CHAPTER III
THE GENOCIDE IN RWANDA AND THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES
In the previous chapter we attempted a survey of the socio-economic and political history of the region in general, and of Rwanda and Burundi in particular. It was demonstrated clearly, how the conflict system emerged and was established. In this chapter an effort will be made to carry forward this analysis with respect to Rwanda.

As was discussed earlier, the first migration into the region consisted of Bantu migrants in the second half of the first millennium A.D. The arrival of the next group of migrants of Tutsi herders into the region is mired in controversy. The colonial powers propounded the Hamtic theory that portrayed the Tutsis as the civilising invaders into a region where the Hutus lived and had established State and order. However, due to ecological disaster the control of State was lost to the Tutsis. Once entrenched in power around the seventeenth century the Tutsis adopted different tools to accumulate resources and strengthen the State and its apparatus. Land being the sole basis of all economic activity Tutsis established their firm control over it. As the State became secure the tributary demands of chiefs became more and more strident and oppressive. The tyranny of the chiefs increased substantially during the reign of Rwangaburi with the introduction of Ubureetwa.

During the colonial rule, the Tutsis were promoted as natural rulers and made the local chief with wide ranging powers. It was only after the Second World War that the imperial officials from humbler background began to be posted in Belgian colonies. This new set of officials encouraged the Hutus. This helped in creating a counter-elite. This group soon began to voice the concerns of Hutu masses and espoused the cause of their emancipation. These demands provoked an intransigent and arrogant response from the Tutsi monarchy and the elite, who also unleashed
violent attacks and intimidation. These events made the Hutu leadership realise its alienation from power and sense of deprivation and powerlessness creeped in.

As the pressure for independence increased and decolonisation proceeded both the groups used ethnicity to mobilise and garner support. Soon the contest between the groups became violent and pogroms were unleashed. Eventually, this process culminated in the Hutus successfully displacing the old monarchy and establishing a republic.

CRISIS OF DEVELOPMENT

Recent events have altered the image of Rwanda drastically, from that of the 'Switzerland of Africa' to that of just one of the many failed States in Africa. This degeneration into chaos and conflict is symptomatic of the inability to sustain externally imposed economic and political reforms that overlooked the ground realities in Africa. In a densely populated agricultural country, the limited availability of land becomes a natural focus and cause of conflict between people. By ignoring to solve this problem, conflict in such agriculture economy and society runs the risk of escalation.

Between 1960 and 1993, the population had risen from around 3 million to 7.5 million. By the second half of the 1980s it was clear that economic growth even in the days of plenty was, well behind the rate of population growth.

Attempts to make agriculture more intensive or extensive failed to yield increased food production. The traditional fallow cycle was abandoned, consequently this diminished and exhausted the soil fertility and resulted in decreasing yields.

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1 The determinining structural cause for the civil war and genocide: the population explosion. With an average of ten pregnancies and 8.3 live births per woman of child-bearing age, Rwanda is one of the most prolific countries in the world. Hartmut Dissembacher, "Explaining the Genocide: How Population Growth and Shortage of Land Helped Bring About the Massacres and the Civil War", Law and State, vol. 52, 1995, p. 78
Despite the help of international agricultural experts, measures to increase the yield by applying fertiliser or employing different methods of cultivation failed.

In the eventuality of food production in a country unable to keep up with the pace of population growth, the surplus population apart from starving is left with two options, either to subsist on imported food or emigrate. The export revenues from raw materials, tin, coffee and tea were too low to finance the import of food to make-up for the shortfall. Attempts to earn more hard currency through tourism also failed. Also Rwandans were not in a position to emigrate. The neighbouring countries of Burundi, Tanzania, Zaire and Uganda, have high birth rates and a saturated market. On the other hand the developed countries were controlling their labour markets with strict immigration and asylum policies.

Another pressure was the land available to the next generation by way of inheritance. Land inheritance was subject to the principle of simple division between sons. An average holding of less than a hectare of arable land and four inheriting sons, would leave only a quarter of this for each son when the next generation took over. Thus, this progressive sub-division of land holding added to the economic pressure and impoverishment of the people.

The policies followed by the national elite maintained the status quo so that they could extract the surplus from cash crop exports and development funds. They made no effort to increase rural job opportunity and decrease rural impoverishment. As both external and internal sources of income began to decline it led to the economic collapse of the country. This caused a collapse in the various gentlemen’s agreements amongst those in power, and resulted in bickering over an ever shrinking cake to divide.
The absence of a well-developed commodity market stunted the growth of food products. This had a crucial bearing on the strategies available to the State to combat food shortages. Food distribution in Rwanda depends entirely on increasing regional food production and creating complementary food flows throughout the country. Absence of a well-developed market resulted in skewed cropping patterns and limited the effectiveness of these food flows.

According to Johan Pottier, the emphasis on encouraging region-specific crops is the governmental strategy for coping with periodic food shortages. Food shortages in Rwanda are usually localised. The State policy usually adopted to alleviate the problem depend on the time-honoured principles of food complementarity and food flow coordination. However the notion of internal food equilibrium within narrow spatial confines is not really helpful. Although there has been no famine since 1943, the likelihood of a major catastrophe in the near future, Pottier warns, must not be dismissed lightly. This is a grim possibility bearing in mind an annual 2.6 per cent rise in population\textsuperscript{2} and a dramatic decline in food production capacity over the past two decades.

Similarly, Saskia\textsuperscript{3} argues that the Rwandan agricultural production is 'consumption-driven' rather than 'market-oriented'. When it comes to food crops the country has a limited internal market and trading structure. Also food sufficiency at household level is considered as an element of pride. Similarly buying food because of insufficient home production is considered shameful, and is seen as a sign of

\textsuperscript{2} In 1948 the typical peasant family lived on a hill which supported between 110 and 120 inhabitants per km\textsuperscript{2}; in 1970, that same family has to make a living on a hill which supports between 280 and 290 people per km\textsuperscript{2}. Johan Pottier, "The Politics of Famine Prevention", \textit{African Affairs}, vol. 85(339), April 1986, p. 215

\textsuperscript{3} Saskia van Hoyweghen, "The Urgency of Land Reform and Agrarian Reforms in Rwanda", \textit{African Affairs}, 1999, 98, pp. 352-372
poverty. This further hampers the development of commodity market. Secondly, food transactions continue to be small-scale and hardly extend beyond the hill community, when additional commercial stimulants are lacking.

**RURAL IMPOVERISHMENT**

As a consequence labour contracts, although no longer institutionalised, continue to provide the poor peasants with the extra food needed to scrape through periods of scarcity. This situation was effectively used by the regime who raised the spectra of *uberweeta* to garner support for the genocide.

Families unable to produce sufficient crops to meet their needs were forced to buy food from the market. To obtain cash for food or other expenses some of the choice many people were left with, included cash cropping, seasonal migration in search of increasingly rare employment, or the sale of land itself.

The popularity of the *bananeraie* among farmers was due to banana finding a ready demand from breweries. This initiated trend a among the farmers to opt for guaranteed returns when choosing cash crops. Beer brewed from bananas was almost certain to find a local market. In comparison the production of coffee was more risky, as farmers had to depend on export markets, whose fluctuations and behaviour was unpredictable and beyond their control. These survival strategies of individual farmers were in contradiction with the economic needs of the urban elite. As the agricultural system\(^4\) did not produce sufficient surplus support a growing urban elite.

Another feature and product of this pressure on land was the individualisation of relationships around land. Land acquired through the market was free from control

by the lineage or community. While communal land assured the livelihood of the
wider community, the owners of land acquired through the market had few or no
obligations. The rural poor, as a result, became increasingly dependent upon these
(new rural) elite for their survival. Invariably these new elite comprised the Tutsis,
who had taken up business after opportunities in the State sector were closed.

Government policies did not manage to turn the tide. Pottier outlines three-
fold reason for this, namely, political, technical and cultural. The subsequent
curtailing of banana production in the mid 1980s, meant removing the only realistic
cash income opportunity of the rural poor. In other words, donors and foreign policy
advisers failed to understand the particular functioning of Rwanda.

The emergence of distress sales of land by nutritionally vulnerable families
was accompanied by a reversal in the paysannat relations of production. Not only did
the paysannat producers had problems with generating surplus food, they were
reverting to a situation in which contract labour prevailed. It was this fear of return of
clientship that was used by the ruling group to mobilise the rural poor against the
Tutsis. The memories of the customary chiefs haunted the poor Hutus who were thus
easily mobilised.

With rapid soil erosion, high population growth, and a downward trend in the
paysannat production of marketable basic foodstuffs and an accelerated slump in
commercial activity it led to a nation-wide resurgence of an old economic order
(uberweeta) in a new guise. Such resurgence meant that the major strategy available

5 Silvester discloses that in 1972 'the same Tutsi farmer (eleveur) gave a bull to (three) individual Hutu
peasants of a given hill section (murenge). Although one is no longer dealing here with the subjugation of the
Hutu, as in the olden days, it is still possible to ensure their assistance. Yet I do not think it too farfetched to
suggest that growing land scarcity within the paysannats in Rwanda will eventually bring about a resurgence of
the clientage system, in one form or another.

