oppressed the other. This legacy should not be passed on to the younger and future generations. Therefore, the youths need to have the chance to voice their concerns, hopes, and dreams.

Finally, the international community needs to take responsibility for their inactions in the post-Rwanda Human Right violations and international justice impunity, and encourage Rwanda to do the same. Participant 18 voiced her concerns by saying, “The problem is between Hutu and Tutsi; Tutsis have to start telling the truth about what really happened. The White people [Bazungu] need to stop talking about things they don’t know or understand.” The rigid labels that were put on both Hutus and Tutsis have

limited the dialogue and close doors to self-reflection. The eternal melodrama of villains against heroes was told over and over and took away people's agency. It has also allowed Rwanda to acquire a particular position in global politics that has helped re-victimize those who felt like they were unrecognized or unwanted victims. We need to reshape the important concepts that are promoted by the international community, such as justice, democracy, peace, reconciliation... Rwanda should not be the exception to the rule. Sanctions need to be taken in order to make Rwanda implement democracy. This process began prior to the genocide with the Arusha Accords, and should not stop now. It seems that the legacy of the genocide has stopped all attempts to democratize Rwanda, which is and will continue to be a problem. Looking at the path Rwanda has followed since colonization, it's easy to see that its future might be as violent as its past. Drastic measures involving all actors—the Rwandan government and its allies, the international entities such as the UN, AU and EU, and Rwandans across the world—need to be considered and implemented in the near future. One thing that many scholars and participants of this study agreed on was that the future of Rwanda might not be a peaceful one. Violent conflicts will erupt and some are even scared that there will be another genocide that could potentially be worse than the one in 1994. In order to avoid a second bloodbath, Rwandans, all three communities, need to put aside their differences and learn from the past. What is needed is to empower the younger generations to reach out to each other and create dialogues that will transform the different treat narratives, and will allow to break the circle of violence Rwanda seems to be caught into.

## **Future Research**

This study is a milestone that should be regarded as the first step to understanding Rwanda's post-genocide environment through the lens of a Hutu community. It is also the first step to determining and preventing future conflict. That victims tend to become the next perpetrators is well known. In the case of the Hutu, they are seen as perpetrators, denied their victimhood, and constantly dehumanized and stigmatized. The younger generations are fighting against the hegemonic narrative and culture of submission into which they have been categorized since early childhood. By letting this study open doors to future research, conflict resolution experts will not only gain a better understanding of cycle of violence that has determined Rwanda's situation, but also what needs to happen in similar situations. The Rwandan case is not unique. Similar situations can be found across the world. What's unique about Rwanda is the protected bubble the international community placed around it and the level of control Kagame's government has been able to acquire in the last two decades.

For future studies, the researcher recommends applying the same process to Tutsis in diaspora and comparing the results to the ones gathered in this study. It would be interesting to learn how Tutsis formed and lived their identity and constant reminders of victimization. Even more importantly, it would be interesting to research the perceptions Tutsis in diaspora have of Hutus. Let's not forget the Twa. Most narratives forget to mention the third ethnic group in Rwanda. They were there during the genocide, experienced the atrocities, but yet they are not recognized, labeled, or even

acknowledged. Knowing the intense level of trauma both Hutus and Tutsis had to face and are still facing, one is made to wonder about this tribe that composed less than 1% of the population. They have been marginalized from both Hutu and Tutsi regimes, and have had no representation in the governments. Their social and civic rights have been non-existent. Taking these factors into consideration, we can assume that their chosen trauma has been passed on from generation to generation. One wonders if the lack of research about the Twa is due to their small population, Rwanda's hegemonic power that dominates different spheres, the Twas' sense of reclusion, or even just the lack of interest on the part of researchers. A lot of work needs to be done to rectify this situation.

It is also important to analyze the impact that the selected histories of Rwanda have had on the different ethnicities. Each ethnicity has adopted stories and narratives that legitimize their own authoritarian regimes and oppress the others. Yet, Rwandan history is not well understood; historians face a great deal of uncertainty. Some believe that ethnicity was used a social class category while others believe that it was a kind of social identification, an identity. Focusing on the differences help promote violent conflicts. What is known is that there has been discontent throughout history, particularly throughout the history of this land of particular significance to its ethnic groups. Looking to the present and beyond, it is clear that the phenomenon is being reproduced. One tribe, Tutsi, believes that the genocide happened because of the other. The others perpetrated these gruesome acts to exterminate them. The other tribe, Hutu, tends to deny the genocide and accuse the other of being the catalyst of the conflicts. It seems as if the circle of conflict is going around again.

