

HISTORY OF RWANDA

**FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE
END OF THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY**

National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

Under the supervision of

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COVER ILLUSTRATION

Cohabitation among Rwandan People

(Paint of NURU Abraham)

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**FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END OF THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY**

Kigali, 2016



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.	: Archives Africaines
A.G.	: Assemblée Générale
ABAKI	: Alliance des Bakiga
ABESC	: Association des Bahutu Evoluant pour la Suppression des Castes
ACR	: Association des Cultivateurs du Rwanda
ADP	: Alliance Démocratique des Peuples
ADR	: Alliance pour la Démocratie et la Réconciliation Nationale
AEC	: Agglomeration Extra-Coutumières
AFDL	: Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre
AGOA	: African Growth and Opportunity Act
AIDS	: Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrom
AIMO	: Affaires Indigènes et Main-d'oeuvre
AJER	: Association de la Jeunesse Estudiantine Rwandaise
ALIR	: Armée de Libération du Rwanda
AM/AP	: Arrêté ministériel/ Arrêté présidentiel
AMR	: Association des Moniteurs du Rwanda
AMUR	: Association des Musulmans au Rwanda
ANT	: Assemblée Nationale de Transition (Transitional National Assembly)
APADEC	: Association du Parti Démocrate Chrétien
APR	: Armée Patriotique Rwandaise
APROBAMI	: Association des Partis Monarchistes Rwandais
APROCOMIN	: Association des Commerçants Indigènes
APROSOMA	: Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse
ARD	: Alliance pour le Renforcement de la Démocratie
ARDHO	: Association Rwandaise pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme
AREDETWA	: Association pour le Relèvement Démocratique des Batwa

ARENA	: Alliance pour la Renaissance de la Nation
ARSOM	: Académie Royale des Sciences d’Outre-Mer
ARUCO	: Alliance du Ruanda-Urundi et du Congo
ARUCO	: Alliance du Ruanda-Urundi et du Congo
ARV	: Anti-rétroviraux
ASSADA	: Association des Anciens d’Astrida
ASSERU	: Association des Eleveurs du Rwanda
AVEGA	: Association des Veuves du Génocide Agahozo
BACAR	: Banque Continentale Africaine au Rwanda
BANCOR	: Banque à la Confiance d’Or
BBC	: British Broadcasting Corporation
BC	: Before Christ
BCDI	: Banque du Commerce, du Développement et de l’Industrie
BCR	: Banque Commerciale du Rwanda
BEM	: Brevet d’Etat Major délivré par l’Ecole de guerre de Bruxelles, devenu l’Institut royal supérieur de défense)
BK	: Banque de Kigali
BNR	: Banque Nationale du Rwanda (Central Bank of Rwanda)
BORU	: Bulletin Officiel du Rwanda-Urundi
BRD	: Banque Rwandaise de Développement
CAC	: Caisses de Chefferies
CAMERWA	: Centrale d’Achat des Médicaments Essentiels du Rwanda
CC	: Comité Central
CDP	: Caisse du Pays
CDR	: Coalition pour la Défense de la République
CDR	: Coalition pour la Défense de la République
CEA	: Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines
CEA	: Colonies d’Etats d’Africains
CEEAC	: Communauté Economique des Etats de l’Afrique Centrale
CEPGL	: Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs
CERAI	: Centre d’Enseignement Rural et Artisanal Intégré

CESTRAR	: Centrale syndicale des travailleurs rwandais
CFJ	: Centre de Formation des Jeunes
CHU	: Centre Hospitalier Universitaire
CICR	: Comité International de la Croix Rouge
CICR	: Comité International de la Croix Rouge
CIZA	: Cimenterie du Zaïre
CLADHO	: Collectif des Ligues et Associations des Droits de l'Homme
CMS	: Church Missionary Society
CND	: Conseil National de Développement (Parlement Rwandais)
CNDH	: Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme
CNDP	: Conseil National du Développement des Programmes
CNRD	: Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie
CNS	: Commission Nationale de Synthèse
CNTS	: Centre National de Transfusion Sanguine
CNUR	: Commission Nationale pour l'Unité et la Réconciliation
COGEAR	: Compagnie Générale d'Assurances et de Réassurances
COGEBANQUE	: Compagnie Générale de Banque
COGER	: Congrès Général des Rwandais
COMESA	: Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
CORAR	: Compagnie Rwandaise d'Assurances et de Réassurances
CPM	: Commission Permanente des Mandats
CPODR	: Concertation Permanente de l'Opposition Démocratique Rwandaise
TPIR	: Tribunal Pénal International pour le Rwanda
CPOR	: Concertation Permanente de l'Opposition Démocratique
CRID	: Centre de Recherches et d'Information pour le Développement
CRISP	: Centre de Recherche et l'Information Socio-Politiques
CS	: Centre de Santé
CSP	: Conseil Supérieur du Pays (Higher National Council)
DMZ	: Zone démilitarisée
Ed.	: Edition
EDPRS	: Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

EEC	: European Economic Community
EIC	: Etat Indépendant du Congo (Congo Free State)
ENA	: Enfants Non Accompagnés
EPR	: Eglise Presbytérienne au Rwanda
EUNR	: Editions de l'Université Nationale du Rwanda
EUR	: Editions Universitaires du Rwanda
FAR	: Forces Armées Rwandaises
FARG	: Fonds d'Assistance aux Rescapés du Génocide
FASR	: Facilité d'Ajustement Structurel Renforcé
FAZ	: Forces Armées Zaïroises
FDC	: Forces Démocratiques pour le Changement
FDD	: Forces de Défense de la Démocratie
FDLR	: Forces Démocratiques de Libération u Rwanda
FED	: Fonds Européen de Développement
FLR	: Front de Libération Rwandaise
FP	: Force Publique
FPR	: Front Patriotique Rwandais
FRD	: Forces de Résistance pour la Démocratie
FRODEBU	: Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi
FRONASA	: Front for National Salvation
FRPC	: Facilité pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté et la Croissance
Frw	: Rwanda francs
GIEP	: Groupe International d'Eminentes Personnalités
GN	: Genève
GOMN	: Groupe d'Observateurs Militaires Neutres
GOMN	: Groupe d'observateurs militaires neutres de l'OUA (Rwanda)
GP	: Garde Présidentielle
GTBE	: Gouvernement de Transition à Base Elargie
GUN	: Gouvernement d'Union Nationale (Government of National Unity)
GUNT.	: Gouvernement d'Union nationale de Transition

HAV	: Homme Adulte Valide
HIMO	: Haute Intensité de Main d’Oeuvre
HIV	: Human Immunodéficience Virus
HRW	: Human Rights Watch
IBUKA	: Association des Rescapés du Génocide (Association of genocide Survivors)
ICAR Africa	: International Conference on Refugees in Africa
ICRC	: International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTR	: International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IDA	: International Development Association
IDC	: Internationale Démocrate Chrétienne
IEC	: Information, Education et Communication
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
INRS	: Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique
INSR	: Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda
IPN	: Institut Pédagogique National
IRDP Paix	: Institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix
IRDP	: Institute de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix
IRSAC	: Institut de Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale
ISAE	: Institut Supérieur d’Agriculture et d’Elevage
ISFP	: Institut Supérieur des Finances Publiques
ISPG	: Institut Supérieur de Pédagogie de Gitwe
JC	: Jeunesse Chrétienne
JENAKI	: Jeunesse Nationaliste Kigeli V
JEUNAR	: Jeunesse de l’UNAR
JOR	: Journal Officiel du Rwanda
JPR	: Jeunesse Patriotique Rwandaise
KHI	: Kigali Health Institute
KIE	: Kigali Institute of Education
KIST	: Kigali Institute of Science, Technology and Management
KM	: Kikosi Maalum
LABOPHAR	: Laboratoire Pharmaceutique du Rwanda
LDGL	: Ligue pour la Défense des Droits de

l'Homme pour la Région des Grands Lacs

LIPRODHOR: Ligue pour la Promotion et la Défense des
Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda

MAGRIVI : Mutuelle des Agriculteurs des Virunga

MCC : Millennium Challenge Corporation

MDC : Movement for Democratic Change

MDR : Mouvement Démocratique Républicain

MFBP : Mouvement des Femmes et du Bas-Peuple

MGR : Monseigneur

MIB : Mission Immigration Banyarwanda

MIB : Mission Immigration Banyarwanda

MIGEPROF : Minsitère des Genres et de la Promotion des
Femmes

MIJESPOC : Ministère de la Jeunesse, des Sports et de la
Culture

MINAGRI : Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Elevage

MINALOC : Ministère de l'Administration Locale
(Ministry of Local Administration)

MINECOFIN: Ministère des Finances et de la Planification
Economique

MINIJUST : Ministère de la Justice (Minsistry of Justice)

MINISANTE : Ministère de la Santé (Ministry of Health)

MINUAR : Mission des Nations Unies pour l'Assistance au Rwanda

MOMOR : Mouvement Monarchiste Rwandais

MONUOR : Mission d'observation des Nations Unies Ouganda/Rwanda

MPL : Mouvement Populaire de Libération

MRAC : Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale

MRLZ : Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre

MRND : Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le
Développement

MUR : Mouvement pour l'Union Rwandaise

N° : Numéro

ND : Non déterminé

NRA : National Resistance Army

NRM : National Resistance Movement 746

NUR : National University of Rwanda

NURC : National Unity and Reconciliation
Commission

OAU : Organisation of African Unity

OBK	: Organisation du Bassin de la Kagera
OCIRU	: Office du café indigène du Ruanda-Urundi
OMD	: Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement
ONATRACOM	: Office Nationale de Transport et de Communication
ONG	: Organisation non Gouvernementale
ONU	: Organisation des Nation Unies
Op.Cit	: Opere Citato (dans l'ouvrage cité)
ORINFOR	: Office Rwandais de l'Information
OUA	: Organisation de l'Unité Africaine
P.	: Page
PADER	: Parti Démocratique Rwandais
PALIR	: Parti de Libération du Rwanda
PAM	: Programme Alimentaire Mondial
PAMOPRO	: Parti Monarchiste Progressiste
PARERWA	: Parti Républicain du Rwanda
PARMEHUTU	: Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu
PAS	: Programme d'Ajustement Structurel
PAWA	: Faction extrémiste dite autrement « Power »
PDC	: Parti Démocratique Chrétien
PDI	: Parti pour la Démocratie Islamique
PECO	: Parti Ecologiste
PED	: Pacte Européen de Développement
PEV	: Programme Elargi de Vaccination
PIB	: Produit Intérieur Brut
PL	: Parti Libéral
PNAS	: Programme National d'Actions Sociales
PNB	: Produit National Brut
PNLP	: Programme National de Lutte contre le Paludisme
PNLS	: Programme National de Lutte contre le SIDA
PNUD	: Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
PP.	: Pages
PPJR	: Parti Progressiste de la Jeunesse Rwandaise
PPTE	: Pays Pauvres Très Endettés
PRD	: Parti pour le Renouveau Démocratique

PRI	: Penal Reform International
PRIMATURE:	Premier Ministère (Office of the Prime Minister)
PROFEMMES	: Collectif des Associations de Promotion de la Femme
PRP	: Parti de la Révolution Populaire
PRSP	: Poverty Reduction Strategy Program
PRSP	: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSCR	: Parti Social Chrétien du Rwanda
PSD	: Parti Socialiste Démocrate
PSR	: Parti Socialiste Rwandais
RADER	: Rassemblement Démocratique Rwandais
RAMA	: Rwandaise d'Assurance Maladie (Rwanda Medical Insurance)
RANU	: Rwandan Alliance for National Unity
RDC	: République Démocratique Du Congo
RDR	: Rassemblement pour la Démocratie au Rwanda
RIF	: Rural Infrastructure Financing Facility
RIPA	: Rwandais Pour La Promotion Des Investissements
RISD	: Rwanda Institute of Sustainable Development
RITA Agency	: Rwandese Information and Technology Agency
RPA	: Rwanda Patriotic Army
RPF	: Rwanda Patriotic Front
RTD	: Rassemblement Travailleiste pour la Démocratie
RTL	: Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines
RU	: Rwanda-Urundi
SADC	: Southern African Development Community
SAP	: Structural Adjustment Program
SBMP	: Société Belge des Missions Protestantes
SDN	: Société des Nations
SIDA	: Syndrome de l'Immuno-déficience Acquis
SIDIM	: Société des Ingangururugo de Mushiha
SNJG	: Service National Des Juridictions Gacaca
SONARWA	: Société Nationale d'Assurances du Rwanda