This informant pointed out that the present-day umucancuro is someone who typically works on a casual
basis in return for sweet potatoes. Although neither the "new" cattle contract nor the recruitment of abucancuro
today implies the subjugation of one ethnic group by the other it cannot be denied that clientship continues to
serve as a remedy against the hardship of cyclical food shortages. Pottier, n. 2, p. 235
to rural poor for coping with food shortages once again consisted of the sale of one's labour power (as *umucancuro*) and/or the acceptance of a clientage system (such as *ubuhake*).

**CONDITION OF THE REFUGEES**

Early in 1988 the RPF was founded following the final rejection to the return of refugees by MRND. The hard-line position of the Rwandan government gave the refugees no other option but to organise themselves politically and militarily. On the other hand the crash of coffee prices towards the end of the 1980s increased rural impoverishment, SAP was introduced, and in 1989 a famine broke out in the southern provinces. All this only added to the strain on the State that was fast losing its grip and control.

In the spring of 1993, the foreign ministers of neighbouring countries met in Geneva and requested the world community to provide financial aid for the absorption of Tutsi exiles into their countries. However, this proposal failed to evoke any favourable response. Thereafter a total of twenty-six conferences, involving Rwanda's neighbours, France, Belgium, the United Nations, the OAU and Ethiopia were organised but to no avail. These sought to find a demographic solution for the potential Tutsi returnees and a political sharing of power with the rebels. These conferences culminated the signing of the Arusha Peace Treaty in August 1993. Paradoxically, it also marked the point of no return in the conflict. The extremist factions began preparations for genocide realising that they would have to share power.

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6 Dissenbacher, n. 1, p. 74
The condition the refugees also depended on the country involved. The lot and condition of the Rwandan refugees in Uganda was arguably the worst in the region. In Tanzania they could take up citizenship relatively easily, and the government actually demarcated a separate district for them. In Zaire, they were occasionally offered citizenship, though at times this offer was withdrawn. However, in Uganda successive government, by contrast, considered even the children of refugees to be refugees. Even though some of the children of the Rwandan refugees left the camps, went to schools and universities, and found employment in professions, business, and the civil service, yet they had to hide their identity.

The Rwandan refugees expulsion in Uganda occurred in 1982-83, under Obote regime. The refugees' houses were destroyed and there were killings, rapes and maiming of refugees. As a consequence over 40,000 fled into Rwanda before the governments closed its side of the border. A section of the refugees, largely the youth joined the growing force of NRA guerrillas in the bush.

From the very beginning the presence of Rwandans refugees as guerrilla in the war was important. After the NRA assumed power in Kampala, the subsequent developments made the refugees realise that, in Africa today 'once a refugee, always a refugee'. The NRA tradition of giving preference to labour and effort became history. When it came to promotions, especially where a refugee was involved, what began to count, more than anything else, was descent. Katenta-Apuli, Uganda's ambassador to the United States in a letter to Human Rights Watch (16/8/93), wrote that the

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7 On the October 1, 1982, a combination of local chiefs, the young wing of the UPC and a unit of the paramilitary Special Force began an operation in south-west Uganda whose target were the Banyarwanda, but which included Bakiga and Bahima. Mahmood Mamdani, "From Conquest to Consent as the Basis of State Formation: Reflection on Rwanda", New Left Review, vol. 216, March-April, 1996, p. 25

8 As a RPA commander put it to Mamdani in Kigali in 1995, 'you stake your life and at the end of the day you recognise that no amount of contribution can make you what you are not. You can not buy it, not even with blood.' No doubt their ranks included some who were convinced form the outset that there was no alternative but to return. Mamdani, ibid, p. 26

9 Mamdani, ibid, p. 27
combination of these two fundamental decisions convinced Rwandan refugees that they did not have a bright future in Uganda. This precipitated the mass desertion from NRA and the decision to invade Rwanda to regain their rights in the country of their origin.

RPF ATTACK AND THE RETURN OF REFUGEES

According to Reed this successful desertion was possible because within the NRA a parallel command structure, headed by Rwigyema, existed in the form of the RPA code-named 'Inkotaya' (a Kinyarwanda word meaning tough fighters).

During its initial three-week offensive, the RPA moved more than 100 km into Rwanda and captured Gabiro, a military depot, as well as a second city Nyagatare. The Rwandan Army (FAR) was only able to repel the invasion after receiving extensive assistance from Belgium, France and Zaire. During this offensive RPA's three top commanders, including Rwigyema, were killed. Their deaths meant that the movement had to be reorganised, before a fresh offensive could be unleashed.

Once again on 1 October, 1990 the RPA attacked Rwanda from the northern border with Uganda. It presented itself as the democratic alternative to the oppressive and corrupt regime of Habyrimana. However, the issues raised were already part of the internal political debate and reform. However, it is pertinent to note that the October 1990 attack was neither the cause nor the start of the crisis of the Second Republic. As a consequence of the attack the regime a wave of arrests of presumed

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10 Either in battle, as most maintain or, as others have argued, as the outcome of disagreements over whether to pursue a protracted guerrilla war, which was the policy of the RPA, or a more orthodox strategy which focused upon occupying territory. Wm. Cyrus Reed, "Exile, Reform and the Rise of the Rwandan Patriotic Front", Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 34(3), 1996, p. 489

The October 1990 invasion made for an explosive situation inside Rwanda. Both French and Belgium sent troops in support of the government. While Belgium quickly developed cold feet—citing a legal obligation to remain neutral in situations of war, it quickly withdrew its troops. France proved to be the regimes reliable backer. French assistance ranged from providing funds, training and arms to giving financial guarantees for arms purchases from intermediary countries such as Egypt and South Africa. Mamdani, n. 7, p. 28
'RPF accomplices' followed. (6,000 to 7,000 were gathered in the stadium of Kigali, most of them Tutsis). At several places in the country, even Tutsi or Hutu moderates were killed. Despite this RPF failed to garner wide spread acceptance. This antagonism among the rural population led to exodus from northern Rwanda.

In spite of the military defeat, RPA's commanders argued that their initial foray into Rwanda was a success on two fronts. First, by capturing the military depot at Gabiro, the RPA was able to acquire the stock of weapons and supplies which they had been unable to bring from Uganda. Second, by occupying key targets quickly, the RPF was able to attract international attention and to establish itself as a viable force in Rwandan politics.

In order to rebuild the morale and to re-establish itself in the public eye the RPF needed to regroup. This was also necessary to demonstrate that it had not been defeated and chased back into Uganda, as the Rwandan regime claimed. Thus, the RPF re-assembled in the Rumba mountains, along the north-western border with Uganda. These mountains provided natural protection for the rare mountain gorillas. By establishing bases here the RPF effectively crushed the main foreign exchange adventure tourism earner.

On the other hand Uganda denied accusation made by the Habyarimana regime that the movement was using its territory as a rear base. However, Museveni turned a blind eye to transit activities inside his own country and the flow of funds.

INTERNAL REFORMS AND THE CRISIS OF GOVERNANCE

The RPF invasion of October 1990 occurred at a time of internal reform was being carried out by the regime. Supporters of the RPF remained silent on this point, while
the opponents claimed that this single fact and action underlined the diabolical and power-hungry nature of the RPF.

In the 1988, Presidential elections Habyarimana’s victory with 99.4 per cent of votes resulted in widespread protest. Consequently there was an effort to compromise and bring reforms. Soon democracy was being actively discussed in the Rwandan press and an explosion of the expression and criticism took place. A combination of both national and international pressure forced Habyarimana to announce an aggiornamento on 15 January 1989. For the rest of the year the government was engaged in talks with Uganda concerning the return of the refugees.

In September 1990 the Manifesto of thirty-three intellectuals demanded multi-partyism and democracy; the first signs of a fast growing efficiently and well-organised opposition.

By early 1990s the cumulative effect of these processes led Rwanda to a major crisis of governance. The political landscape was more complicated and the result of this struggle was much more destructive than that of the past. Aware of past patterns, some of the protagonists feared that should they lose this struggle, they and their families would surely face liquidation.

Till then, for the President, the combination of northern dominated army, his wife’s clan and the Christian-democratic international community was sufficient to stay in power. But this combination no longer worked. Habyarimana was no longer presiding as arbiter over the factional struggles.

Around this time the balance of power between southern and central Rwanda and the traditionally powerful Hutu north also collapsed. Power struggles in the army – the backbone of the President’s power – went beyond his control. A creeping decay
began within the Republic that was accentuated by the near stagnation in economic growth from 1985 onwards.

An uneasy coexistence had prevailed between the political and administrative Hutu elite and the economic Tutsi elite. This broke down with the RPF invasion and resulted in panic among the Hutu political class. The RPF invasion also coincided with the start of structural adjustment programme and the resultant austerity policies. There was also a rapid para-militarisation of Rwandan society, with the creation of hundreds of civil-defence associations and covert death squads, all dedicated to fighting the RPF and 'their allies'.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

The Church was one of the most important institutions in the country, which was intervening in every sphere of social life. Hence its role was decisive in the events, which finally culminated in the genocide. The Tutsis dominated the clergy in the Church, because Hutus finally took-up positions in the public sphere. The Church played a major role in the economic development of the country and was the biggest employer after the State. It was therefore, the focus of both the Tutsis and the deprived Hutus; mainly form the southern provinces in search of social mobility. The clergy reflected the fission within the society. While 90 per cent of the Christian population was Hutu, 70 per cent of the lower clergy were Tutsi, which most of the bishops were Hutu. Thus, the Church was penetrated by those ethnic classes and faced difficulties in evolving into an independent institution capable of social intervention.