Finally, researchers may need to investigate the impacts of the international community and any other third parties on the destabilization of peacebuilding initiatives designed to include both tribes, Hutu and Tutsi, as both victims and perpetrators. Initiatives have been implemented to help Tutsis deal with their trauma; initiatives have been taken to bring justice to the Tutsi victims. Yet, it seems that because of the label of perpetrator, the Hutu community has been forgotten. About 85% of the Rwandan population has been ignored. In order for peacebuilding to be effective in Rwanda and install long-lasting peace, works need to be done. This work must not conform to the official narrative, but bring both Hutu and Tutsi together on the same pedestal in order to help them visualize a common past, present, and future. This must be done in order for the younger generations to work collectively together. This might be done using educational channels.

## **Conclusion**

It was interesting to explore the Hutu Diaspora identity and narratives of selves. Shaped by the labels created in the post 1994 Rwandan genocide, their identity transformation was not only influenced by the geographic location that defines their diasporic status, but also the global structurally violent system that has marginalized them, and classified them as the villains. This double or ‘damaged identities’ helped mold their sense of otherness in relation to Rwanda but also in the host-country. As many participants pointed, their identity and stories were formed partially in response to the “winner’s game” narrative. Those who won the war shaped their identity. Consequently,

two distinct identity processes were developed. The first one was a rejection of their ethnic or group identity, whereas in the second case, people decided to embrace their Hutu identity despite the stigmas attached to it.

Those who decided to reject the Rwandan or Hutu identity constructed their presents and futures based on their new mixed identity, which was formed by assimilating into their host country's culture. For the others, their future is still being shaped. Their connection with and affiliation to their homeland has made their future less predictable. Some have decided that no matter what will happen, they will remain in their host country due to factors such as stability, security, opportunity, and primarily, because it is where they have made lives for themselves. Others have decided that they will go back to Rwanda and be a part of the change they want to see. For this group of individuals, their futures will be shaped by the future of Rwanda.

As described previously, Rwanda or their homeland has been an essential component of the diaspora community identity transformation and narratives. The laws, initiatives, or even dialogues implemented in Rwanda or by the Rwandan government have been criticized. Indirectly acting as watchdogs, the Hutu diaspora communities have often questioned the reconciliation and healing processes, while denouncing the increasingly oppressive regime. Those who have been the leaders or port-paroles of these community's concerns have put their lives at risk or experience other types of pressure and intimidations.

Interestingly, over the last decade new counter-narratives have surfaced. The Hutu narrative is one of them, but often silenced. This narrative (Hutu stories) is not only based

on the genocide, their chosen trauma, which has increased in the last 20 years, has impacted it enormously. Transmitted from generation to generation, this narrative of trauma and otherness has become part of the communities' daily struggle. The older generations have admitted that their narratives were voluntarily or involuntarily silenced in order to move on and face the new challenges they were confronted with.

Unfortunately, the silenced stories helped create a generational gap between them and the next generation who have found other ways to discover these missing stories that were part of their ethnic or group identity. Naturally, some did accept this lack of information and turned their attention to the host-country's identity and membership affiliation.

Others in the search of this part of their history got organized and created organizations aiming to solidify this notion of 'Hutuness' or homeland.

Sadly as professor Ho-Won Jeong expressed, "If the future of Rwanda is based on its past, Rwanda has not seen the end of the atrocity."<sup>361</sup> The history of Rwanda is based on violence, and the current situation is not offering very positive signs for the future. Many scholars as well as the participants do fear that Rwanda is at the edge of another conflict that might or will most likely be triggered from the outside. The situation at the western border (Eastern DRC) with regard to the different Rwandan rebel groups along with the animosity expressed by the different Diaspora communities will have an important impact on what kind of future Rwanda will have. After her first trip to Rwanda, participant 2 described several scenarios that might happen in the near future. In the first scenario, President Kagame will change the constitution and win another term. His

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<sup>361</sup> Jeong, 43

victory will bring more disparity and human rights violations, which will lead to a violent uprising. In the second scenario, President Kagame will step down and appoint one of his protégés, but this will not change the final outcome of war. In the third scenario, Hutus will manage to gain power and possibly seek vengeance. In the final scenario, a transitional regime, supported by the international community, will try to bring peace to Rwanda and the Great Lakes region. In this transitional regime, the younger generations within the three communities (Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) will have to come together and create a common vision of a peaceful future. According to her, it is by empowering the ‘leaders of tomorrow’ that Rwanda will have a change to avoid more atrocities. Unfortunately, this scenario is an ephemeral dream because it would require President Kagame’s stepping down and facing justice for the crimes he and the RPF committed.

There may be one last possible future. Participant 20 said, “The question of the genocide does not turn around ethnicity because we also have regional conflict, North-South. It’s all about politics.” Hypothetically, if the government decided to stop focusing on ethnicity, stop blaming all the Hutus for the genocide, and accept its responsibilities for the unstable situation, maybe an open dialogue could take place; however, removing the ethnicity focus would require redefining the narrative of the 1994 genocide. It would require completely reforming the justice and educational systems. The entire country would need to be reinvented.