SORAS	: Société Rwandaise d'Assurances
TANU	: Tanganyika National Union
TANU	: Tanganyika National Union
TIC	: Technologie de l'Information et de la Communication
TPDF	: Tanzania People's Defence Forces
TPIR	: Tribunal Pénal International pour le Rwanda
TRAC	: Treatment and Research AIDS Centre
TRAFIPRO	: Travail-Fidélité-Progrès
UAAC	: Université Adventiste de l'Afrique Centrale
UAARU	: Union des Aborozi Africains du Rwanda
UCK	: Université Catholique de Kabgayi
UDPR	: Union Démocratique du Peuple Rwandais ⁷⁴⁸
UE	: Union Européenne
UEBR	: Union des Églises baptistes au Rwanda
UFDR	: Union des Forces Démocratiques Rwandaises
UJR	: Union des Journalistes du Rwanda
ULK	: Université Libre de Kigali
UMAR	: Union des Masses Rwandaises
UMHK	: Union Minière du Haut Katanga
UNAFREUROP	: Union Afro-Européenne
UNAR	: Union Nationale Rwandaise
UNATEK	: Université d'Agriculture, de Technologie et d'Éducation de Kibungo
UNHCR	: United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	: United Nations Children Fund
UNILAC	: Université Laïque de Kigali
UNINTERCOKI	: Union des Intérêts Communs du Kinyaga
UNLA	: Uganda National Liberation Army
UNLF	: Uganda National Liberation Front
UNR	: Université Nationale du Rwanda
UPC	: Uganda People's Congress
UPM	: Uganda Patriotic Movement
UPRONA	: Union pour le Progrès National
URSS	: Union des Républiques Socialistes Soviétiques

USA	: Etats-Unis d'Amérique (United States of America)
USAID	: United States Agency for International Development
VAR	: Vaccin Anti Rougeoleux
VAT	: Vaccin Antitétanique
VOA	: Voix de l'Amérique
VPO	: Vaccin Polio Oral
YPO	: Young Presidents' Organisation
ZEP	: Zone d'Echanges Préférentiels

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PREFACE

No people can exist without a history. Likewise, there can be no history without a people. Since the end of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994, many Rwandans have been asking and waiting eagerly for a written account of their history. Current Rwandan society has not been spared from this fundamental desire -- namely, the wish to be correctly informed about Rwanda's past in order to confront the challenges of the present and the future. The social demand for history is particularly high in a country like Rwanda where the tragedies of war and genocide against the Tutsi occurred.

People demand to know their history for several reasons. Among other things, history explains what happened; it gives proof of the catastrophe that occurred with examples of manipulated facts -- invented for ideological ends and propaganda -- and provides context to inspire action and behavior with the aim of reconstructing post-genocide Rwanda. This book neither claims to meet all the expectations of its readers nor claims to answer all questions asked. The authors are conscious of these limits and deserve to be commended for having transcended their own partialities and emotions. They have made this contribution to the national memory of Rwanda in a professional way by gathering, analyzing and reconciling diverse ideas.

Above all else, this history of Rwanda is written by and for Rwandans. It constitutes a vital step in the current reconstruction of this nation. We know that the manipulation of history was one of the tools of extremist propaganda disseminated before

and during the genocide of 1994. Rather than grounding itself in the prejudices and unverified theories of the past, this comprehensive work aims at establishing the truth of the past and promoting the critical mind of the future. This framework is especially important in educating our youth, who can now claim improved tools for accessing knowledge of their national history. This work gives a balanced account of events but certainly does not provide an exhaustive account of everything that took place. Its objective is to provide basic, objective information about the essential aspects of the evolution of Rwanda, some of which are deeply controversial. The major themes handled are: the problem of information sources, the prehistory and people of Rwanda, the Kingdom of Rwanda from its beginning through the end of the nineteenth century, European colonisation, post-colonial regimes, and the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, and the transitional period from 1994 up to 2003. Throughout their writings on these periods, the authors have attempted to address economic, political, social and cultural factors in addition to addressing Rwanda's relations with states in the sub-region and beyond.

The National University of Rwanda, to which the authors of this book belong or belonged, is particularly grateful to the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), which afforded the necessary funds for the realisation of this work. The confidence the NURC has shown in our lecturers has only enhanced the longstanding spirit of collaboration between our institutions.

Finally, we offer our sincere thanks to the authors of this book for their work well done. They have distinguished themselves from some of our predecessors who supported the bloody drift of the post-colonial regime -- namely those who played a negative role before, during, and after the genocide committed against the Tutsi. By publishing this work, the authors of this book have opened a new chapter for future research in Rwanda. They ought to be thanked for that endeavour.

Prof. Silas LWAKABAMBA
Rector, National University of Rwanda

FOREWORD

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) is pleased to present an appraisal of the history of Rwanda, the objective of which is to disseminate a better researched and more objective national history than formerly available. Several readings and disorted interpretations of the history have always nourished the political behavior that has undermined Rwanda's unity, leading to the destruction of the concept of citizenship in Rwanda.

On several occasions and in several forums, the wish to revisit this history has been expressed with the intention of facilitating the process of unity and reconciliation. This commitment falls within the context of some primary objectives of NURC, namely research conducting and publishing.

The scope of this work covers the essential history of Rwanda from its beginning up to 2003, the year that marked the end of a political transition which started in July 1994 and marked the beginning of another period of the Third Republic.

Sponsored by NURC, this work was coordinated and produced by historians and researchers from the National University of Rwanda who were not only able to present their findings based on state-of-the art research methodologies, but who also succeeded in clarifying controversial points and even illuminating previously unknown facts of Rwanda's history. The authors are entirely responsible for this identification of historical facts, their interpretation and analysis, and their final presentation in this work.

May this work be useful to our readers and may it contribute to stimulating future research initiatives and debate.

NURC wishes to thank those who contributed to the realization of this book, especially the NUR for its research and the European Union for its financial support.

Dr. Jean Baptiste HABYALIMANA
Executive secretary
National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

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This synthesis of the 'History of Rwanda' would not have been produced without a combined effort of the National University of Rwanda (NUR), the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) as well as the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC).

Special thanks go to the National University of Rwanda which was the cradle for the authors of this piece of work. These authors were requested and supported to write a history of Rwanda that is devoid of any manipulation.

We are grateful to the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) which was charged with financing the processes of writing, printing and disseminating this work which is considered an essential tool in the fulfillment NURC's mission.

Finally, we are indebted to the Ministry of Education which conceived, from the outset, the importance of a scientific study of the history of Rwanda and its impact on the sustainable development of the country. In addition, the above ministry outlined the philosophical framework of this study.

The authors of this study therefore wish to wholeheartedly express their deep and sincere gratitude to the above institutions for their determined support. May these institutions find satisfaction in this work!

Deo BYANAFASHE and Paul RUTAYISIRE



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Since the perpetration of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994, many sectors of the Rwandan population – public and private – have solicited a written account of their history. This demand, also motivated by scientific necessity, is certainly informed by the tragic experiences of recent history. The Rwandese want to know their history so as to provide answers to numerous unanswered questions. Upon realizing the manipulation of history was at the very center of the propaganda which preceded and accompanied the genocide in 1994, Rwandans want to be exposed to an objective and true version of history that is based on in-depth research and that is written in an unbiased manner¹.

An opinion which is commonly expressed by Rwandans of all ages is that the history taught and disseminated in schools is distorted². This manipulated history emerged as a tool for political gains during and after colonization and is accused of having attached undue importance to ethnic differences. It is also accused of creating tensions between Hutus and Tutsis by falsely portraying both the monarchy and the Tutsi as oppressors of the Hutu while before the emergence of propaganda, all Rwandans regarded one another as members of broader inclusive institutions such as clans.

¹ IRDP, Enquête dans le Budaha, 5 janvier 2005.

² IRDP, Enquête à Butare, 5 janvier 2005.

Additionally, the history taught in schools was written with the aim of pleasing the leaders in power. It only reproduced slogans of former leaders instead of seeking historical facts and objective truths. For example, under colonization it was said by the colonizers that the Tutsi were the only ones who could rule. Conversely, during the First and Second Republics, the ancient Hutu Kingdoms were glorified by some scholars and the power in place at the expense of the Nyiginya Kingdom, which was discredited³.

History taught and disseminated in schools was interested in neither the peasant masses nor their daily lives. It was even less concerned with the relationships existing between different social groups in the interior of the community and between inhabitants of the same region. The discipline did not attempt to illuminate the socio-cultural and economic factors which shaped these people of regions.

This being said, it is unlikely that all the problems regarding the manipulation of history emanated exclusively from history textbooks. Recent research has shown that divisive discourses were also prevalent in day-to-day conversations, behaviors, attitudes, and even civic education. These attitudes were often imparted and reinforced by teachers who propagated lessons on the 'long exploitation of the Hutu by the Tutsi Monarch', the strange character of Tutsi and the Hutu Revolution of 1959, etc.'

Many teachers admit to having publicly asked their students about their ethnic background and having treated them discriminately based on such grounds. Not only did teachers enforce ethnic segregation at schools, but they also employed divisive language and stereotypes which imparted on their students strong ethnic consciences.

Conscious of the widespread manipulations of the history discipline in Rwanda, the government of National Unity has for some time prohibited the teaching of history in the primary school curriculums throughout Rwanda. At the secondary level, however, teachers may choose to teach history, though they often face pressure from outside organizations to include history in their curriculums⁴.

³ IRDP, Enquête à Butare, 5 janvier 2005.

⁴ On this topic, see the recommendations of the International Colloquium organized

We should hope that an official and objective teaching of history be introduced throughout our schools. The status quo is one in which Rwandan youth are subject to unverified and politically manipulated renditions of history. Our youth have a right to know their origins, the creation of the state of Rwanda, and the causes of ethnic tensions that recently plagued our country. Alternatively, we risk the possibility that our future generations hold a partial and clouded understanding of the past, informed by emotional partialities and learned on the streets.

We hope instead to have a national history which is not stained with any partiality; we hope for a history that corrects the distortions of the past, that enables students to discover, live, and enjoy in the tradition of Rwanda's past civilization, and that does not hide facts or take sides. The team of historians to whom the task of establishing our national history was assigned knows fully well the consequences of distortion given their own life experiences.

The task of correcting what has been distorted is difficult because of the degree to which distortions have been inherited from generation to generation. The discipline of history is largely blamed, however justly, for having divided Rwandans and for having sowed the seeds of hatred up to the catastrophic genocide committed against the Tutsi between April and July 1994. Being aware of the past manipulation of Rwanda's history should not lead to paralyzation, but rather should teach us to learn from the past, no matter how bitter, so as to build for the future.

Historians can take up this challenge by establishing the necessary critical distance with the past, distorted interpretations of our history. They can resort to recent research tools and methodologies to effect the desired change of transitioning from an ideology-based history to a history that awakens a critical mind. History can only be a useful science when that which it reports is in conformity with reality.

There are those who are doubtful of Rwandans' capacity to write their own history in a scientific and objective manner⁵. They

from 4th to 6th April 2010 in Kigali by the National Commission against Genocide. The participants spent a long time on the necessity of introducing the teaching of Rwanda's history in primary and secondary schools as soon as possible.

⁵ African Rights, *The heart of education ; assessing human rights in Rwanda's schools*, University of Michigan, June 2001, p. 27

fear the perpetuation of distortions, though the new fear is that history will be biased towards a ‘Tutsi perspective’⁶. Of course, it is impossible to be perfectly objective, and as such we must be aware of the continued dangers of distortion. We must do our best to foster objectivity by adopting a critical approach to history and by adopting appropriate research methodologies. We also must be humble enough to recognize that any initiative in the historical field is limited, and our work should be continuously reviewed and updated as new information and data becomes available.

This appraisal seeks to respond to questions raised in seven papers and critical analyses, presented as follows: the sources of history, pre-historic Rwanda, pre-colonial Rwanda, colonial Rwanda, Rwanda under the First and Second Republics, the genocide committed against the Tutsi, and the post-genocide transition. In this final analysis, the synthesis of the general history of Rwanda provides the space for various teaching materials to emerge (history atlases, educative DVDs, etc.), which will be of invaluable use in the teaching of history in primary and secondary schools.