In the midst of all this socio-political turbulence the Church remained a silent spectator. It did not react even at the murder of Sylvio Sindambiwe, a journalist of the Catholic journal Kinyameteka. His killing was linked to an article he wrote on
corruption. Once again the arrest of several Tutsi priests, subsequent to the October 1990 RPF attack, failed to evoke any reaction from the Church.

Social justice had for long been absent from the Church's vocabulary. The Church did not consider violence or corruption to be structural problems, but merely viewed them as aberrations. It had become a highly hierarchically and structured charity organisation that did not question the political structures in which it comfortably operated and extended its development activities.

The Church had an economic interest in supporting the status quo, because as a cumbersome extensive institution it needed a stable environment to operate. By the 1990s winds of change forced the Church to change its stance. Even then the Church hesitated to speak out. While the episcopacy remained silent, Christian organisations working under the umbrella of the Church took part in the rally for democracy. Both the Christian journals *Kinyamateka* and *Dialogue*, had long been very critical of the regime, and so were several other Christian movements.

Finally on 1 December, 1991 the Church\(^\text{11}\) broke its silence. Mgr. Thaddee Nsengiyumva, Bishop of Kabgaye, published a pastoral letter titled 'Let's Convert and Live Together in Peace'. This self-critical document criticised the Church's silence and accused the Church of corruption. It alleged the neglect of grassroots by the Church, and it co-option into the ruling elite in search of prestige and material rewards. Secondly, Mgr. Thaddee Nsengiyumva condemned the war with RPF. The political issues raised in the letter were in tune with the demands being made by the internal opposition. He was also of the opinion that the solution of the refugee problem would give the RPF no basis to continue the war.

In pursuance with this new thinking in August 1991 the Catholic bishops had approached the representatives of the Rwandan refugees. In January 1992, under the auspices of the AACC (All Africa conference of Churches), both the Protestant and the Catholic bishops mediated in negotiations between the RPF and the opposition. This resulted in the formation comité de contacts, an association of both Catholic and Protestant bishops who got engaged as mediators in the peace process.

Since the late 1980s the Church's position had been under attacked on another front, namely development. Habyarimana had plans to assign the responsibility of development to the local council rather than the parish. At grassroots' level there was also the rise of non-Christian NGOs and a secularisation of development in general. Taking all this into account, Mgr. Thaddee Nsengiyumva in his pastoral letter said that the church needed to reposition itself to regain credibility. The general political climate of Rwanda in 1991 proved an excellent opportunity to do so. The opposition seemed credible and the old regime was never able to re-establish its former status.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE GENOCIDE

The RPF's dilemma was that it could not agree to any political solution based on multi-party electoral competition. It feared defeat because of the narrowness of its demographic base. Caught between devil and the deep blue sea, i.e. to say, the dangers of a military solution on the one hand and an electoral one on the other, it was forced to opt for some sort of 'power sharing'\textsuperscript{12} formula.

In the next stage of political developments, on 14 March, 1992, the Habyarimana government under pressure from both the domestic opposition and the international demand for democratisation, agreed to the establishment of a multi-party

\textsuperscript{12} Christopher Clampham, "Rwanda: The Perils of Peacemaking", \textit{Journal of Peace Research}, p. 200
transitional government. One of the conditions, which the internal opposition insisted upon was, peace negotiation with the RPF. In effect, the internal opposition was using the leverage provided by the RPF to increase its bargaining power. This simultaneously enabled the RPF to shift from a rebel group to a legitimate participant in the domestic political process. By early 1992, Habyarimana was unable to maintain his diplomatic strategy of refusing direct contact with the RPF, which was gaining militarily. And on 12 July, 1992, in the presence of observers from Uganda, the United States, France, Belgium, Zaire, Burundi, and the OAU, the RPF and the Government of Rwanda signed a peace agreement that was to come into effect a week later. This was a virtual coup d'etat for the RPF and the internal opposition, made possible due to two factors. The first being that, the RPF with a disciplined organisation had an extremely able negotiating team, and was backed by the confidence of its military strength. Second and more importantly, the Government's negotiators scarcely represented the effective power holders in the government of Rwanda. There were disproportionately large number from members of different opposition parties, who had been recently joined the government as a part of the new multi-party transitional government in April 1992, and Habyarimana supporters from the more liberal wing of the MRND.

The introduction of political reforms brought competition for power in a setting where the State monopolises the scarce resources. And the State itself is monopolised by a small elite. This creates inherent conflicts, because the elite would seek to defend its interests, either by manipulation or by force. In Rwanda, where that elite was deeply threatened and prone to resort to violence, the prospects for a peaceful transfer of power through negotiations were thus, slim. The very fact that any settlement ultimately emerged was a tribute to the international mediators who
strived to achieve an ‘agreement’. This is regardless of whether this agreement provided the basis for any workable political settlement.

The time provided by the negotiation enabled the extremist factions of the regime to organise themselves for the genocide. They subsequently implemented it after the killing of Habyarimana in April 1994.

Confident of their ability to capitalise both on their Hutu ethnic identity that would enable them to sideline the RPF, and the unpopularity of the Habyarimana regime, the minor parties in the negotiation, hoped to establish themselves more firmly in power through early elections. This in turn encouraged the extremist factions to regard the Arusha negotiations as no more than a façade. These extremist groups were fundamentally irreconcilable to any resolution of the conflict through a negotiated settlement. They articulated an exclusivist ideology of Hutu identity. They also resorted to acts of systematic murder and intimidation on a large scale, to maintain their power.

Even a stronger UNAMIR could not have overseen the implementation of the Arusha settlement. The key weakness of this settlement was not the failure to implement a ‘transition bargain’ but the very lack of a implementable bargain. Given the irreconcilable contradictions and differences between ‘Hutu power’ groups on the one hand and the RPF on the other any peace-keeping force could have affected the outcome only by intervening decisively on behalf of one side against the other. Thus eventually entangling it into the conflict.

THE HUTU ELITE IN PARANOIA

The official rhetoric claimed that the Habyarimana government represented all the rural segments of the country, and that it followed the ideals of the 1959 Revolution.
However, in reality, a wealthy, powerful clique (the *akazu*) dominated the government. By the end of the 1980s, widespread popular disaffection had weakened the regime, particularly in the southern and central areas of the country.

At the same time, a hardcore within the regime, concentrated in the army, made preparations for genocide. This faction feared its own survival under any arrangement with the RPF. The main organisers were the northern Hutu elite in the army and in the higher echelons of civil service. The initial goal was the regime's survival and the methodology adopted for this was maximum possible elimination of the perceived 'racial' enemy. During the genocide, new goals emerged to extend Bantu control throughout eastern-central Africa. It was to oust the Hamitic 'race' once and for all from their position of dominance in the region.

In this context, a 'small house' (translated as *akazu*) of senior military and civilian officials emerged as the centre for planning and execution of the genocide. The *akazu* started to organise itself politically and militarily in the early 1990s. It claimed historical legitimacy from a long line of independent Hutu kingships located in north-west Rwanda. This group had tight control over President Habyarimana's extensive networks of political patronage. The growing dominance of this small group of Hutu northerners over every sphere of Rwandan life came to be deeply resented as the economic recession deepened, and this led to an upsurge in support for opposition political parties.

For the *akazu*, especially senior military officials, the Arusha Accord's requirement that the RPA be incorporated within the Rwandan Armed Forces and be allocated 40 per cent of officer corps was the last straw. To the President, the result of the negotiations represented a humiliating defeat. As a consequence there was a willingness of the treaty's opponents to use force to revoke it. They began to use
emotional and ethnic symbols to generate strong emotions that saw all supporters of
the treaty – both Tutsi and Hutu – as enemies.

DEMONISING THE TUTSIS AND THE PREPARATION OF THE
GENOCIDE

The Hutu Power was not a marginal force. They considered both the negotiation and
the resolution as a disgraceful capitulation. It led them to look for a final solution to
the Tutsi question. The assassination of President Habyarimana in April 1994
furnished the genocide wing of 'Hutu Power' and its apparatuses – notably the
Interhawe, the Impuzamugambi and the Milles Collines radio stations with the pretext
and opportunity to unleash the mass killing.

Further in the accord the army was to be reduced to 19,000 men with no
provision for the 21 thousand odd young soldiers who were to be laid off. As non-
inheriting farmer's sons, they had in the army a secure existence and a purposeful
outlet for their youthful energies. Released into the hopelessness of an over saturated
labour market, they were potentially ready recruits to different groups. Further, the
accord would have added pressure on land due to the return of the refugees and the
reintegration of internal exiles.