It would be a large task, but one certainly worth doing. If the young generations, who will be the leaders of tomorrow both in Rwanda and abroad, are not empowered to create healing and reconciliation channels, the Rwanda’s future is very uncertain. The

young people need to have the opportunity to dream about a homeland built on mutual respect, common ground, and justice.

## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire Survey: English Version

#### Identity-Based Questions:

Which gender group do you associate with?

- Male
- Female
- Other

How old are you?

- 15-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45

What is your level of education?

- I have no education at all
- Elementary education
- High school
- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Post-graduate
- Other

Where is your country of birth?

- Rwanda
- Belgium
- Other (name it)

Do you identify yourself as:

- Rwandan
- Hutu
- Belgian
- Other ( name it)

Are you more involved in the Rwandan Community or your local Community?

- Rwandan Community
- Local Community
- Neither

Does your family practice any traditional rituals once practiced in Rwanda?

- Yes
- No
- Some

Do you believe that you will return to Rwanda?

- Most definitely
- Definitely
- Maybe
- Not sure
- No
- Never

Have you been back or visited Rwanda?

- Yes
- No

Do you want to go back to Rwanda?

- Most definitely
- Definitely
- Maybe
- Not sure
- No
- Never

Do you believe your experience in returning will be positive or negative?

- Positive
- Somewhat positive
- Neither
- Somewhat negative
- Negative
- Other (explain)

Do you have Tutsi friends?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know any Tutsi

Do you speak Kinyarwanda?

- Yes

- No

Which Language do you consider to be the most important?

- French
- English
- Dutch/Netherlands
- Kinyarwanda
- Others (name it)

Which Language do you use the most often?

- French
- English
- Dutch/Netherlands
- Kinyarwanda
- Others (name it)

Rate from 1 (no knowledge) to 5 (mother tongue) your proficiency in these following language?

- French 1 2 3 4 5
- Dutch/Netherlands 1 2 3 4 5
- Kinyarwanda 1 2 3 4 5

Do you still have family members in Rwanda?

- Yes
- No

Is it important for you that your children know about Rwanda?

- Yes very
- It is their choice
- Not Really
- It doesn't matter

Is it important for you that your children and the next generation speak Kinyarwanda?

- Yes, very
- It is their choice
- Not really
- It doesn't matter

Narrative-Based Questions:

Where do you get your information about Rwanda?

- Parents and Friends
- News Papers
- JamboNews
- Others (name it)

Do you, spontaneously, look for news about the Rwandan current situation?

- Yes
- Sometimes
- No

Is it important for you to learn about the genocide?

- Yes very
- A little
- It depends
- Not really
- No

How did you learn about the genocide for the first time?

- Family discussion
- School
- Media
- The community
- Others (name it)

What would you like to know?

- You family history
- The causes of the genocide
- The history of Rwanda
- The causes of rivalry between Hutu and Tutsi
- Others (name it)

Were you able to share your family history and background with the others, non-Rwandan?

- Yes
- Not yet
- No

## Interview Surveys

1. In couple words, how would you define yourself?
2. How do you feel about being in Belgium?
3. **How do you feel about being Hutu?**
  - a. What were the most important dates for you as a Hutu? Does April 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> have a specific meaning for you?
  - b. Assuming that the Belgian and Hutu identity are important to you, how do you manage to raise your children as Belgian and Hutus at the same time?
4. **How do you feel about the current image of Hutus?**
  - a. How do you feel about the fact that people learn about your background in movies like “Hotel Rwanda” and “Shake Hands with the Devil”?
  - b. How do you feel about the stories taught about Hutu in classroom?
5. **When you look at the three different generations of Hutu, your parents, yourself, and your children, how do you think the information or stories are transmitted?**
  - a. How do you think the next generation of Hutu is feeling about the different competing stories?
  - b. What do you think the next generations do to compensate for the missing of familial background?
6. **What does the term genocide mean to you?**
  - a. Do the older generations talk about the genocide?
  - b. How do you feel about President Kagame being accused of crimes against humanity? How do you feel about the fact that the Rwandan government is trying to dismiss ethnic groups and call everybody Rwandan?
7. **Have you faced problems because you are Hutu? Please explain?**
8. **What will it take for you to go back to Rwanda?**
9. **How were you able to deal with your memories for the 1994’s events?**
  - a. What do you think the next generations do to deal with the general image of Hutus promoted by the Rwandan government?
  - b. Among your relatives or friends, what were some of the coping mechanism used to deal with the different perspectives of the genocide?

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Claudine Kuradusenge was born in Ruhengeri, Rwanda, and raised in Brussels, Belgium. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Utah Valley University, Utah, US, in 2013. Although her background is in communications and public relations, she has worked with refugees, international students, traumatized youth, and Diaspora's.