Déo BYANAFASHE and **Paul RUTAYISIRE**

⁶ This was the objective of a study conducted by Penal Reform International (PRI), an NGO specializing in the monitoring of Gacaca courts (a form of popular courts founded on the traditional model of local administration of contentious issues between neighbors). The study focused on history lessons and talks on history pronounced in the solidarity camps of freed prisoners. The tool of reference was made of notes written by prisoners and interviews conducted with them. The views of those who taught these lessons are not reported (PRI, *Du camp à la colline, la réintégration des libérés*, Rapport, VI, Kigali, mai 2004).

I

SOURCES OF RWANDA'S HISTORY

By Déo BYANAFASHE

Regarding sources of history, Rwanda shares the fate of countries in Central Africa whose historiography is challenged by the absence of written texts before the fifteenth century (at the coastal strip), and before the nineteenth century (in the hinterland of the sub-region). Up to the 1960s, this problem made it difficult for Rwanda's historiography to be recognized. Generally, it was argued that before the twentieth century, Rwanda was a society without a history given the absence of written texts. However, sources of information cannot be limited to written sources, as history as a discipline is conceived as simply "a science of man living within society."⁷

It was in the spirit of suggesting solutions to this problem of historical sources that, in 1916, the London International African Institute organized "the Fourth International African Seminar" on African pre-colonial ethno-history in general and the history of pre-colonial Africa in particular. Pre-colonial African history was acknowledged at that time for relying on sources other than written histories. The seminar concluded by showing that non-written sources of history needed to be accorded the importance they deserve.

In cultures without a written tradition such as those of sub-Saharan pre-colonial Africa, sources are restricted to oral traditions, archeological data, and material evidence from ancient

⁷ Nouschi., *Initiations aux sciences historiques*, Paris, Nathan, 1993, p. 19.

times. Since the end of the nineteenth century, Rwanda has enjoyed a diversity of historic sources. Given the revolutionary nature of writing and the audiovisual cultures, four types of sources can be discerned, namely: material sources, oral sources, written sources, and audiovisual sources.

These four types of sources constitute “the sources of Rwanda’s history”. Processing them requires both creating a critical inventory because of their invaluable importance to historians and examining how they have been formerly analyzed by exploring Rwanda’s historiography. This inventory deals with material records of oral and written sources as well as audiovisual sources. We aim to address the major challenges confronted by Rwandan historiographers in the use of these sources. We hope to write a history in the context of post-genocide dynamics – dynamics that call for reconstruction, reconciliation, and a national history that transcends manipulation and partiality.

1.1. Critical inventory of Rwanda’s historiography sources

Although they do not all carry equal weight, the sources of Rwanda’s history are abundant and varied. Each contains sub-categories, tones, and characteristics which can make the compilation of a critical inventory rather complex.

1.1.1. Material sources

The culture of writing was introduced to Rwanda during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Consequently, prior history can only be discerned through oral tradition, archeological vestiges, sites and historical monuments, and traditional industries and technologies.

a. Archeological vestiges

Archeological vestiges are material proof of traditional activities performed by Rwandans, namely objects and other material evidence that provide information on modes of living and thinking, methods of social, political and economic organization, methods of knowledge acquisition, production, consumption, and exchange.

It is important to know how to extract meaning from these

objects and material vestiges so as to extrapolate the information they contain. For example, different types of traditional hoes provide clues not only about the methods of how they were manufactured, but also about the nature of soils for which they were manufactured. This same analytic process can be applied to utensils of herdsmen and bee-keepers, objects used in transport, tools used in fishing and hunting, and objects used in dressing.

These objects provide testimony to modes of living and settlement of people -- their social and economic organization, cultural practice, and beliefs. The expansion of Rwanda's historiography has much potential; there is much material yet to be tapped from archeological sites. The Institute of Rwanda's National Museums and the National University of Rwanda should focus their efforts on these sites.

b. Monuments and historic sites

Monuments and historic sites are among the principal repositories of Rwanda's pre-colonial culture and material heritage. However, most of the archeological sites in Rwanda have neither been identified nor properly safeguarded. There is need for a systematic and exhaustive census to identify and save famous historical sites from falling into oblivion, including royal palaces, salt pits, ruins, caves, escarpments, and sculptures.

To this effect, the Institute of the National Museums of Rwanda has recently opened branches in four rural provinces of Rwanda. It is through these branches that the institute has mobilized its efforts in identifying, rehabilitating and conserving important cultural heritage to supplement interpretations of oral tradition and to provide for cultural tourism and for posterity.

c. Industry and traditional methods

The methods used by Rwandan traditional societies offer ample information on the ingenuity of these societies, especially those of the two last centuries. The technological collections of the Institute of the National Museums of Rwanda demonstrate the level of technology achieved, from the invention of fire in 50,000 BC to the manufacturing of silver-made tools to the apparition of agriculture and animal husbandry and metallic

and ceramic tools and objects in the seventh century BC. Material sources have the advantage of portraying a direct image of Rwandan society in its long cultural trajectory beginning before colonialism. During colonialism, society was rendered stagnant and its technological know how were marginalized.

1.1.2. Oral sources

The history of ancient Rwanda has been essentially transmitted to us thanks to the oral tradition. Oral histories, or oral traditions, are conveyed by qualified experts with a certain degree of accuracy from generation to generation. Oral traditions vary from region to region and from narrator to narrator. In most cases, the variations mostly concern form rather than content. Researchers have developed a habit of classifying oral sources into one of two categories: official oral-tradition and popular oral-tradition, each of which umbrella has several variations.

a. Official oral traditions

Official oral-traditions are sources narrated by people who systematically learnt them from their parents or neighbors. They enjoy a classification of “official” because they match up with facts conserved by official institutions on classified events whose transmission is subject to censorship and eventually subject to modifications by the royal court (A. Kalama and A. Pagès).

Official oral traditions consist of six broad types: historic narratives (*ibitekerezo* and *amakuru*), dynastic genealogy (*ubucurabwenge*), dynastic esoteric code (*ubwiru*), dynastic poetry (*ibisigo*), war poetry (*ibyvugo*) and pastoral poetry (*amazina y'inika*). Many of these narratives have been collected by A. Kagame, A. Pagès, J.N. Nkulikiyimfura, A. Coupez, and Th. Kamanzi, J. Vansina, among others, and we should look to expand these collections.

➤ Historic narratives (*ibitekerezo and amakuru*)

Historic narratives constitute an important source of historiography. The category refers to a literary genre which not only deals with events pertaining to different regimes of kings, but also to historic events specific to famous

people or national heroes. Therefore, royal historic narratives (*ibitekerezo by'abami*) generally consist of the history of military expeditions and conquests that took place under a specific king against a certain country to conquer or even to subdue and defeat a certain rebellious character (*umugome, umuhinza*).

Historic narratives are primarily works of heralds designed by every head of militia and secondly, works of memorialists (*abatekereza b'ibwami*) who listened to these herald narratives within a short span of time and then rearranged them according to the wishes of the king. They never ceased to embrace the criterion of propaganda⁸. These historic royal narratives were recited by the best narrators and the exact wording was carefully preserved.

Lastly, family historic narratives (*ibitekerezo by'imiryango*) recounted military achievements of characters from powerful families. These narratives were generally more liberal and provided space for fantastic and marvelous tales that stressed hyperbole and beauty, in other words they were beautified and perfected beyond any element of scruple⁹.

➤ **Dynastic genealogy (*ubucurabwenge*)**

Developed in the sixteenth century by J. Vansina, dynastic genealogy originated from the monarch in power who would cite all his ascendants by their ruling names, coupled with the recitation of a complete genealogy of queen-mothers up to Gihanga and *Ibimanuka* (i.e. "those who descended and fell from heaven") as well as the ancestors of the founders of some clans. This genealogy was recited by approved specialists who had sworn an oath; they were called *abacurabwenge* (i.e. custodians of intelligence).

Dynastic genealogy did not only consist of an official document; it was also the legal justification of the dynasty in power. It provided legal proof of the right of succession to the throne and also provided the proof of lineage from the first Rwandese king: "King Gihanga".

As an instrument of legitimacy, the dynastic genealogy

⁸Vansina, J. *L'évolution du royaume Rwanda des origines à 1900*, Bruxelles, ARSOM, 1962, P.23

⁹ Ibid

underwent several modifications and transformations whenever the law of succession was threatened. The affiliation between successive monarchs was of the utmost importance.

In spite of the risk of falsification, dynastic genealogy has remained an important source of information in establishing the chronology of Rwanda's history.

It should be noted that A. Kagame published an entire set of this genealogy even if he did not include a critical analysis. It was later that J. Vansina and thereafter J.N. Nkulikiyimfura, beginning in 1960, developed a critical approach to complement the research on Rwanda's dynastic genealogy.

➤ **Dynastic esoteric code (*ubwiru*)**

The royal dynastic code, the most ancient genre of Rwanda's oral literature, is an official document which was preserved in the form of a poem by specialists called "*abiru*" (preservers of the esoteric code). These trustees were special advisers to the king regarding the rules and regulations of power retention and the behavior of the king. These trustees kept conserved and narrated invaluable, confidential information which was transferred from father to son within their families.

We know from different authors that the esoteric code was a separate integral text of its own, composed of 18 pieces called "*inzira z'ubwiru*," or tracks, and another text consisting of the history and commentary of this code. Together, they were called "*intekerezo z'ubwiru*".

According to A. Kagame¹⁰, the esoteric code was subdivided into four parts:

- *Irage ry'Umwami* - the personal will of every king;
- *Umurage w'Ingoma* - the will of succession to the throne;
- *Inziraz'ubwiru* - poems constituting the official text memorized by heart by the *Abiru* who would show how one would proceed to ensure that the country enjoyed happiness;
- *Intekerezo z'ubwiru* - a history of commentaries of the three titles cited above.

The first two parts of the code (*Irage ry'umwami* and *Umurage*

¹⁰ 1947

w'ingoma) will perhaps never be known because they were not recorded in the poems (*Inzira*). In addition, only trustees of these testaments, such as A. Kagame, knew them and he died without publishing any of them.

Several commentators including R. Hermans, J. Vansina, M. D'Hertefeldt and A. Coupez contend that the esoteric code (*Ubwiru*) lacks objectivity because it often distorted facts which did not agree with the expected rules of the trustees of the "Abiru" code. These trustees were often accused, as interpreters of history, of having distorted history by projecting the situation of the moment as having occurred in the past by using old-fashioned language or by interpreting history according to the ideologies of the royal powers of that time.

➤ **Dynastic poetry (*Ibisigo*), war poetry (*Ibyivugo*) and pastoral poetry (*Amazina y'inika*)**

Dynastic poetry (*Ibisigo*) is an official source which relates to 19 historic kings of Rwanda, beginning with Ruganzu II Ndori. It traces the events that marked different successive reigns from the literary point of view. The dynastic poem adheres to a very rigorous standard. It is especially challenging to understand and interpret because it makes reference to events which have already fallen into oblivion. In addition, the narrator of this poem (*Umusizi*) is a true specialist and professional. To this effect, this professional has at his disposal a tool (*poem*) that enables him to glorify the royal (*Nyiginya lineage*) by showing that every king had continued the work of his ancestors. The *Umusizi's* role was to praise the king. As such, we of course are skeptical of the objective capabilities of the narrator.

War poetry (*Ibyivugo*) enjoys a pronounced eulogistic nature, especially because it is addressed to the very person who composes the poem chant and praises his bravery during war. The historic value of a war poem (*icyivugo*) is restricted to indicating some details of military organization and of the Rwandan image of the ideal warrior and of the patriotism Rwandans used to cherish.

Pastoral poetry (*Amazina y'inika*), like war poetry, is of a lyric genre and consequently is work of imagination inspired by the history of the cow where cows used to face each other, in the same manner as social armies. Pastoral poems praise the value

of war and the beauty of a special original type of Rwandan endemic cow (*Inyambo*). It should be noted that herds and their herdsmen used to come regularly to parade past the royal court, and other cows from different residences of the king also paraded from time to time. Hence, the attention of the public was turned towards successive events which took place in various parts of the country where different herds were kept.

The shortcomings involved in the adequate processing of oral tradition, in all its forms, remains a challenge in the historiography of pre-colonial Rwanda. On the whole, the three poetic genres which have been discussed present biased historic perspectives. Nonetheless, their value should be appreciated and reconciled against other regional poetry.

a. Popular oral-traditions

Popular oral tradition is of almost the same form as the official oral-tradition; it encompasses two major sub-types: fixed popular oral-tradition and free popular oral-tradition. These are narratives which give a lot of importance to the spectacular.