The Rwandan political elite used various symbols and genocide plans by Tutsi
enemy to transform an unpopular but relatively successful group into a scapegoat.
Tutsis were held responsible for all the evils of the colonial era, and all the problems
of the years since independence. The akazu elite revived and elaborated the
conspiracy theory better known as the Bahima conspiracy. Objective of this
conspiracy was to kill sufficient numbers of Hutus to ensure a Tutsis electoral
majority. The Bahima conspiracy myth lent a justification to the plan of genocide of
the Tutsis. It was claimed that Hutus would be slaughtered, or at least recolonised by
the Tutsis, unless drastic action was taken to make such an outcome impossible. In this connection, the plight of Burundi Hutus presented as a ready reference point.

It was imperative for those holding the reins of power that if they were to stay in power, they had to resort to a radical solution. They would have to stop the changes in the army and the political reforms. They would also have to achieve a military victory over the rebel troops and more importantly it was argued that they must eradicate the entire 'surplus' Tutsi population and their Hutu sympathisers. This will ensure for the oppressed Hutu population a safe internal Lebensraum and a secure control of power.

Recolonisation for the rural Hutus implied the restoration of clientships and a return to the unquestionable superiority of the Tutsi overlords over the Hutu majority. In short, a return to the pre-revolutionary past. The pressure on land was compelling the poor rural Hutus to look towards well-off Tutsis for work and eke out a living. Under these conditions such fears sounded reasonable.

A key document that propounded the Bahima conspiracy theory, was the 'Ten Commandments of the Hutu', first published in the Rwandan Hutu supremacist magazine, *Kangura*, in 1990. The first three of the Ten Commandments proscribed sexual relations between the two races and openly accused Tutsis of using their women to enslave elite Hutu men. These wives were Hamitic Eves in the Bantu garden of Eden. A similar document, titled the '17 Rules of the Tutsi', was published by *Kangura* in 1993.

Popular music was used for ridiculing Hutus who did not fall in line with Hutu power extremists, or did not sufficiently hate Tutsis. From time to time, government and militia forces staged fake attacks on Kigali in order create panic among civilians and rally extra support for the militias and the extremist Hutu power party.
The militias together with the army organised much of the killing during the genocide. The young men in these militias were trained in fighting techniques, which glamourised violence and involved much chanting. The largest of these militia groups was the *interahamwe*, which literally translated means ‘those who help one another’. Until preparation for genocide, *inteahamwe* was a rural self-help work group, which operated at the level of local communes. They were much praised by donors and seen as essential to the success of Rwanda’s development model.

A new popular radio station that went on the air was RTMC (*Radio-Television Mille Collines*). It became a popular station by broadcasting in Kinyarwanda instead of French. The role of this radio station in urging on the killings, broadcasting names of Tutsis and opposition targets, and reporting the whereabouts of those hiding from militias during the genocide are well documented.

Rwandans are expert at euphemistic expressions designed both to convey, and to disguise, their true intention. Ambiguity was deliberately cultivated during preparation for the genocide, and even during its implementation. Thus the genocide was referred to as a big job, *akazi gakomeye*, or special work *umuganda*; killing was repeatedly referred to as tree felling. Chopping up men was 'bush clearing', while slaughtering women and children was referred to as 'pulling out the roots of the bad weeds'.

During each election campaign, a cultivated climate of fear undermined peaceful opposition to the regime, all of which came to be falsely equated with tacit support for the RPF. Southern Hutu elite and the poor majority were told repeatedly that differences of class, region and politics were superficial as compared with the profound difference of race, which separate all Hutus from all Tutsis. It was argued that for Hutus to be safe, all Tutsis had to be eliminated from the society. This
consequently reduced all social conflicts to a two-dimensional power struggle between the two races.

Under the terms of the Arusha Accord, a transitional government was due to have been installed in Rwanda on 8 April, 1994, the day after the genocide started. The United Nations mission installed in the country was due to leave on 5 April, 1994, the day before President Habyarimana's assassination. Thus, genocide was very carefully timed.

THE EXECUTION OF THE GENOCIDE

Genocide represented a last ditch attempt by an increasingly autocratic and unpopular regime to cling on to State power at all cost. Therefore it was not the result of spontaneous fighting between two competing ethnic groups. The 1994 killings constitute genocide, precisely because they were planned much in advance. By January 1994, it was clear to the United Nations's Special Envoy for human rights that death lists were being drawn up, both for the killing of Tutsis, and the elimination of Hutu opposition politicians and human rights activists.

Even as a 2500 strong United Nations peace-keeping force arrived, Habyarimana continued to oversee the build-up of militias, opposed to the Arusha Accord and for blocking the formation of transitional institutions. By March 1994, the President was up against the growing international pressure to live up to the Accord. However, following a meeting in Tanzania where he pledged to implement them, he and the President of Burundi were killed as their plane was shot down near Kigali.

Immediately following Habyarimana's death, the parties that opposed the Accord mobilised themselves and embarked on genocide to eliminate supporters of
the Arusha process. Within hours of Habyarimana's death road-blocks had been put in place and members of the internal opposition were killed.

Even though the rural poor Rwandans chafed under the authoritarian rule of Habyariman and his clique, they were still not eager to embrace the rule of the RPF. The ethnic polarisation that occurred in Rwanda during the 1990s, culminating in the genocide of 1994, was in many respects a continuation of the evolving tensions of late colonial rule.

The link between leaders of 'Hutu Power' and subaltern Hutu masses in the genocide was not marginal. The foot-soldiers mobilised by the leadership understood that the genocide was an act for defending the social gains achieved during the Revolution of 1959. They referred to the killing as work or communal work, a customary obligation, organised and directed by authorities in the State.

**ETHNICITY AS A TOOL FOR PERPETRATING GENOCIDE**

It is common knowledge that the struggle for power is a struggle between dominant groups. In our case, these included the akazu, the opposition leaders, and the RPF. The RPF attack was used to create ethnic tension and draw attention away from internal political and economic problems. The manipulation of ethnicity was aimed to prevent the formation of a viable opposition and make the ethnic group as the only basis for association.

Following Habyarimana's military coup in 1973, political power came to be wielded predominantly by the northern Hutus, from Gisenyi district. Habyarimana’s supporters used ethnicity to camouflage their political ambitions and maintain power within a small circle of northern Hutu elites.
While the Arusha Accord reflected the interests of the internal opposition and the RPF, its implication would be disastrous for the President and the akazu. Stripped of power they would have been held accountable for their past actions by a hostile government and an independent judiciary. In order to block the implementation of Arusha Accord, Habyarimana refused to sign the agreements and set about politically dividing the opposition. Beside he encouraged and helped to create groups which opposed negotiations altogether, such as, the Coalition pour la defense de la republique (CDR) and their different affiliated armed youth wings or militias, which came to be known as the Interhamwe. Habyarimana was thus able to split each of the parties in the coalition between those who supported the Arusha process and those who were willing to accept offers of immediate access to power and resources. With the internal opposition divided, the President signed the Arusha Accord in an environment in which setting-up of the stipulated transitional institutions was exceedingly difficult and impossible.

The October 1990 attack in the north by the RPA and the shift from single-party to multi-party politics led Rwandans to mobilise on a local level, to implement a system of civil defence. Civil defence gave people the experience of conducting road blocks, house searches, security meetings, and night patrols. It also developed a shared vocabulary and the techniques for identifying and seeking out 'enemies of the people' and their 'accomplices'.

Multi-party politics, as it took hold in Rwanda, exposed citizens to the open and aggressive promotion of an in-group, as well as to acts of intimidation and violence against those outside the group. In public sensitisation meetings – which were both administrative gatherings and political rallies – authorities mobilised citizens and taught them how to participate.
By April 1994, it had become amply clear to communities throughout the country, as to who were the dynamic citizens striving for leadership roles, who were passive or alienated residents and lastly who were members of the out-group. In many places the most active citizens had received some military training. The more passive or alienated citizens developed patterns of avoidance, self-protective detachment, and silence that helped passively facilitate the genocide in Rwanda.

From 1992 onwards, members of ‘Hutu power’ militias were being trained in the techniques of hunt – and – destroy operations, rather than for open-armed combat. Five to eight months before the outbreak of the genocide extremist elements in the government and the army had begun organising “local security meeting” to identify Tutsis.

The members of these bands were mainly young Hutu men, non-inheriting sons of farmers and surplus labour aiming to change the hopelessness of their existence. With their help, death lists were compiled. Given the absence of cultural or physical distinctions between many Hutus and Tutsis, the national identification cards clearly denoting ethnicity became crucial. In special military camps they learned to kill with machetes, clubs and Kalashnikovs, to burn down houses and crops and to turn roadblocks into death traps for refugees. They made up the 15,000 to 20,000 strong contingent of young militia fighters who behaved as marauding gangs and death squads, and were receptive to the genocidal ethnic war mongering of Ferdinand Nahimana on RTMC. Through such propaganda the leaders aimed to turn them into instruments of coercion and tool for genocide. It only needed a triggering event to set

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13 These youth were simply unwilling to remain in their wretched situation forever. It was in armed conflict that young men might find their opportunities. The struggle of this surplus population for a redistribution of rights and privileges, property and positions found expression in violence.
off of the fuse of genocide. This was provided by the death of the President Habyarimana in a plan crash.