➤ Fixed popular oral tradition

Fixed popular oral tradition consists of family genealogies, popular songs, popular poetry, and lessons: *Imigani miremire* (folktales) *Imigani migufi* (proverbs), *Ibisakuzo* (riddles) vows, oaths, and discourses to express anger.

➤ Free popular oral-tradition

Free popular oral tradition is a popular form of historical narrative which includes the following types and sub-types: (*Ibitekerezo*) ecological narrative (*Imigani ivuga ku muco, ku muryango kur kamere y'isi, kamere y'abantu, uko batareshya, n'amaherezo yabo*), mystic narratives (*Imigani*), and esthetic narratives. They are intended to please and amuse the audience. War songs (*Indirimbo z'ingabo, z'ibitero*), musical pieces played on a traditional violin (*Inanga*), and artistic compositions, which sometimes conveyed historical information, could fall under the category of oral tradition or popular oral tradition.

The importance of oral sources cannot be overlooked. In

situations where material and written sources are unable to give necessary information, oral sources can be analyzed to extract reliable historic data. However, this analysis must be prudent as orally transmitted narratives were often changed from the initial testimony (proto-testimony) to the final tradition, given the multiple aural witnesses along the chain of transmission. Accidental additions or omissions to the narratives are likely quite common, resulting in different narrative implications.

Additionally, sometimes the nature of relationships between people were attributed to astrology. For instance, many personal or relationship characteristics were attributed to the King Ruganzu Ndori even while these people lived much later than Ruganzu. A critical look at the broad categories of the oral tradition reveals several instances of simplification, confusion, and hyperbole, which poses a challenge in the reconstitution of Rwanda's history

1.1.3 Written sources

Written documents occupy an important place in Rwanda's historical memory. Written sources enjoy a relatively secure status in Rwandan historiography for their preservation of the exactitudes of their authors.

In Rwanda, written historical documentation only began with the colonial occupation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Documentation emanated from explorers, missionaries, colonial officers, civil servants, and as businessmen. Since then, written inventory has only increased and can be divided into one of two categories: edited sources and archive sources.

a. Edited sources

Edited sources are published written documents which are therefore available to a wider public. These sources can be categorized into two different generations: the pioneer generation and the recent generation publications, which generally date from 1940.

The pioneer generation consists of written accounts that were originally published in Rwanda. These include narratives of explorers, publications of the first colonial officers and civil

servants, accounts of businessmen, and publications by the first missionaries. However, the publications from this generation are not exhaustive, and at times they are not of the utmost relevance to understanding the history of Rwanda and they raise the problem of information quality and the relevance of this to the historical contribution. The texts of the nineteenth century of Rwanda are extremely tendentious since they contain unproved assertions, fables and narratives that are reproduced on similar topics.

The publications belonging to the recent generation are composed of written documents that date from 1940-1945. These documents were written by the colonial administration, churches, educated individuals, and the postcolonial administration. These publications are subject to inconsistencies, and should be compared against other sources for critical analysis.

Written sources do not necessarily convey true information. Further, written sources are not easily or locally accessed for consultation given that in Rwanda, the National Library only exists nominally. Among written documents, ethnographic and linguistic sources deserve to be given special mention for their historical contribution.

Ethnographic sources can be considered as written accounts of Rwandan traditional activities. They are sources of explanation of material sources whose historical importance is revealed immediately upon their conservation. Linguistic sources constitute a precious tool for understanding history as Kinyarwanda is a social phenomenon that envelopes Rwandan culture.

As we know, language is a tool of communication between members of a given society and deals with several aspects of society. Lexicology enables us to reconstitute the history of the tools, cultures, migrations, and institutions of people. It is built on the analysis of words and their meaning and evolution. Lexicology also makes it possible to determine the closeness of relationships between languages, and consequently the relationships between peoples.

Alongside lexicology, linguistic sources benefit from the system of onomastics. Onomastics deals with the study of names

of places (toponymy); zoonymy is the study of the names of animals, hydronymy is the study of the names of lakes and rivers and anthroponymy is the study of the names of persons. These names convey historical messages and are key clues provided by languages to detect contacts between peoples, historical convergences and influences. Studying the onomastics of Rwandan society is akin to studying the Rwandese themselves and their history.

The field of onomastics has not yet been thoroughly explored in Rwanda even though the country is extremely rich in toponymy. An organized inventory of the names and places of Rwanda would facilitate the examination of its spatial organization.

In short, language is like a bank where each generation has deposited, century after century, all mental and material tools of imagination, memory, and resources that have been conceived and reconstructed.

b. Archive sources

Contrary to the edited sources which are found in libraries, archive sources are written documents which have not been published and remain in archives.

The archive documents on the history of Rwanda range from the the oldest ones, dating from the colonial period, to the most recent ones, including contemporary documents. They are deeply valued because they address the social, political and economic evolution of Rwanda. However, the use of archival sources is confronted with three major obstacles: conservation, dispersion, and accessibility.

➤ Conservation

The Rwandan department charged with the maintenance of national archives has been very weak for almost thirty years. The department has neither adequate infrastructure nor qualified personnel. This scenario is exacerbated by the lack of an inventory of the enormous quantity of written documents originating from all periods. Without such an inventory, it is practically impossible to conserve these archives; some archives have disappeared while others have been destroyed. However

archives in the former colonial metropolitan powers remain in good condition.

➤ **Dispersion**

A substantial number of archives on Rwanda, particularly the colonial archives, are located abroad. They are principally located in the former colonial metropolitan powers. Rwanda's archives from German rule are conserved in Brussels, Potsdam and Dar es Salaam. Archives of the Belgian Trusteeship are conserved in the African Archives in Brussels (Harroy) in Namur. Rome hosts the archives of Catholic Missions, while Protestant missions' archives are located in Belgium, Sweden, England and the United States. Lastly, the archives of the League of Nations and the United Nations on Rwanda are located in Geneva and New York. Prior to the advent of the internet, Rwandan researchers were condemned to travel long distances to access these archival sources.

➤ **Accessibility**

Even if the difficulties pertaining to long distances are mitigated, other obstacles related to archival accessibility endure due to archive depots' regulations of access. For instance, there are often set holds on recent files and confidential files until a determined period of time has passed because the archive depots have their rules and regulations of access. Thus, for example, all the most recent files as well as all top-secret files can be accessed after a specified period.

It should be noted that certain works that could be of considerable interest to our national history are neither preserved in nor valued by these archival depots. These include theses, dissertations, and other works that mark the end of university studies in Rwanda or abroad. The challenge of accounting for and accessing these documents has yet to be thoroughly addressed.

1.1.4 Audiovisual sources

The audiovisual sources which complement the written documentation of Rwanda's history are principally composed of filmed documentaries that date back to the colonial and post-colonial period. Beyond its role of entertainment, cinema

embodies a relationship between memory and history, “provides space for identity construction,” and can even serve as “a tool for propaganda”.

Written colonial archives and the film archives on Rwanda are primarily conserved in the rear of Western archive depots, notably at Kadoc (Louvain), the *Cinématèque Royale* (Brussels), and the Musée Royale d’Afrique Centrale (Tervuren). In Belgium, the various archival depots of film sources have made a commitment to digitizing them so as to ensure their durability over time.

In Rwanda, people are hardly informed about these facilities, especially considering that these filmed archives are not yet known properly. It is therefore high time that we got to know these distant sources and learned how to use and interpret them. Nonetheless, these are sources that are tinted with cultural biases of their authors, known for their ability to reconstruct and influence events instead of reconstituting them. It is therefore important to know how to make use of them.

Some authors make false reconstitutions of the past without resorting to any source. “Others rely on cinematography to shape ideologies which have everlasting, pragmatic and useful intentions”.¹¹

1.2 Overview of Rwanda’s historiography

A look at Rwanda’s historiography from its beginning up to today exposes salient features of historiographical knowledge across its three most significant periods: the pre-colonial, colonial, and post colonial periods. These periods are covered by a historiography that is deeply controversial and that encompasses many unanswered questions. The division of three periods on the basis of the colonial factor is in itself a perplexing phenomenon !

1.2.1. Pre-colonial period

Pre-colonial historiography is exclusively characterized by oral history. Oral histories consist of the works of traditional witnesses and specialists who narrated ancient narratives

¹¹ p. 9-10.

(*Abatekereza*), custodians of the esoteric code (*Abiru*), genealogists (*abacurabwenge*), war-poets, and pastoral poets (*abasizi*). This pre-colonial historiography was heavily laden with facts and was based on official and popular oral-tradition that focused on justifying the existence of the royal court and its ideology. With such priorities, family histories as well as local histories were largely overlooked.

Many contemporary authors protest the fact that these narratives were manipulated by those who were supposed to strictly conserve them. Among others responsible, we can cite the great ritual Chief Kayijuka, Rwanyange, Sezibera, Karera and, Sekarama. The censorship of these narratives by their trustees was done for purposes of interpolation, suppression, or reimagination.

The history of pre-colonial Rwanda was transmitted to us by those who were on the pay roll of the royal court. This history therefore conveys myths, ideologies, and stereotypes of all sorts. However, it also gives objective information that is often official, which helps to shape the historic mind and consciousness of Rwandan identity during that period -- an identity that was thoroughly manipulated by the whims of the colonizers.

1.2.2. Colonial period

Colonial historiography marked the advent of a written history with the transcription of the memorized oral-tradition. Missionary priests including Loupias (1907), A. Pages (1933), P. Schumacher (1943), L. Delmas (1950), and L. Canon Lacger (1930) listened to traditional informers and considered these traditions as if they were written sources.

The missionaries introduced their colonial perception of the conquered Rwandan people. All was changed in favor of the "*Bantu-Hamitic*" myth, which was interpreted to justify colonial presence, indirect rule and Christianity. The works of the colonial missionaries and administrators were not informed by existing oral traditions; indeed, traditional oral narrators are not even mentioned in their accounts as sources of information.

Concerning Rwandan history between 1910 and 1936, the most important point to note is that Rwanda's traditions

were sanctioned in writing and this work was pursued by an unauthorized specialist – A. Kagame (1912 – 1981)¹². While recognizing that A. Kagame is “an uncontested authority” and a role model in Rwanda’s history¹³. There exists still fervent criticism leveled against him by J.Vansina toward the end of the colonial period. A. Kagame, and his precursors, i.e. the White Fathers, were accused of towing the line of official royal tradition. A. Kagame is also accused of sharing nationalist sentiments and being very close to administrative circles¹⁴.

1.2.3. Post colonial period

Just before Rwanda’s rise to independence, there was strong pushback against colonial achievements, including Rwanda’s colonial historiography. This criticism targeted both the faulty historical methods used, and also was based on A. Kagame’s interpretations and the identification and correction of distortions and falsifications introduced during the colonial and post colonial periods. Such critical studies, to which J. Vansina subscribed fervently from 1961- 1962, primarily attacked the works of A. Kagame by stigmatizing the three ideological manipulations of the royal court.

a. Manipulations through the ideology of the royal court

More than 300 official historical narratives have been recounted by people who learned them systematically from their fathers and neighbors. The events they recall were censored even before their transmission. This censorship rendered them chronicles that were adapted to the needs of the monarchical institution or the ruling dynasty. Conversely, popular historical narratives were beyond censorship and beyond the propagandist nature of official narratives. However, these popular historic narratives are not valued given their liberal transmissions over time and their tendency toward grandeur and hyperbole.¹⁵

Dynastic genealogy was also not free from manipulation. Dynastic

¹² Rutayisire, P., “Les défis de l’historiographie rwandaise», in *Cahiers Lumière et Société*, 1997 pp. 13.

¹³ Vansina, J., 1962, op. cit., p. 12

¹⁴ Rutayisire, P., 1997, art cit. pp. 15

¹⁵ Vansina, J., 1962, op cit p. 23.

genealogies were official documents that provided the legal framework for the dynasties in power. As such, it was subject to adjustments whenever the right of succession was at stake. Despite its vulnerability to manipulation, dynastic genealogy remains an important source in establishing the chronology of Rwanda's history.

A. Kagame published the entire set of this genealogy. However, according to other authors (J. Vansina, M. D'Hertefelt, A. Coupez, T. Kamanzi, C. Rugamba, J. N. Nkurikiyimufura), he did not offer any critique of these works. J. Vansina and J. N. Nkurikiyimufura thus produced other chronologies. In Rwanda's historiography, chronology constitutes a big subject of controversy.

Despite its ultra-secret nature, the esoteric code of the dynasty did not escape ideological manipulations and was also threatened with falling into obscurity. Consequently, R. Hermans, J. Vansina, D'Hertefelt, and A. Coupez firmly affirm that the dynastic esoteric code lacked objectivity since its trustees and interpreters (Abiru ritualists) always sought to conform facts to existing rules. Further, by virtue of the nature of dynastic names, esoteric code fixed the life plans of the four successive reigns in advance.

Finally, according to A. Kagame, the esoteric code does not reveal the sections where the text was distorted by King Rudahigwa's court in Nyanza. These missing sections were the "*Irage ry'abami*" -- the last desire of the kings -- and a section of "*Umurage w'ingoma*," the evidence of succession to the throne. A. Kagame, the trustee for these testaments, died before publishing them; they have become the secrets of ritual trustees who have never been found.

b. Some Euro-centered ideological manipulations

Following the footsteps of his first masters, Pages, L. Delmas and L. de Lacger, A. Kagame was targeted by critical studies for his interpretation of Rwanda's oral-tradition. A. Kagame suffered for being influenced by the arguments of his missionary predecessors. A. Kagame was an advocate of the *Hamite-Bantu*

myth and of the *evolutionist-disseminationist theories* of the nineteenth century. However, this myth had been developed along the lines of “the exogeneity of the Tutsi” and “racial ethnic differences”¹⁶, which were blatant inventions of explorers in the colonial administration and of European missionaries who wanted to justify their presence and their actions in Rwanda. As is known, the *Hamite-Bantu myth* has haunted Rwanda’s historiography up to very recently.

c. Some manipulations of the nationalism ideology

Post-colonial Rwandan historiography up to the genocide principally carries the accusation that A. Kagame was deeply subjective while handling oral tradition. It attributes this weakness to his nationalistic zeal and to his proximity to Rwanda’s ruling circles. Vansina thus wanted to prove that Kagame did not conduct a historian’s task, but rather conducted a “politician’s task”¹⁷. A. Kagame’s extreme Euro-centricity likely inspired this vitriol.

It is indisputable, however, that A. Kagame had a centralized vision of power. He nurtured an elitist project in his works on the history of Rwanda, which sometimes led him to distort history even as the Rwandese accommodated him. The new post-genocide historiography of Rwanda should therefore consider oral sources as victims of manipulation by the colonial or nationalistic administrations.

1.2.4. Post-genocide period

With the advent of the genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994, the arguments of the authors and defenders of the *Hamite-Bantu myth* fell apart. This is because the myth suffered from lack of reason and critique which would distance it from colonial manipulation and the neo-colonial ideology of “*divide and rule*”. Recent studies¹⁸ have revolutionized the writing of Rwanda’s

¹⁶ Rutayisire, P. 1997, art. cit, p.19.

¹⁷ Ibid p. 15

¹⁸ Chrétien, J.P., (under supervision), *Rwanda : Les médias du génocide*, Paris , Karthala, 1995.; Chrétien J. P., *Le défi de l’ethnisme au Rwanda et au Burundi, 1990-*

history by showing that genocide rationale was the mastermind of the colonial regime, with its stereotypes and founding myths. This cleared the history of Rwanda from the interpretations influenced by the *Hamite-Bantu* myth -- a product of colonial racism and Euro-centric mentality.

From these diverse considerations, it is clear that Rwanda's historiography remains a fertile ground of controversy, steeped in the various ideologies which have shaped Rwanda's political space since time immemorial.

This situation poses a problem for history -- to resist former ideological manipulations so as to remain objective while analyzing the sources of Rwandan history. A lack of objectivity has former compromised the scientific credentials of historians who should exercise critical minds that lead to interpretations devoid of sentiment. Time has come for Rwanda's historiography to part from its false semblance of truth. It should embark on its true objective -- the search for and dissemination of social reality, with zero-tolerance for the manipulation of historiographic sources.

1996, Paris, Karthala; Braecman C., *Rwanda, histoire d'un génocide*, Paris, Fayard, 1994 ; Rutembesa F., « Ruptures culturels et génocide au Rwanda », in *Cahiers du Centre de Gestion des Conflits*, n° 2, Butare, April 2001, pp. 93-123; *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah*, n° 190, Janvier- Juin 2009.

II

PREHISTORY AND SETTLEMENTS IN RWANDA

(1000 BC – 700/800 BC)

By Célestin KANIMBA MISAGO (R.I.P)¹ †

Rwanda's prehistory and original settlements first began in 1000 B.C... Prehistory and settlements in Rwanda form the foundation of our national memory, without which historical events that have occurred since cannot be understood. This history has been informed by environmental change, archeology, anthropology, linguistics, and oral tradition.

2.1. Prehistory

The period which preceded antiquity can no longer be defined as exclusively one period given the absence of written sources. However, other sources of history shed light on prehistoric events throughout the period's trajectory.

2.1.1. Environmental framework

Covering a total surface area of 26,338 km², Rwanda is located between longitudes 1°20' and 2°50' North/South and latitudes 28°50' and 30°55' East/West. It forms an asymmetrical block of highlands resulting from transformations which were created by the great tectonic drift that extends from the Red Sea up to the southern part of Lake Malawi, crossing Lakes Rwicanzige, Rweru, Kivu and Tanganyika.

Lake Kivu was formed in the depression and the straight fold that separates the watersheds of the Nile and Congo Rivers. This

¹ † Professor Celestin Kanimba Misago passed away in 2010, and death deprived us of his invaluable knowledge on this theme.

fold, the Crest of Congo-Nile, is a mountainous range that covers 20 to 40 km; it is located at an altitude of around 2,000 m with a highest peak of 3,000 m. It is bordered to the north by volcanic mountains whose peak, Karisimbi, is 4,500 m high.

Between the Congo-Nile crest and the Akagera-Bugesera depressions, there is a central plateau that reaches an altitude of 2,000 m. This region is covered by hills separated by marshy valleys with flat bottoms rich in alluvium. To the east, along the border with Tanzania, the Akagera River crosses large swamps located at an altitude between 1,300 and 1,500 m.

2.1.2. Current state of archaeological research

Archaeological and linguistic sources provide important information in the reconstruction of the history of Rwanda. Nevertheless, studies in archeology have been and still are very limited. Although Rwanda is full of archaeological remains, systematic archaeological studies were only initiated in the second half of the twentieth century. Up to 1968, studies in this field were not systematic.

The first vestige found was an axe made of quartz stone of achulean type²; it was discovered around 1921-1922 in Kavumu -- located in the former Territory of Gitarama. In 1936, I. Boutakoff³ made excavations in some mines that date back to the Stone Age. These excavations were particularly focused in Ruhimandyarya cave in Rusizi District, former Cyangugu Province, where quartz and quartzite tools of the Stone Age were unearthed. These tools were used in the early Iron Age. During the same period, a double-edged blade made of quartz stone of sophisticated achulean type was found in Katumba in the former territory of Gisenyi. Between 1942 and 1958, Maurice Bequaert, a researcher at the Royal Museum of Central Africa, published a series of works on some outstanding stone tools⁴.

After establishing the Institute for Scientific Research in Central Africa (IRSAC) in 1947 and upon establishing the Centre for

² Nenquin, J., *Contributions to the study of the prehistoric cultures of Rwanda and Urundi*, Annales- Série in 8, Sciences humaines, No 59, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1069, p.9.

³Boutakoff, I., *Première exploration méthodique des gisement de l'âge de la pierre au Ruanda-Urundi. Abris sous roche, atelier et station de plein air*, Bruxelles, 1937.

⁴ Bequaert, M., *La position actuelle de la préhistoire au Congo belge et au Ruanda-Urundi*, Berlin, Hambourg, Bericht, V. Internat. Kongress, 1958, 1961, pp. 84-88.

Research in Humanities in 1951 in Butare (ex-Astrida), studies on the Iron Age were initiated by Jean Hiernaux and Maquet Emma⁵ (researchers at IRSAC in 1953). They uncovered many sites of ceramics and furnaces of iron ore. Their research helped to identify sites that have produced these items, contributing to the field of archaeology in the Great Lakes Region.

However, it was in the 1960s that systematic studies were initiated by archaeologists. During that time, Jacques Nenquin made two excavations - one was on the site called “Pit of Champion” near Butare; the second was in Rutonde near Kigali. In 1967, Nenquin published the findings he conducted in different regions of the country⁶.

These studies were followed by programs initiated in 1968 by Francis Van Noten⁷. His studies primarily focused on royal tombs so as to harmonize oral tradition and archeology, and they focused secondly on sites that dated from the Iron Age. Further studies were later undertaken in various regions of the country, i.e. in the regions of Lakes Bulera and Ruhondo by Phillippe Simon⁸, at Ryamurari in Ndorwa by Tshilema Tshiluka,⁹ and in the Akagera Park by Bernard Lugan. The latter excavated six sites, among which four had shelters, it was mainly in the southern regions. Particularly in the region of Butare, those excavations of various sites of ancient metallurgy were carried out by Francis Van Noten, Emile Roche and Marie Claudine Van Grunderbeek¹⁰.

A dozen years later, after some archaeological materials were found by chance near Butare, F. Van Noten did a systematic excavation during which he found several furnaces used for iron extraction in Kabuye (Gisagara) and its vicinity. In 1978

⁵ Hiernaux, J., and Maquet, E., *Culture préhistorique de l'âge des métaux au Rwanda-Urundi et au Kivu (Congo Belge)*. 1^{ère} partie, Bruxelles, 1956.

⁶ Nenquin, J., ‘Contribution to the study of the prehistoric cultures of Rwanda and Burundi’, *Annales, Série in 8 Sciences humaines* no 59 Tervuren, M.R.A.C. 1967.

⁷ Van Noten F., *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1983.

⁸ Simon, Ph., « La région du lac Bulera » Annexe 9, In Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, Musée royal de l’Afrique centrale, 1983, pp. 137-148.

⁹ Tshilema T., « Ryamurari, capitale de l’ancien royaume de Ndorwa », Annexe 10, In Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1983, pp. 149-153.

¹⁰ Van Grunderbek, MC., Roche E., et Doutrelepoint H., « L’âge du fer ancien au Rwanda et au Burundi. Archéologie et environnement », in *Journal des africanistes*, 532 (1-2), 1982, pp 5-58.

and 1979 M.C. Van Grunderbeek continued this research toward east, west and north Butare. She also discovered several iron extraction furnaces, which were largely exposed due to agricultural activities or soil erosion.

From 1978 onwards, Bernard Lugan began to carry out surveys in the Akagera National Park and excavated four sites. The results of his excavations indicate that human occupation in the area stretched several thousands of years. The oldest population at these sites used *Wiltonian* type tools, while those who appeared later used iron tools and pottery¹¹.

Philippe Simon conducted a study around Lake Bulera between 1980 and 1981. There, he collected artifacts representing various types of stone tools. These included the Sangoan type of tools on the site of Ndago and the Wiltonian type near Bugarama. This site also produced some pot fragments, and the oldest among them were similar to the pottery found at Masangano in present day Ruhango District¹². Van Noten's book, published in 1983, gives an outline of studies conducted in different parts of the country up to 1982.

From 1986 on, the Museum of Natural History in Mainz conducted regular geological studies on the Masangano site. This site produced fossils of Pleistocene animals, stone tools and ancient pottery. The National Museum of Rwanda also discovered similar remains at the same site during the survey carried out from 1999 to 2004. In 2006, the survey and excavation of Iron Age sites were revived by researchers from University College of London in collaboration with researchers from the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda and students from the National University of Rwanda.

2.1.3. Evolution of climatic and landscape changes

a. Paleo-climatic changes

During the Quaternary period, similar to other parts of Africa, the African Great Lakes region including Rwanda experienced

¹¹ Lugan, B., « Le Rwanda oriental » Annexe 8, In Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, 1983, pp. 130-136.