A highly efficient machinery of government enabled the implementation of a complex genocide plan in a short time span. It combined highly effective propaganda techniques with a high degree of military preparedness, to achieve its end. A strong sense of secrecy and a false air of normality served to disarm many victims of this genocide. Many Tutsis apparently failed to anticipate the genocide, in spite of mounting evidence that something was being planned. Had they believed that genocide was impending and possible, many more Tutsis would have fled the country before April 1994.

There were gamblers, adventurers, looters and would-be soldiers familiar with the many civil wars who participated in the killing. There were young men between fifteen and twenty-five, even as young as eleven, bought with money, weapon or promises of a share in the spoils, or jobs. For them the civil war and the genocide provided an opportunity to start afresh. They were given party badges and firearms and operated under the eyes of army groups and with logistical support from them. They could loot and lay waste unhindered and kill at will any Tutsi and any supporter of the Arusha Peace Treaty.

Efforts of the Habyarimana regime was successful in damping ethnic tensions during the period from 1973 to the mid 1980s. However ethnic identities were kept alive through various governmental polices. So when the elite faced with the political crisis due to stagnation of development, they used the, "ethnic card"\textsuperscript{14} to divert attention.

\textsuperscript{14} Catharine Newbury, "Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda", \textit{Africa Today}, vol. 45(1), 1998, p. 18
The consolidation of the 1959 Revolution took place in a climate of ethnic purification. Thousands of Tutsis were killed or fled into an exile. It is essential to remember here, that the despite an image of religious, linguistic and cultural unity Rwanda is a deeply fragmented society.

The ethnic discourse has since then been used to divert attention from the inner contradictions within the Hutu elite. Contrary to initial promises soon it became clear the new regime relied on a network of patronage that promoted the interests of a small circle of people.

Mobilising vertical social cleavages, racial, ethnic and political ideologies could be of great use to failing regimes facing widespread opposition from within their own ranks. When political democratisation was imposed on Rwanda in the early 1990s, President Habyarimana’s regime responded by rallying the majority against a purported common racial enemy, thus hoping to prevent regional and class divisions from finding more open political expressions.

A key element in politicising ethnic cleavages in the recent history of Rwanda according to Catherine15 was the corporate view of ethnicity. The generalisation of blame was dramatically evident in the genocide against Tutsis in 1994, when hard-liners in the Hutu dominated government labelled all Tutsis in the country as enemies of the State. The genocide was calculated to exterminate them; the hateful vitriol used against the Tutsis in the press and on radio broadcasts illustrated this thought process.

During the ethnic mobilisation prior to independence, the image of the Tutsi had thus been transformed from a proud and noble aristocracy, to lazy, parasitic and cruel pastoral race and alien conquerors. The foreign origin of the Tutsis, once used to

15 A recurrent pattern: the tendency for a regime threatened by external attack to target an internal scapegoat and to rationalize its behavior by propagating a corporate view of ethnicity. Catherine ibid., p. 7
defend their inherent right to rule, was now being used to justify plans to drive them out of Rwanda. A key hate speech made in 1992 by a leading Hutu power politician, Leon Mugesera, heralded the genocide and passionately argued for sending all the Tutsis "back home to Ethiopia" from where they supposedly came.

The transformation of social relations is through a process of identification and disidentification that supersedes prior unawareness and indifference. Once the dialectics of identifications and disidentifications are in full play, fantasies mutually exacerbate one another. Activists will resort to violence for their own purposes; to oust members of the opposite group from rewarding positions, to take over their houses, shops, jobs and land. This is the rational action aspect of the spiralling violence. Rape is an essential, symbolic and sexual, part of this expropriation.

The widening scope of identification and disidentification was a necessary condition for the subsequent genocide, but not sufficient. A full explanation would require a complete account of the economic, political and military dynamics and an analysis of the relation between the 'Hutu power' movement and the political regime in Rwanda.

According to the proponents of Hutu-power ideology, Tutsis are more intelligent than the Hutus. They are more loyal to their own kin and Tutsi women are more attractive. However, these properties are only used by the Tutsis for power. Therefore, Tutsis use their intelligence only to deceive the Hutus; they are 'devious' or 'sly'. It was not so much with naked power that they subjected the Hutus, but with

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18 In Rwanda a complementary process of identification continues, creating an equally abstract category of 'Hutu'. Every Hutu should consider another Hutu as his brother. If tomorrow one of the volcanoes were to erupt, the Hutu from Rukiga could come and live in Nduga and become by this very fact one of the people there. And if he expected a famine in Nduga, a Hutu from Nduga can go and stay in Rukiga and becomes one of them. But no matter what he does, a Hutu can not become a Tutsi, nor the inverse. Swaan, ibid, p. 115
deceit that they stole their land. The Hutus were described as simple, frugal and honest people, and were also conceived as primitive, naïve and uncivilised.

The ‘Hutu power’ review Kangura and their colleagues of Radio Mille Collines started in the early 1990's. From the first issue Kangura reprocessed the familiar themes of the Tutsis as devious manipulators, of the Tutsi women as treacherous seductresses, all in the service of the conquest of power.19

Apart from the disintegration of State monopoly of violence, there was also the economic context, i.e. the extreme scarcity of the one indispensable economic resource, land. Absence of an enduring alternative to agriculture, made all conflict of interest a zero-sum game; land won by a person was the one lost by another.

Violent acts of one group vindicate the worst fears of the other group and prompt it to respond in kind. Every incident was magnified and reflected in the fantasies of the parties concerned. The presence of hostile neighbour States and the threat of invading armies reinforced and accelerated this process.

Everyone in Rwanda and Burundi had sufficient cause to fear violent attacks, once the State could no longer ensure their safety or deliberately choose not to do so. The ‘Hutu’ government in Rwanda was trapped between the ‘Hutu power’ bands on the one hand and the threat of the refugee army in the north. The ‘Tutsi’ regime in Burundi, almost completely controlled by the army, could not afford to relinquish its minority monopoly without the danger of being swept aside by the ‘Hutu’ majority.

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19 Every Hutu should be aware that the Tuutsi woman, wherever she may be works in the pay of her Tuutsi nation. As a consequence, every Hutu is a traitor – if he marries a Tuutsi woman; – if he lives with a Tuutsi woman; – who hires a Tuutsi as his secretary or supports her...

Everyone should know that every Tuutsi is dishonest in business. He has no other goal than the supremacy of his nation.

The Hutu must stop pitying the Tuutsi. This is an almost literal exhortation to disidentification. Identification of the ‘Tuutsi’, disidentification from the ‘Tuutsi’ and avoidance of all identification with the ‘Tuutsi’ – those are the necessary conditions for establishing a ‘Hutu’ identity. Through projection, all evil but still human characteristics have been assigned to the ‘Tuutsi’, by exaggeration they have been demonized into superhuman proportions of evil and, finally, through dehumanization they have been transformed into vermin. The process of disidentification is complete, it has gone even beyond hatred and achieved a level of dispassionate destructiveness. Swaan, ibid, p. 114
Each country lived in fear that what had occurred in the neighbouring State might next be perpetrated with the help of the adjacent regime

GENOCIDE

President Habyarimana was assassinated on 6 April, 1994 when his aircraft was destroyed by a missile. The aftermath of his assassination witnessed an uncontrolled slaughter of Tutsis by the government forces (army, Presidential guards and interhamawe militia) and civilian death squads known as Network Zero. The following genocide was conceived, planned, and executed by a small group of people close to the former President. The downing of his plane served as the igniting force for something that had been prepared well in advance. As soon as news of his death was announced, the militias and death squads were unleashed. The bonds within civil society were completely broken, as the genocide was completed in record speed and with extreme thoroughness.

A military government was installed in Kigali on 8 April, 1994 under Jean Kambanda. It was the first government that did not contain any Tutsi and was formed by the Hutu Power faction. The international community, except France, rejected this government’s legality. But what was most striking and shocking was the recognition of the interim government by the Church hierarchy. On 9 April, 1994 they congratulated the new government and thanked the army for protection.

20 All the indications are that his death was the regicide which extreme elements in the government and the army needed to enable them to prosecute their claims on power and their aims. Dissenbacher, n. 1, p. 59
21 Saskia, n. 11, p. 393
During the period of genocide people were caught up in the clever and well-thought out propaganda and use of ethnicity and were often intimidated to comply. They were following the calls from their radios: "The graves are still half-empty. Help us to fill them". During the three months of the genocide, nearly every Rwandan adult as well as many children repeatedly faced critical choices in which their security and survival and that of others were at stake.22

The competition for land had significant social consequences before the war, starting right at the family level, with increasing conflicts over land-use rights and inheritance. Andre and Plateau23 recorded that in 1993 an open conflict took place every three days in the commune they studied; half of them over land. When they retraced the people of this community after the genocide, they found that many people were killed for reasons other than their ethnic identity. Big landowners were one of the targeted categories. To some the genocide offered an opportunity to fight out unsettled conflicts over land. Plus extra-ethnic factors, namely economic gain such as seizure of land had been the motivation for many.