¹² Simon, Ph., “ La région du lac Bulera”, Annexe 9, in Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, 1983, pp. 137-148.

climatic changes that affected the flora and fauna. Studies done through today in geology, geomorphology and palynology do not provide ample information on ancient climate changes. However, recent analyses of fauna and botanic remains have been useful in reconstructing the environment, particularly the paleo-climatic changes that marked the end of the Pleistocene and Holocene periods in Central-East Africa. Wet periods favored forest growth and provided limited erosion of calm waters; heavy rains raised the levels of lakes and rivers. However, drought decimated many forests and increased the erosion and turbulence of rivers. Consequently, water levels of lakes and rivers fell.

There is a dearth of available data; however, the data that does exist provides an idea of climate change since the late Pleistocene period. The Masangano site located at the confluence of Nyabarongo and Mukungwa rivers falls in this category of available data and encompasses the history of changes that occurred in this area for thousands of years. This site yields pieces of information fields such as hydrography, geology, paleontology, archeology and history.

Although the studies initiated so far are scarce and incomplete, they are scientifically interesting. The available data shows that the formation process of the landscape of the region goes back 100,000 years.

An analysis of geological strata reveals that River Nyabarongo initially flowed northwards. It appears that later volcanic eruptions in the North ejected lava that overflowed southwards along the Nyabarongo valley and formed a sort of dam, forcing the river to deviate from its normal course. Thus, the waters of Nyabarongo collected to form “*a lake or delta dam*” that was rather deep. This process led to the formation of fine sand mixed with clay and silt, which were deposited in the delta. Consequently, several pelagic microfossils were formed.

Gradually, River Nyabarongo took a different course towards the southeast. The delta began to dry up as a new river bed formed. Later, the water level decreased, making it possible for hippopotamuses to live there.

While hippopotamuses used to bathe in the waters of the delta, buffaloes and elephants used to frequent river banks to drink or

graze. Incidentally, this period was when the first volcanic ash reached Masangano.

As the river got entrenched in its new bed, the delta became almost dry. This is when human settlements began to appear in the dry areas of the delta, where hot springs deposited travertine. The earliest human activities took place contemporary to deposits of travertine and vertebrate fossils, which were located in the layers formed by volcanic rock fragments and fine and rough sand.

Numerous fossils were found from a depth of two meters. An examination of the fossils which were collected from different layers reveals the remains of various animals that lived on the site at the time of geological deposit formation. The layers of rough sand and travertine afford not only invertebrate fossils, including mollusks, but also bones of elephants, hippopotamuses, buffalos, *sitatunga*, and otters. (see Figure 1 below)

Figure 1: Fossil bones found at Masangano: otter (*Natural History Museum in Kigali*)



Human remains were found on the banks of River Nyabarongo along the surface of a quasi-dry delta which was frequented by hippopotamuses, elephants, buffaloes, and other animals that early man likely fed on. Human settlements were also found along lava fields. In addition, traces of human activity were found in the travertine layer, or the first 2 meters, of rough sand.

Between 70,000 and 40,000 B.C., the climate changed from a very dry state to a humid one. During that period, the forest declined considerably as the savannah advanced. From 40,000 B.C. onward, the climate became humid again and the forest

reclaimed large areas. The forested area was significantly larger than it is today¹³. Around 30,000 B.C., the arid climate was marked by a decline of the forest and its replacement by the expanding savannah, except in areas where rainfall was still sufficient.

Beginning around 18000-15000 BC, the weather became cool and dry. The forest shrank. By contrast, toward the beginning of the early Holocene period, around 12,500 B.C., a warm and humid phase characterized by heavy rains began. The forest attained optimum extension between 8000 and 4000 B.C. Around 5000 B.C., lake levels rose to about the current level. However, between 2500 and 2000 B.C., there was drought which significantly decreased the level of Lake Kivu. By 2000 B.C. the climate became warmer and more humid but did not reach the intensity known before 4000 B.C.¹⁴

b. Vegetation changes

Landscape changes occurred from 1000 BC. Indicators that characterize our understanding of the landscape were animals, plants, and physical terrain, such as relief, rock vegetation, and water. An analysis of pollen and wood fossils, in addition to dating the coal and the wildlife that lived in these regions, helps to reconstitute the vegetation in the way it appeared before 2,000 years.

Two thousand years ago, human activities began to deeply impact the environment. Fishing, hunting -- with the use of fire on bushes -- agricultural, and pastoral activities degraded and destroyed the environment. Environmental degradation became intensified during the Iron Age when iron tools were used to clear the forest. Stone tools, which were used for more than a million years, had a much more limited impact. Fire caused damage to the savannah while dense forests were not so prone to such destruction.

Man's effects on the environment were intensified with the acquisition of food production techniques and metallurgy. Land formations from that time reveal that the west and northwest were covered with different types of vegetation. The mesophilic forest extended towards the eastern shore of Lake Kivu, mountainous

¹³Servant, M., et Servant-vildary, S., « Nouvelles données pour une interprétation paléoclimatique de séries continentale du Bassin Tchadien (Pléistocène récent, Holocène) », in Van Inderen Bakker, E. M., *Palaeocology of Africa*, VI, pp. 87-92.

¹⁴Robertshaw, W. P., "Climate change and the rise of political complexity in western Uganda", in *Journal of History*, 41, 2000, pp. 1-28)

rainforests and sub-mountainous forests covered the areas of Rukiga, Buberuka, and all the highlands forming the Congo-Nile crest and the current Nyungwe forests, i.e. most of the regions in the west of Mukungwa and Upper Nyabarongo.

In the north of the country, the valleys of Rugezi, east of Lake Bulera, testify to the existence of mountainous vegetation. The western shore of Lake Ruhondo proves the existence of savannah woodlands and gallery forests in the lava plains at the base of *Birunga* volcanoes. An analysis of the valleys located at the base of Rwaza Hill, dating from the first century A.D., reveals that there was a forest surrounded by wooden savannah. Further south, at the confluence of the Mukungwa and Nyabarongo rivers, there was a mountain rainforest that joined a lava plain covered with woodland. Toward present day Kigali at Rwankuba, forest vegetation dominated. Southward, in the area between Ngoma and Akanyaru and between Ngoma and Gisagara, savannah woodlands, characterized by some forest growth, were dominant by 200-700 A.D., particularly in Kigembe. This area also contained entire gallery forests along the river galley¹⁵. Around 2500 B.C., drought led to the disappearance of forests. Around 2000 B.C., the wet climate would have favored the return of the forest had man not encroached on the vegetation.

During the Iron Age, early man settled on land that was suitable for agriculture, livestock, and iron metallurgy. From the first century A.D., iron-ore extraction by iron tools began to intensify. These activities reduced the size of the forests as they were replaced by savannah. During the Second Millennium A.D., the bush-fallowing period gradually reduced in accordance with the pace of population growth. New technological advancements stemming from modifications of lifestyles and accelerated population growth contributed to environmental degradation,

2.1.4. Prehistoric age in Rwanda

According to recent studies conducted in Rwanda the interlacustrine region, Rwanda's prehistory can be categorized into two major sub-divisions: the Stone Age and Iron Age¹⁶. The

¹⁵ Van Grunderbeek, M. C., Roche et Doutrelepon, H., « L'âge du fer ancien au Rwanda et au Burundi. Archéologie et environnement », in *Journal des Africanistes*, 52 (1-2), 1982, 33-41.

¹⁶ Van Noten, *The Archeology of Central Africa*, Akademische Druck-und Verlagsanstalt, Graz, 1982; Sutton J. E.G., "The aquatic civilization of middle Africa", in *Journal of African history*, 15 1974: 527-546.

table below shows different ages and the archaeological objects used across ages:

Table 1: Prehistoric age in Rwanda

Late Iron Age	Urewe traditional cultural potteries	
Early Iron Age	Urewe pottery	
Neolithic Age	Diversified pottery traditions	
Late Stone Age (LSA)	Tshitolian	Wiltonian
Middle Stone Age (MSA)	Lupemban Sangoan	Magosian
Early Stone Age (ESA)	Achulian Pre-Achulian or Oldowan	

a. Stone Ages

➤ **Early Stone Age**

The Early Stone Age is characterized by two different types of industry: the *Oldowan* and *Acheulian* industries.

Oldowan industries

The oldest tools were found in the Omo valley in Ethiopia and their origin is traceable to 2.5 million years ago. They were found on the edges of ancient lakes or marshes near the Rift Valley in northern Tanzania and at Olduvai George on the shores of Lake Turkana in Kenya. The *Oldowan* tools belong to two different periods and they are dated between 1.5 and 2.5 million years old. The early *Oldowan* industry is composed of grattoires and chopping boards which are known as pebble tools and splinters. These tools were generally large. Simple pebble tools and splinters were used on both plants and animals; on animals, they were used to break bones in order to extract bone-marrow. They were also used as butchering tools to cut carcasses of animals and to kill small animals like frogs, lizards and tortoises.

The late *Oldowan* industry was characterized by simple double-edged stone tools (photo number 2). Stone tools from the two *Oldowan* industries have not yet been located in Rwanda. The people who used *Oldowan* tools were related to *Homo Habilis*,

and they lived on hunting and gathering. Apart from stone tools, they may have also used tools made of perishable materials such as wood, skin, bone, and tree bark.

Achulian industry

There is evidence that the *Achulian* industry evolved in East Africa at a site called Olduvai George in Bed II. This type of industry was different from the Oldowan type given the large size of its objects and the techniques used to manufacture them. The new technique required more energy and skill. These tools were found on the old continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe (southern and western). The *Achulian* industry began around 1.5 million years ago. This industry existed concurrently with the *Aldowan* industry for hundreds of thousands of years.¹⁷

The African *Achulian* industry was characterized by double-edges and hand-axes with several pounding heads. These tools were manufactured by heavy pounding. The African *Achulian* industry was associated with *Homo Erectus*, who lived on hunting and gathering in areas covered by savanna grassland and plants or areas sparsely covered by trees. *Homo Erectus* migrated according to the availability of animal resources. This helps to explain the increase of mine deposits in Africa as a general sign of increased numbers and sizes of human species.

There are three stages in the evolution of the Acheulian industry: Early, Middle and Late Achulian industry. In the last stage, the technology of shaping the size of stones depended on the diversity and shape of the type of tools involved. The consumers of these tools were interested in small tools that reflected their mode of living and hunting. The progressive improvement of these tools resulted from the invention of fire. Beyond improving his ability to make tools, fire enabled man to fight against the cold and wild animals.

Achulian tools have not yet been excavated on Rwandan sites. However, some surface collections have been made at sites like Katumba, Gatara and Remera in Northern Province and in the River Rwagatovu valley in the district of Huye. It is possible that in Rwanda, the lack of mines related to the Achulian industry is partly due to the scarcity of sediments that were preserved from that period. (See figure 2)

¹⁷ Daniel, J.Y., *Science de la terre et de l'univers*, Paris, Vuibert, 1999, p. 595.

Figure 2. Curved stone tools conserved at the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda in Huye.



From left to the right: Bola, double-edged stone tool, pick axe.

➤ **Middle Stone Age**

The term “*Middle Stone Age*” is used in Sub-Saharan Africa to describe the prehistoric period corresponding to the Middle Paleolithic period and a large part of the Paleolithic period. This period started immediately after the *Acheulian* industry. It was characterized by diversification of industries which were adapted to different environments as well as manufactured stone tools that were much smaller and more precise.

The population of the Middle Stone Age belonged to the *Homo Sapien* species. At the technological level, the Middle Stone Age was characterized by a considerable reduction in the size of stone tools used. The techniques used involved removing the splinter and replacing it by fixing a nucleus in the centre so as to fit in splinters of predetermined shapes and sizes.

These technical innovations enabled the production of small tools designed to be fitted with handles made of wood or bones. The process of fitting stone tools involved the preparation of gum resin and shaping and trimming stones; this process was facilitated by the use of fire.

The second innovation involved regional specialization, allowing man to adapt to various environmental conditions. Industries evolved which were adapted to different environments. In the

forest environment, there were two types of industries: Sangoan and Lupemban industries. In the savannah environment, there was micro-lithic industry.

The Sangoan industry located in Sango Bay on the shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda consisted of lithic industries which followed the final *Acheulian* industry in Central Africa. The tools produced included massive pick-axes, heavy-duty core-axes, and various grattoir.

Sangoan implements were associated with dense vegetation systems. It is therefore assumed that they first appeared in these regions during the final phase of the *Acheulian* period in the savannah grasslands. However, these tools never existed in extensive open plains. There is a correlation between the presence of these tools and the heavy rainfall which created dense vegetation zones.

In most of the equatorial rainforests, Sangoan tools seem to provide first-hand evidence of human settlements. However, these tools also represent an adaptation to drought when rain forests were considerably reduced. It should therefore be assumed that these heavy tools are closer correlated with ecological data than specific periods related to the evolution of stone tools. The techniques and types of tools used transcend arbitrary borders.

The age of the Sangoan industry is unknown, though it is estimated to have occurred around 100000 - 80 000 B.C. Sangoan tools have been sighted in many areas around the country, largely in the Southern Province. Seven of these sites can be identified: Nyange site on the shores of Kabogobogo between Mugombwa and Kansi, Champion, Ruhashya, Rubona, Bweya, Muyaga and Kavumu site, located east of Kabgayi in the vicinity of Karuruma valley. At all these sites, tools with Sangoan characteristics were found, including cleavers, pick-axes and grattoirs. At *Sablère Champion site*, Lupemban tools were discovered buried below layers of Sangoan tools.

In central Rwanda, a study was conducted in Rutongo at the confluence of Nyabugogo and Shengambule rivers near the Kigali–Byumba highway. It established the presence of Sangoan tools, including a beautiful spear and *Magosian* tools. These consisted of single and double edged spears that were rudimentary wedged-shaped blades with folded edges. At Nyabwari, the same types of tools were found. These tools were manufactured from dark-grey shale or brown quartzite material.

The Sangoan industry was widespread and varied according to the set of tools and their evolution. This proved great adaptation to environmental change. However, most objects known from that period were surface collections (found on the surface). They can be compared, across space and time, with objects found in Central Africa and the in Great Lakes region.

The *Lupemban* industry was an industry found in Central Africa, predominantly in areas once covered by forests. It was characterized by a combination of heavy tools like pick-axes and chisels and spare parts completed with meticulous finishing. These tools were fine-tuned and beautifully curved and date between 42,000 and 38,000 B.C. In the Eastern Province, many sites were identified in Akagera National Park, and the objects found there confirm the presence of Lupemban tools in the region (see picture 3).

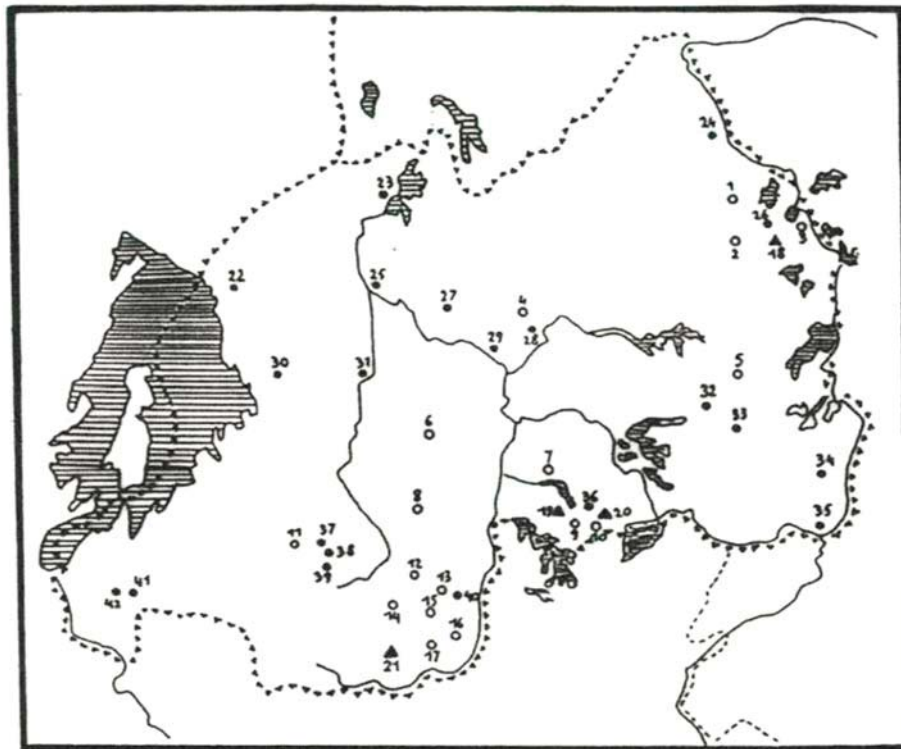
Figure 3: Kagitumba sharpened stone tools (Akagera National park); National Museum in Huye



The sites of Kandalo, Nyabwari, Muhororo, and the Hippopotamus “Beach” provide hachets, pick-axes and grattoirs. The tools from the Lupemban industry at Nemba consist of single-edged hatchets and a central nucleus with sharp blades. An elongated spearhead made of quartzite material was found on the surface at Liba, opposite Kansu along the Huye–Kanyaru highway. Similar objects were collected in Mibirizi, Rusizi District, Kajumbura, south of Lake Mihindi and Ngulenge in Akagera National Park, Rwamurumba, and Bugesera near the Kigali–Muhinga main road¹⁸. At these sites, stones tools made of quartz, quartzite, and schist Acheulean type materials were found on the surface.

¹⁸ Nenquin, J., « Contribution to the study of the prehistoric cultures of Rwanda and Burundi » in *Annales, série 8, sciences humaines*, No 59, Tervuren, MRAC, 1967; Van Noten, F., *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1983.

Map 1: Localization of Middle and Late Stone Ages in Rwanda



Légende

- : Sites du Sangoen et du Lupembien
- ▲ : Sites du Lupembien supérieur
- : Sites du Tshitolien et du Wiltonien.

1. Muhororo	○	12. Ruhashya	○	23. Nyanga	●	34. Rugamama	●
2. Kindalo	○	13. Muyaga	○	24. Nyamasimbi	●	35. Rusumo	●
3. Plage des hiypos	○	14. Campion	○	25. Masango	●	36. Lutete	●
4. Rutongo	○	15. Bweeya	○	26. Nyagasheshe	●	37. Gakanka	●
5. Rwinkwavu	○	16. Dahwe	○	27. Rwankuba	●	38. Gashiha	●
6. Kavumu	○	17. Nyange	○	28. Rutongo	●	39. Lemera	●
7. Leberu	○	18. Kajumbura	▲	29. Rutonde	●	40. Muyaga	●
8. Rubona	○	19. Rwamarumba	▲	30. Muhororo	●	41. Ruhindyarya	●
9. Mulehe	○	20. Nemba	▲	31. Katumba	●	42. Mukinanira	●
10. Murehe	○	21. Liba	▲	32. Bugambira	●		
11. Gashila	○	22. Nyundo	●	33. Remera	●		

AN NOTEN, F., Histoire archéologique du Rwanda. Musée royal de l'Afrique Central Tervuren, 1983.

Key:

Source: Van Noten, F., Histoire archéologique du Rwanda, Tervuren, Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale, 1983

➤ **Late Stone Age (LSA)**

The term “Late Stone Age” is used in sub-Saharan Africa to describe the prehistoric period that corresponds with the Upper Paleolithic age. It covers a period of around 40,000 years. The diversification of lithic industries started in the Middle Stone Age continued to the Late Stone Age. Diversification resulted from adaptation to different environments, including forest and savannah regions.

The first half of this age, which started between 40,000 and 20,000 B.C., was marked by the presence of intermediate industries of large and small-sized tools. The large tools included sickles, stone axes, grinders and mills. Small tools, which were sometimes fitted in series, were used as knives, saws, arrowheads for spears, and small drills.

At the beginning of the early Holocene period, which occurred in 10,000 B.C., the number of sites of the Late Stone Age increased. Caves and rock shelters multiplied. Local resources were used more intensively than ever before. The remains of fauna found on human settlements showed the increased prevalence of hunting specific animals. However, the industries of the Late Stone Age are not yet well documented in Rwanda.

Three industries are represented in this period. Firstly, there was the *Magosian* industry whose tools are found mainly at Rutonde, Rwankuba alongside the Kigali-Musanze road. Rutonde site offers different phases of Magosian industry. Other Magosian sites are found at Bugambira Hill, located between River Gitinga and River Urufunzo-Akagera, and River Rugamama west of Nyarubuye and Nyanga, between Lake Bulera and Lake Ruhondo on the Ruhengeri–Ntaruka main road. The Magosian industry shows how tools evolved from large to small. It marked a transition and preceded the Tshitolian and Wiltonian industries.

The Tshitolian industry, named after the Tshitolo site located in the plateau of Western Kasai, is characterized by huge, imposing tools with refined, double-edged, foliated features. It also consists of geometric microlith tools. Wiltonian tools were found in a rock shelter at Wilton’s farm, located in Province of Western Cape in South Africa.

A microlithic industry dates back to 18,000 B.C. It is characterized by microlith implements with segments in the form of circles, triangles, trapeziums, drills, and pieces with edges of saw-like teeth.

The exact dates have been established for these industries. Microlithic tools were located in mine deposits of East Africa. In Uganda, they were found in Munyama cave and Buwuma Island in 14,480 B.C. \pm 130 years. In Kenya, they were located in Nakuru/Naivasha rift, or the Prolonged Drift, in 13,300 B.C., \pm 220 years. In central Tanzania, the Kiesese rock shelter was established in 18,190 B.C., \pm 300 years.

Nevertheless, in Rwanda those industries were located at the following sites:

- The Kinanira rock shelter, which was excavated by J. Hiernaux. It contained a layer of artifacts dating from the Stone Age. Near the top layer, it contained materials dating from the Early Iron Age.
- The Rwabugiri cave located in Akagera National Park produced microliths that date from the Late Stone Age and pottery decorated with circular designs.
- Shelters of Mucucu, Muhororo and Kandaro.
- The Hippopotamus beach site contains Late Stone Age objects.

Microlithic tools were fitted in wooden or bone handles. Unfortunately, this organic material is rarely preserved. From these technological innovations, a number of cultural and economic innovations can be deduced. It is probably during this period that bows and arrows were used for hunting. Sickles were used to harvest edible plants. Grinders and mills were used to crush grain. In addition, poison was created for arrows, stone and bone needle-like instruments were used to make clothes, particularly in sewing skins, and shell-beads, spikes and bone-harpoons were developed.

➤ **Neolithic Age**

Originally, this term was referred to as the “New Stone Age”. The Neolithic Age was different from the Early Stone Age on purely technological grounds. It was characterized by polishing objects. The meaning of the term “Neolithic Age” has considerably

changed. In recent decades, it has come to refer to a global transformation in food acquisition techniques. Man stopped living on only hunting and gathering and shifted to an economy based on production. This sluggish change was accompanied by the introduction of new techniques such as product polishing and the use of ceramics. This new, agricultural lifestyle was accompanied by new modes of living, such as building houses and living in communities.

These changes no doubt impacted the internal organization of communities and their perspectives of the world. These visions were expressed through rock paintings and through customs showing respect for the dead. The “neo-lithisation” processes differed from one region to another. In some areas, these innovations were acquired gradually through development that was in harmony with existing cultural groups.

In other regions, Neolithic industry was introduced in a comprehensive and coherent manner. The origin of Neolithic industry in Central-East Africa and Rwanda is still subject to controversy. Generally, it is associated with foreign origins from the southern Sahara to the Nile-Valley across the Ethiopian highlands. However, excavations on the banks of the lakes in the region of great lakes have revealed continuous human occupation for thousands of years.

It is thought that groups of fishermen living around the great lakes and rivers in central-eastern Africa had made settlements in the region for over ten thousand years. At the periphery of the interlacustrine region, there are better known sites, including Ishango located on the shores of Lake Rwicanzige and Turkana and Gambel caves located on the shores of Lake Nakuru. In addition, this region is known for remarkable consistency of human settlement since the Holocene age. The region also developed bone industry and relied on the use of harpoons.

According to one hypothesis, from the early Third Millennium, the populations that enjoyed mastery of pottery, agriculture and animal husbandry transmitted this technology when they fled desertification of the Sahara towards the south. As previously mentioned, during the 8th-6th Millenniums, the climate was very humid. The lakes became larger and more numerous and rivers grew longer and more rapid.

The lifestyle of fishing communities was closely tied to the water, shoreline, food supply, and advanced techniques of fishing and boat-construction. There were many sites in the highlands of the Sahara and in the southern fringes of the desert from the Upper Niger to East Africa through the Chad basin.