Rwandans24 quietly confide that life before and after the genocide has exhibited a chilling continuity. Fear is still there as are accusations, identification of political "enemies" and their "accomplices," use of political intimidation for material gain, disappearances, killings, and silence.

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22 Tutsi women married to Hutu men were killed. I know only one who survived. The administration forced Hutu men to kill their Tutsi wives before they go to kill anyone else -- to prove they were true intrahamwe. One tried to refuse he was told he must chose between the wife and himself. He chose to save his own life. Another Muhutu man rebuked him for killing his Mututsi wife. He was also killed. The killing was planned because some were given guns. During the war with RPF, many young men were taken in the reserves and trained and given guns. Those coming from training would disassociate themselves from Tutsi. Some of my friends received training. When they returned, they were busy mobilising others. They never came to me. I am 57. Even people in their 60's joined in the killings, though they were not trained. Mamdani, n. 7, p. 17

Scavenging goats nosing through the trash uncover the trembling, cringing figure of a woman. The choices: acknowledge her or grant her continued invisibility. The ramifications: control over whether she lives or dies. Such choices were influenced by guilt, fear, self promotion, greed, faith, morality, caprice. Michele D. Wagner. "All the Bourgmester's Men: Making Sense of Genocide in Rwanda", Africa Today, vol. 45(1), 1998, p. 28

23 Saskia, n. 3, p. 357

24 Wagner, n. 22, p. 284
The killings created refugees, who would come to villages and tell about those from the village who were part of the 
*Intrahamwe*, and who had participated in killings in other sectors. However, once the killings stopped, life just continued as usual. Even if one did not witness killings, one got used to living next to known killers.²⁵

**AFTERMATH OF THE GENOCIDE**

An estimated²⁶ 5-10 per cent of Rwanda’s population was killed between the second week of April and the third week of May 1994. This ranks among one of the highest casualty rates in any population in history due to non-natural causes.

The leaders of the old regime like Protaise Zigiranyirazo (brother-in-law of the President, known as the “Monsieur Z” of the death squads) or Ferdinand Nahimana (formerly professor of history at the National University, who had led the ethnic propaganda on Radio des Mille Collines) found refuge in exile in Paris. Similarly, some thirty to forty more of those chiefly responsible for the massacres, were flown to safety in French military aircraft. However others like the Hutu Professor, who spoke to Mamdani, was released after three months, while her husband – also a Professor – has been charged with participating in the killings.²⁷

²⁵ Mamdani, n. 7, p. 21
²⁶ Purnier, Quoted in Hintjens, n. 16, p. 241
²⁷ 'One of the [Tutsi] lecturers had a Tutsi wife. They had a boy of 16. We hid the child of the couple, and then took him along to the [French - created] Zone Turquoise when we ran there for safety. The wife survived ...the husband, a Matutsi, had tried to hide, survived for two months, was found in June and was killed... She heard about us; and came to the Zone Turquoise to get the son, but never told us we were being talked about as killers. So when we returned, we were arrested a week later. We put our lives at risk for hiding the boy for the three months.'
Among these there are ten lecturers, who I know are innocent. If they were brave enough to come back, they must be innocent.'
I asked her whether the demands of justice are a hindrance to reconciliation. The answer was quick and clear: 'Those responsible must be tried. They must be given punishment, which should be broadcast so the culture of not punishing is brought to an end. I don't believe in forgiving. This was something which was planned at the level of political parties. It was not accidental... There is no tension between justice and reconciliation. Once those victimized see perpetrators punished, they will feel better and will be able to live with the rest.'
Mamdani, n. 7, p. 20
A major characteristic of the conflicts of 1950s and 1990s, was the destruction of the political middle ground. In both crises, there were voices of moderation that called for inclusiveness, the restructuring of power relations, and the necessity to attend to the needs of all Rwandans, regardless of ethnic background.

During the early phase of the genocide, not only were the leading members of the internal opposition killed, but so were virtually all skilled Rwandans who had not fled. However an UNHCR commissioned study reported in September 1994 that RPA killed thousands of Hutu civilians, a finding, which led the organisation to suspend its resettlement activities. Such excesses were attributed by the RPA to young soldiers who had joined late in the war and lacked the disciplined training which other had received.

**INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE GENOCIDE**

Rene Degni-Segui, the Special Reporter appointed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, in his report\textsuperscript{28} of 28 June, 1994 said that the killings had been both planned and systematic and constituted a genocide. The Security Council however continued to use moderating terminology in this regard. Thus, the resolution 935 of 1 July, 1994 talked of “possible acts of genocide” and all Security Council documents retain similarly nuanced language. If the violence was termed a genocide, they would have no choice but to implement the terms of the Convention on Genocide and there was no inclination for this.

The United Nations according to Alain Desexbe, Director of *Medecien sans Frontier*, should have taken sides as soon as it became clear that a genocide was being perpetrated by the government. It was not a total surprise to the United Nations The

\textsuperscript{28} Alain Desexbe, “The Third Genocide”, *Foreign Policy*, (97), Winter 1994-95, pp. 13-14
international community had been well informed that Rwanda was being torn apart by deliberately provoked fear and hatred, still the United Nations chose to ignore the warning signs.

In the face of genocide the first United Nations reaction to the massacres was to pass Resolution 912 on 21 April 1994, reducing the UNAMIR force from 2,500 to 270. The UNAMIR General’s ability to act was further reduced by the Security Council itself. Having lost its Belgian contingent, the United Nations decided that the status quo was untenable. Boutros-Boutros Ghali gave the Council two options: either double the number of troops in Rwanda, or reduce it to a token force of just 270 men. The Council had no hesitation in adopting the latter course.29

The United States heavily influenced this decision because 18 of its soldiers had been killed in Somalia at the time. United Nations Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali strongly urged the Security Council on 29 April, 1994 to deploy an African contingent under the United Nations flag. A few days later he submitted a plan asking for the deployment of 5,500 soldiers to Kigali. The Security Council could not agree on moving forward with this plan mainly due to resistance from the United States.30

The expanded mandate however did not allow the UNAMIR to use enforcement action. By this time 14 other African nations offered to contribute soldiers. On 8 June, 1994 the Security Council passed Resolution 92531 authorising the deployment of 5,500 soldiers and specifically asked UNAMIR to provide security

30 On 5 May, 1994 Clinton Administration unveiled the Presidential Decision Collective 25 placing rigid limits on peacekeeping operations, whether or not they included any American troops.
31 The text of paragraph 4 reads: Security Council Reaffirms that UNAMIR in addition to continuing to act as an intermediary between the parties in an attempt to secure their agreement to a cease – fire, will: a ) Contribute to the security and protection of displaced persons, refugees, and civilians at risk through the establishment and maintenance, where feasible, of secure humanitarian areas. b) provide security and support for the distribution of relief supplies and humanitarian relief operations. S.C. res. 925, UN SCOR, 49th Sess., 3388th UN Doc. S/RES/925 (1994)
and protection for displaced persons and relief workers. However, disagreement over logistics between the United States and the United Nations severely impeded the deployment.

Efforts of the United Nations were impeded also due to lack of United States interest in the region. The Great Lakes were never a high priority area on its African policy agenda. The United States assessment, whether humanitarian intervention should be carried out was conditioned by threats to its ‘vital interests’. These vital interests were perceived to be the protection of United States lives, security of core allies, health of the global economy, and overall stability of the International system.

At the heart of the United Nations refusal was the United States' perception of what constituted humanitarian intervention. In the case of Rwanda intervention did not coincide with United States policy interests and was therefore deemed unnecessary. The United States applied a restricted definition of intervention along 'realist' lines in order to avoid any involvement in the conflict. Clinton Administration officials had been specifically instructed\(^{32}\) to avoid using the word 'genocide' because under the Genocide Convention, the United States would have been obliged to act. Instead, United States policy was based upon a civil war scenario, under which it repeatedly called for a cease-fire.\(^{33}\)

**FRENCH INTERVENTION AND THE OPERATION TURQUOISE**

For strategic and humanitarian reasons, France decided that further delay was intolerable. On 22 June, 1994, the Security Council gave Paris an uneasy approval for a limited, humanitarian intervention to stop the massacres. The United Nations Security Council was wary of the French action. Only 10 of the 15 members of the Security Council were willing to support the operation. However, the United States, France's ally, insisted on a cease-fire and a withdrawal of all UN forces from the area. The United States had its own agenda and wanted to avoid any involvement in the conflict.

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Council voted in favour of the operation, while the rest five abstained. Despite these concerns, some 2,500 French troops launched 'Operation Turquoise' without delay. From bases in Zaire at Bukavu and Goma they entered Rwanda to establish a 'safe zone' in the south-western corner of the country.

Of all the countries that might have intervened in Rwanda, France was perhaps the least appropriate to do so. It had close relations with the Habyarimana government, supporting it militarily with troops in its counter-offensives against the RPF in 1992 and 1993. It also evacuated the top officials and gave them asylum.

The United States however, supported the idea of French intervention while declining to provide any United States forces. This enabled the United States to work out its logistics with the United Nations Resolution 929 authorised French troops to use "all necessary means to achieve the humanitarian objective". This clearly illustrated the Security Council's ability to override any article prohibiting non-intervention. The Resolution kept the troops under French and not United Nations command, which showed its reluctance to assign an enforcement role to UNAMIR.

The French military intervention was the first response of a horrified Western world that was decidedly ambivalent in intentions and effects. In can also be seen as an effort in defending an area of Rwandan territory against the RPF, and protecting French clients in the old regime – killers included – who were flooding into the region before the RPF advance.

The French military presence, however, over a two month period beginning on 22 June, 1994 saved the lives of several thousand Tutsis. Yet Operation Turquoise did little to improve the political situation. After ten weeks of genocide, when most of the Tutsi community had either been killed, displaced, or had taken refuge in

34 Palut, n. 29, p. 152
35 Alain Desexbe, n. 28, p. 11
neighbouring countries, the world finally responded by offering support to a purely humanitarian operation by the United Nations, and several individual governments, including France and the United States.

**RPF IN POWER**

After the RPF had entered Kigali on 1 July, 1994 its leaders announced that they would abide by the terms of the Arusha Accord with suitable modifications in light of the recent genocide. Amendments were endorsed and accepted by the remaining remnants of the internal opposition. It was agreed that the allocation of ministries between the various parties would be maintained, though those posts earmarked for the MRND were to be reallocated to the RPF.

By the time Wagner\(^\text{36}\) arrived in Rwanda in early October 1994 as a United Nations human right monitor, genocide had become a mundane element of daily life. The human face of genocide he encountered was the loneliness of corpses lying face-up and open mouthed in puddles of mud on living room floors. No longer was genocide an abstraction or an intellectual puzzle with none left to bury the dead. Another face to the genocide he encountered was the embittered survivor. In military fatigues, it was the determined face of the small boy – the only survivor among his siblings –who now served as a *kadogo*, or boy-soldier.

The word *génocidaire* delineated the “enemy” and it implicitly rationalised abuses against the enemy. They were suspected *génocidaires*, and they were guilty according to popular thought. About 100,000 people packed into those filthy, lethal

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36 Wagner, n. 22, p. 25
human warehouses. As they are génocidaires they certainly deserved, it was the government line of thought.

Rwanda's disturbed collective psyche was visible. During 1995, weekends after weekends funerals replaced weddings as the important somber social occasions. Private funerals held by families – both Tutsi and Hutu – were occasions for mourning, remembering, and healing.

The State language in Rwanda, divided the population of Rwanda into four categories: returnees, victims, survivors and perpetrators. The term survivors was applied only to the Tutsis. The implication being that the perpetrators were the Hutu who were still alive. A Hutu was presumed to be a killer. Hutu were collectively held responsible for the genocide and tracked down, even on foreign soil. In March 1997 a Hutu refugee and a former school teacher Mukarugwizwa's said:

We are hungry and we are sick but above all we have lost all morale. Our elders are shrivelled and dying and our children already look old. Are all of us guilty of genocide, even these little children? We have been chased through the bush like animals. And in three days, Kabila's men will be upon us again, leaving 100,000 of us with a choice of death under their bombs or in the jaws of crocodiles.

This tendency to globalise and generalise the blame for the genocide in Rwanda to all Hutus has led to tragic consequences. This perception of ethnicity has been used by a paranoid elite for its political survival.

The new regime too used ethnic card to mobilise support and demonise the Hutus. Regular rituals like the following were used to create public support. Officials

37 Rwanda's tormented soul was perceptible in many ways: in the commonplace use of the term génocidaires to demonise large numbers of people; in the inner recesses of Gitarama Prison where detainees; forced to stand in filthy dampness for months on end, lost toes and feet to gangrene; on the outskirts of other prisons where detainees, skeletal thin and naked except for a rag at the waist, sweat pouring off abscessed flesh, performed hard labor in the hot sun; and in the screams and gunshots that were audible under cover of night even in late 1995. Wagner *ibid.* n.22. p. 26
38 Mamdani n.7 p. 22
39 Catherine, n. 14, p. 8
and others perched in their places of honour and locals clambered on mounds of dirt on the periphery watched quietly as truckloads of corpses arrived. Shrouded in block plastic sheeting or garbage bags, the corpses were unloaded from the trucks by young men – usually soldiers and local RPF cadres – and carried to the pit where they were staked neatly. Spectators stood in the sweltering heat, choking on tears and the odour of thousands of decomposing corpses only a few yards away. Then the political speeches began, following the familiar theme laid out by Vice-President Paul Kagame: reconciliation was not possible without justice, and killers could never reconcile with their dead.

The official and of-repeated message was that for every genocide victim, there was a genocide killer. Therefore for the estimated 1 million victims, government officials promoted the idea of at least 1 million killers. The image was further ethnicised; Tutsis as victims, Hutus as killers.

The linear certainty of this Rwandan “popular thought” took the verdict of collective responsibility shared by all Hutus. Those who did not understand the genocide in this way, including survivors, remained silent in 1995.

Conversations with people, official and non-official, give a clue; for most who survived outside the lowlands, there must have been at least one Hutu family who protected them. For this group, however, there is no term; it is politically and publicly invisible.

In the communes, daily denunciations and political terror allowed the victors to occupy other people’s properties. In and around Rwanda, tens of thousands of

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40 However according to Mamdani it was possible for Tutsi to hide in the surrounding swamps and survive, but not so in most of the country. One could not hide on the hills. So hopeless was the quest to survive that there were many eventually resigned themselves to being killed and presented themselves at roadblocks. There were even those made to queue before rivers to have their heads chopped off as they reached the front of the line, so the corpse may roll into the river with but a nudge, saving the killers any extra effort. And yet, there were survivors. Mamdani, n. 7, p. 23
people disappeared or were summarily executed. In these conditions, the United Nations principles of dignity, voluntary repatriation and safe return are nothing but empty slogans.

REFUGEES

Regional stability was undermined by the emigration of refugees into Tanzania and Burundi, and the ecological and health repercussions on Uganda (for example thousands of corpses floating in Lake Victoria, one of the country's sources of potable waters). The general climate was one of fear. The exodus from the north of the country was also partly the responsibility of the MRND as they ordered people to flee from the enemy.

Mobutu's need for French support in neighbouring Zaire, and Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi's intense suspicion of Museveni, extended the Rwandan conflict into regional relationships. In short, the structure of international rivalries helped to exacerbate rather than moderate the conflict within Rwanda.

The Irish traveller and writer, Dervla Murphy found that at the camps there was a deeply engrained culture of control. This culture had made the genocide possible, together with a complete want of remorse, which was ominous for peace and reconciliation in Rwanda. In a lecture to a group of English literature students at the Bukavu camp she was subjected to a great deal of hostile criticism for even using the words genocide and interhamwe and was told that what had really happened in Rwanda in 1994 was merely a war with killings on both sides.

Most of the 300,000 refugees have organised themselves in their village structures, creating a situation where community elders automatically become camp
leaders. The militias, who are intermingled with the refugees, continued to force them to remain outside Rwanda, thus depriving the RPF regime of its legitimacy.

The Church is in disarray and the camps are also full of sects which have broken away from the rigid Church institutions. It has been has argued with respect to a similar phenomenon in contemporary Liberia, that the rise of charismatic movements is not proof of an irrational escapism but a rational and pragmatic way of dealing with a disordered, fragmented social and religious reality.

President Mobutu of Zaire relished his new role as a peace-keeper. He began to use the refugees as a bargaining chip, threatening the expulsion of all refugees by the end of 1995. The desired result was achieved, as Zaire became the centre of international attention in Africa.

THE QUESTION OF REPATRIATION

While the Hutus in refugee camps wished to return to their homes and take back their possessions, most of these were either destroyed or have been taken over by Tutsis whose property was destroyed.

After the victory of the rebel troops, returning Tutsi exiles settled in their old homes or on deserted Hutu property. Anticipating disputes over the land many of the Hutus in the refugee camps at Goma or Bakuvu hesitated to return.

In October and November 1995, the Rwandan government announced it was ready to take back up to 20000 refugees per day. While UNHCR had advised that no more than a daily 8000 could be handled. In this battle of contingency plans, all concern for the crucial issue – the effective protection of the returnees in Rwanda –
was completely ignored. The prison situation\footnote{In November 1994, some six thousand of those suspected of active involvement were incarcerated in Rwandan prisons by the year end, the figure had gone up to about sixty thousand. The complicated investigations started, with international participation. By June 1995, seven prisoners in every 10,000 were dying every day—almost four times the emergency rate of a devastating epidemics. At this rate, disease, violence and overcrowding threaten wipe out the prison population. The 58,000 prisoners of Rwanda were literally on death row. Francois Sauliner, “The Human Shield Strategy”, \emph{The World Today}, January, 1996, p. 19} in Rwanda illustrates the dilemma between individual responsibility and collective guilt.

Swift repatriation on a huge scale posed a direct threat to Rwanda’s stability, as the returning masses would be a Trojan horse for the most hardline elements of the former Rwandan army. The smaller groups of refugees returning to their homes in an uncoordinated way could well face unpredictable dangers in a country where the rule of law has not been restored.

This left the international community with no other option, but to redirect its efforts from the obsession with repatriation targets and the provision of aid, to addressing the real issue of protection within Rwanda itself or finding a solution first to the conflict in Rwanda.

\section*{IMPACT ON THE CHURCH}

Catholics were the most visible in supporting the Hutu Power elite, from President Juvenal Habyarimana himself right down to the lowest of government functionaries in the communes before, during and after the genocide. A similar loyalty was displayed by the Anglican Church; the Archbishop of Rwanda and the Bishop of Kigali told a press conference\footnote{Elaine Windrich, n. 32, p. 857} in Nairobi in June 1994 at the height of the genocide that they had come there not to condemn but to explain what is happening in Rwanda. A minority
of priests, nuns and pastors opposed the genocide; another minority\textsuperscript{43} enthusiastically collaborated with its organisers while the majority stayed inert.

Early in June 1995 RPA soldiers killed three Rwandan bishops\textsuperscript{44} namely, Mgr. Vincent Nsengiyumva, Archbishop of Kigali, Mgr. Thaddeee Nsengiyumva, Bishop of Kabgaye, and the Bishop of Byumba, Mgr. Ruzindana, besides several priests under their protection. The Catholic Church was de facto beheaded. The RPF declared that the killing was the individual act of four soldiers and executed one of them. But it soon become clear that the RPF wanted to reduce the role of the Church drastically.

In the summer of 1995, 200 priests in Rwanda, and 60 in Goma was all that was left of a total of 400. Between the priests in exile and the priests within Rwanda there was hardly any communication. Most sources describe the Church to be in a state of shock. The priests in the camp enjoyed neither status nor authority.\textsuperscript{45}

The bishops within Rwanda engaged themselves in public confession and \textit{mea culpa} as the only way towards reconciliation. The Diocese of Butare declared December 1994 as the start of a period of mourning and issued guidelines concerning pastoral activities. Sacraments were to be given only on Sunday; weekdays were marked for priests to concentrate on confession and on the world of God. This could be seen as an attempt to reclaim the Church’s authority over the restless Rwandan Christian.

\textsuperscript{43} The case of Wencesles Munyeshyaka, a Rwandese Catholic priest, is illustrative of the current debate regarding the Catholic Church of Rwanda. Father Munyeshyaka, evacuated in September 1994 to France, has been accused of complicity in the genocide. Testimonies collected by organisation such as African Rights, contain massive evidence against him. He has been accused of endangering the life of refugees in his parish by hampering their evacuation, violating Tutsi women in exchange for protection, and participation in massacres. Munyeshyaka has been arrested but meanwhile released due to a lack of evidence. It is clear that he can count on the unconditional support of the French Catholic Church and certain French and Belgian White Fathers. The best lawyers were engaged for his defence and press conferences were held to allow the accused priest to defend himself in front of the media. Saskia, n. 11, p. 395
\textsuperscript{44} Saskia, ibid., p. 395
\textsuperscript{45} Windrich, n. 32, p. 857
The Catholic Church was of the opinion that the accusations directed at its clergy were part of a world-wide project defamation aimed to discredit it, and, at any expense, the Church wanted to clear itself of all implication with the genocide even in face of all the evidence.

LAND REFORMS

The massive\(^{46}\) influx of returnees to Rwanda after more than thirty years of exile, made the land issue a pressing socio-political question in urgent need of solution, as these people entered the competition for land. When these latter so-called 'old caseload' refugees returned \textit{en masse} (1.3 million) from December 1996 onwards, the government felt pressured to take drastic measures to assure the integration of the increasingly diverse population. The government decided in December 1996 that whole of Rwanda's population was to be regrouped in villages as opposed to inhabiting in traditionally dispersed housing.

Those Tutsis who lost relatives through the genocide regarded it as insult to be asked to vacate the houses and property they inherited.

Besides in many of the communes in Butare prefecture, there were several fields, which were not maintained. The local authorities stated that many people have lost the motivation to work. Genocide survivors have psychological difficulties, often having lost many family members. Farmers with family members in prison were burdened by the task of feeding those imprisoned, while at the same time lacked farm labour. Furthermore, several NGOs stated that refugees returning from the camps in Congo and Tanzania have lost the habit of working after being spoon-fed on aid for

\(^{46}\) Saskia, n. 3, p. 354
more than three years. 'Old caseload' refugees were in this sense the group, least
affected by the war.

In Rwanda, land is still managed by a dual legal system. All land that is
officially registered (mainly land belonging to missions and expatriates) is considered
inviolable private property. The rests, over which the population only enjoys a use
right, belongs to the State.47

The new policy should aim to ensure food security and increase off-farm
income and a more market-oriented agricultural sector. Since there is only marginal
room available for extension of the cultivated area, the only option is to increase
productivity through a change in land use.

However, this policy suffers from similar cultural ignorance, a similar paternal
top-down style of management and an even more Western-oriented, liberal market
approach. The document does not discuss the social and political factors that hinder
agricultural development. Unless these are addressed there will be no solution.

CONCLUDING POINTS

In general terms, political reconciliation requires the parties in a conflict to forgive
each other and take appropriate measures to build institutions which can deal
effectively with similar problems in the future. In Rwanda, this would require the
Hutus and Tutsi to agree on a formula to share political and economic power, and to
have confidence in their public institutions, including the criminal justice system.

47 On ne s'approprie pas une espace mais on justifie un pouvoir sur l'espace ou sur une ressource particuliere qui,
celle, est potentiellement inappropriable. Saskia, n. 3, p.368
Conflict resolution and reconciliation in Rwanda revolve around several factors: the dynamics of Hutu-Tutsi relations, the nature of RPF rule and the role of neighbouring States and the international community.

Another irony of the Rwandan situation is that reconciliation requires a rapid move towards democracy, but genuine democratisation would put the Hutus in control. Given the background of the 1994 genocide, this could undo reconciliation.

While political reconciliation is an imperative in the Rwandan situation, it does not top RPF's list of priorities. The RPF led government is primarily interested in establishing political and military control over the territory and its resources. To find and punish those who were responsible for the 1994 genocide, is probably not their priority.

It would probably have been easier to establish democracy under Habyarimana's regime than it would be under the RPF. This is largely because Habyarimana came from a numerically large ethnic group. Hence there is reluctance of the Tutsi dominated RPF to establish democratic rule. The RPF, led by people who do not speak French, at times looks more like a foreign occupation force.

This tense regional climate has been complicated by relationships among the neighbours themselves and their past association with Habyarimana. It is therefore important that Rwanda’s problems and prospects for reconciliation are discussed in the context of the political machinations of neighbouring countries.

Some of the former Rwandan officials fled to the neighbouring countries in mid-1994. The Kenyan Government was not only happy to host RPF opponents but also remained very critical of the Rwandan government. Kenya closed its diplomatic mission in Kigali at the onset of the genocide and has not reopened it and in 1995 it expelled two senior Rwandan diplomats.
According to the Professor from Butusi,

The main problem for reconciliation is arbitrary arrest and those who have not participated being harassed. There are even cases of Hutu who hid Tutsi being arrested now. It is demobilising. Those who killed left didn't remain behind. Now, even those who were hidden by Hutu are not coming out to say so, to protect those who hid them if falsely arrested.48

One reason is that the victim is often the only survivor. The victim feels bad and there is the desire for refuge. The returnees from exile do not share their sensibilities about justice since they did not share their experience of genocide. The political consequence of this fact was uneasily but honestly underlined by one RPF official:

We have a difficult situation. The people (Tutsi) here say we have been here for a year and nothing has happened. No one has been brought to justice. They say we were opportunistic, just wanting to come to power, for which they paid the price. Before the RPF came, they were oppressed, but not massacred. Now, they have suffered a genocide but have not justice. Survivors want punishment of perpetrators. What do we do?49

There is according to Mamdani a growing consensus at different levels of the State that justice must pave the way to reconciliation. But to extended that consensus to society seems a dilemma. The army and political group says 'we are looking at it from the point of view of genocide or of the people who lost their relatives? What do you tell people who say, where shall we stop, shall we not kill every one.' The head of the group said if you can bring to trial those who planned the genocide then the question of peasant who caught people on the hills is political. We can over look that. A similarly placed official said the numbers of those held responsible does not matter. Another said exposure is more important in the trials than punishment. Morally those who survive on the politics of ethnicity will have been undermined.

48 Mamdani, n. 7, p. 23
49 Mamdani, Ibid, p. 23
It is clear that the genocide in Rwanda tore the social fabric to such an extent that husbands killed their wives due to different ethnic affiliations. After the victory of RPF, a large number of Hutus fled. Most of them fled to 'Zone Turquoise' thereafter to Zaire and other countries.

A large refugee population leads to many complications. They are a precursor to become a major destabilising force. As events in Rwanda show that unless refugee problem is solved instability and flux will persist. And refugee problem or their settlement and repatriation cannot happen without substantive reforms taking place in Rwanda. For this to happen issues of ethnic identity and egalitarian integration of society have to addressed. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.