According to another hypothesis, pastoralism and agriculture were introduced from Egypt to Ethiopia. Neolithic technology reached the Ethiopian highlands and then spread southwards as a result of the movements of Cushitic-speaking populations. In Ethiopia, along the Gobra shelter near Axum, geometric microlithic and pottery tools were identified in areas where Eleusine *coracana* was grown in the Third Millennium.

In Kenya, there is a missing link regarding data on the existence of agriculture. Evidence of pastoralism is widely found throughout the Rift Valley up to Tanzania and in the highlands. There is little evidence that agriculture was developed before the Third Millennium, however the rearing of sheep, goats, and cattle was developed from the Third Millennium. Bones of sheep, goats and cattle were found in the fauna remains collected. Closer to Rwanda, in the Lake Victoria Basin, remains of sheep, goats and cows were also found.

There is no conclusive evidence of Neolithic technology in Rwanda. There is some evidence of the transition from the Late Stone Age to the Old Iron Age. Layers containing artifacts from the Late Stone Age mixed with pot fragments were found. This finding is subject to two interpretations.

One hypothesis is that of coexistence or commercial transactions between two communities; one community used stone tools while the other used agricultural and metallurgical techniques. Another hypothesis is that of migration theories; local indigenous people who lived in the Stone Age received pottery from communities who lived in the Iron Age and who had newly arrived in their area. According to linguistic data, before the Christian era, cattle keepers from the North-East brought cattle of Asian origin.¹⁹

¹⁹Epstein, H., "The origin of the most domestic animals of Africa", Vol. I and II, in *Africana*, New York- London- Munich, Publi. Corp., 1971; Ehret, C., "Cattle keeping and milking in Eastern and South African history : the linguistic evidence", *In Journal of African history*, 8(1) 1967, pp 1-17; Ehret, C., " Patterns of Bantu and Sudanic settlements in Central and Southern Africa", *In Trans-African journal of Africa*, 3(1), 1968, p .1-71; Ehret C., "The first spread of food production to Southern Africa", in

b. Iron Age

➤ Early Iron Age

The presence of iron metallurgy is proved by the presence of numerous furnaces and characteristic ceramics of the interlacustrine region,²⁰ including the remains of iron-ore extraction such as bricks, nozzles, and slags. Nine sites produced bricks that were used to build furnaces of varying sizes and forms according to the region. The oldest site among them dates to the seventh century. However, it was from the beginning of this era that iron production activity became significant.

It seems that the extraction of iron ore was not done on a large scale. Although the raw materials used, such as red-brown hematite or limonite, were abundant, iron production remained a handcraft.

Studies were mainly concentrated in Butare, a region where iron extraction activity was intensive between the third and the seventh century. This is probably due to the integration of the interlacustrine region in general, and Rwanda in particular, with the East Coast through trade. Contact with the East Coast is much older than is currently portrayed in history books.

Fourteen furnaces of the same type have been excavated so far, similar but for differences in dimension. They consist of a generally deep excavation of 20 to 60 cm in the ground. Their diameters range from 80 to 90 cm. Some of these depressions attain larger dimensions at Nyaruhengeri and Cyamakuza sites.

All these excavations were filled with debris from an overhanging instrument, which was used to concentrate heat on the iron-ore in order to increase the efficiency of extraction. The instrument whose diameter decreased from top to bottom was made of rollers of superposed clay, forming a conical shape. The layers were kneaded by hand; sometimes there were fingerprints on the external surface, while the interior was decorated with crescent designs or s-formations.

Ehret, C., and Posnansky, M. (Eds), *The archeological and linguistic construction of African history*, 1982, pp. 158-181; Bender, M.L.; "Livestock and linguistics in north and east African ethno-history", in *current anthropology*, 23 (3), 1982, pp. 316-317.

²⁰ Schmidt, P., *Historical archeology: a structural approach in an African culture*, Westport, Greenwood Press, 1978.

Many brick sites were found on the top of Kabuye, Gahondo and Remera hills. At Kabuye hill, 34 sites produced furnace remains. The depressions created in the brick sites contained nozzles, iron slags; charcoal and some pottery (see Figure 4 below):

Figure No. 4. Bricks found at Muyunzwe (seventh century)



On Gahondo hill, five sites produced a variety of objects. These include bricks, nozzle fragments, charcoal, and pots with dimple-decorated bases; their edges are embossed with decorations and three grooved edges. Remera Hill produced brick and pot fragments as well as nozzles with edges of 3- 4 facets with embossments and incisions (see Figure no. 5 below):

Figure 5: Pot with patterns characteristic of Urewe pottery



There are several sites with pottery that date from the Early Iron Age. This pottery is associated with metal work activities. It is characterized by marked edges with dimple-decorated bases. The most common decorations are oblique incisions, fish-bone shaped lines, v-shaped decorations, horizontal lines, overlapping triangles, fine incisions, and concentric circles (see Figure 6 below):

Figure 6: Urewe dimple-based pottery



Urewe dimple-based pottery also features concentric circles, parallel lines, and petals that are semi-circular or triangular.

These pots' bases are round and flat with dimple decorations. A closer examination of the inner surface of the pot reveals that the base and the lining were achieved using the *columbine* technique, which superimposed spiral rolls of clay. While the inner surfaces were thick, the external ones were thin.

The paste used in the pottery industry contained natural grease-removing material such as small grains of quartz and limonite. The containers manufactured were usually small in size and were of two types:

- Closed containers, with a neck-shape and an S-shaped profile
- Open containers with no neck

Open ceramic containers were identified at several sites, including Butare, Gishubi, Masangano, Rugobagoba, Rutare, and Sholi.

Further north along the shores of Lake Ruhondo in the Kiguhu peat-bog, pottery with straight necks, flat bases, oblique decorated incisions, and V-shaped decorations covered with triangular lines have been discovered. These decorations are comparable to those of the pottery found in Ruhimandyarya in the former Cyangugu Province.

These sites provide bavel-edged pottery with two to six facets. Decorations originate from the edges with lines in fish bone patterns. In addition, they feature horizontal embossments, overlapping triangles, and small incisions. The most common patterns are embossments, oblique incisions, angle formed lines, V-shaped lines, and small parallel incisions.

The pottery found in the peat-bog of Kiguhu, near Lake Ruhondo, is varied. Pottery was found in layers. Some pottery features straight necks while others have flat bases and are decorated with oblique incisions or V- shaped decorations²¹.

Most of the pottery sites were discovered in regions that were originally open savannah; pottery was not commonly found in former forests. In open areas, the climate was mild with regular temperatures that favored sufficient rainfall. Rich soil favored agro-pastoral activities and metal works, especially in Butare

²¹Simon, Ph. Annexe 9 : La région du lac Bulera, in Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, MRAC 1983 p. 146

region. The average altitude favored the growth of millet and sorghum, which were staple food crops at the time. Large-scale cattle-keeping was possible because high-altitude regions were devoid of tsetse flies.

Evidence of agricultural and animal-keeping activities was found in Rwanda dating from the third century. Cattle-keeping was more commonly practiced than agriculture. In Southern Butare, hills were densely covered with savannah shrubs and grass, which were easy to cut and favorable for grazing²². In this region, cattle teeth were found in a furnace structure at Remera dating from 220 A.D. This date coincides with that of cow and sheep bones found in Tongo, north of Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo²³ (see Figure 7 and Map 2).

Figure 7: Cow tooth found at Remera (Gisagara District)



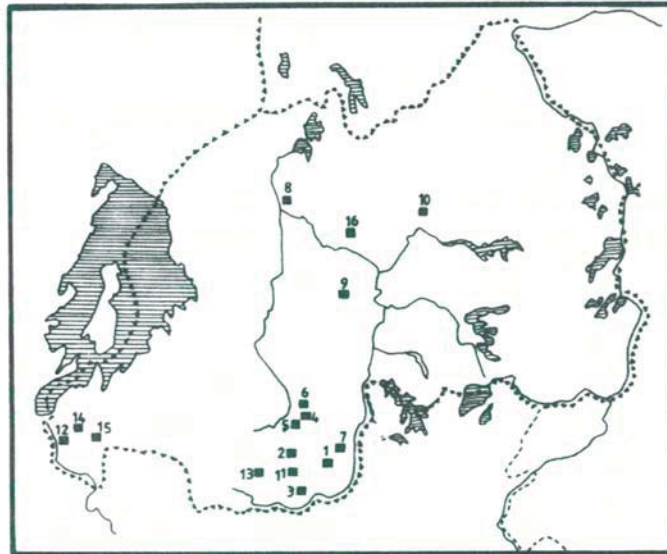
²² Van Grunderbeek et al., 1982, op. cit. p. 32.

²³ Kanimba and Shumbusho, 1992: 66-71

Map 2: Location of sites during the Early Iron Age

Fig.10 dent de vache trouvée à Remera (District de Gisagara)

CARTE 6 : Localisation des sites de l'âge du fer ancien



- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Kabuye | 9. Rogobagoba |
| 2. Ngoma | 10. Rutare |
| 3. Kansi | 11. Sholi |
| 4. Karubanda | 12. Kabaza |
| 5. Maara | 13. Karavumba |
| 6. Nyirankuba | 14. Mukinanira |
| 7. Gishubi | 15. Ruhimandyarya |
| 8. Masango | 16. Base |

➤ Modern Iron Age

The Modern Iron Age started towards the eighth century A.D. It was characterized by pottery decorated with ringed circles and objects made of metal. In some sites like Kiguhu, pots with decorations of ringed circles were accompanied by pots with saw-like teeth. (See figure No. 7 below):

Figure 8: Pots decorated with circular rings on the surface and around the space between the pot's base, neck and shoulder



At Kiguhu site, pot fragments decorated with the use of cords were found in addition to fragments with saw-like teeth²⁴. These pots are similar to fragments found in Bugarama. The pots from Kiguhu and Bugarama are likely to have been created at the same time, but very few studies have been conducted on this period. Some of the sites that have revealed these pots date from the eighth to the tenth century A.D. The Mucucu and Cyamakuza sites date back to the eighth century while the Akameru and Yinkomane sites date to the ninth and tenth centuries.²⁵

At Ruamurari site, which dates to the seventeenth century, a key collection of bones has been discovered. Examinations associate the bones to both small and large animals. The bones of large-sized animals belonged to *Bos primigenius f. Taurus* (bull). Two skulls which were nearly intact and remains of very long, u-shaped horns were found. These remains indicate that the cows were of the Ankole-type, a type which was widespread in the Great Lakes Region²⁶. The bone-fragments of small-sized animals likely belonged to goats and sheep. The Ruamurari site also afforded grinding stones and mills made of stone that resemble those which are still in use in Rwanda today. They were used for grinding sorghum and millet grains.

²⁴ Simon, Ph., 1983, op. cit, p. 145.

²⁵ Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Butare, INRS, 1983, p. 62.

²⁶ Tshilema, T., Annex 10 : Ryamurari, capital of the ancient kingdom of Ndorwa, in Van Noten, *Histoire archéologique du Rwanda*, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1983, pp. 150-151.

These artifacts and animal bone remains show that inhabitants practiced a subsistence economy based on agriculture and cattle-keeping. During this period, hunting and fruit-gathering subsided to a secondary role. Meat from wild animals and fish was rarely consumed, and a large percentage of the Rwandese population was prohibited from eating such meat.

The evolution from the Ancient Iron Age to the Modern Age was not abrupt. However, there are large differences in the forms of ceramic and metallic objects made between these periods. Metallic and ceramic objects of the Modern Iron Age are bigger in size and cruder in nature. The decorations added to the outside surfaces of these objects were crude.

These changes lead us to ask who introduced this new form of pottery. Was it the influence of a new group, or was it a local development? We should consider the changes in manufacturing style not only by the technology used, but also by the objects' deterioration rates resulting from anthropogenic action. Both agricultural and pastoral activities likely contributed to the increase in population. Some historians have associated these innovations with the Barengé (Hiernaux et al., Kagame, Kanyamacumbi). The Barengé belonged to the Abasinga clan and are said to have established a kingdom that extended from the East of Masisi, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to Akanyaru. The region of Butare was part of this kingdom²⁷. Oral tradition associates the Barengé people with objects made of metal and with water wells dug in rocks²⁸.

2.2. Settlement in Rwanda

At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, almost all theories on settlements in Africa attributed migration waves from Asia, a continent that was considered the cradle of mankind and the origin of change in Africa. The phenomenon of migration has therefore been considered as the basic conceptual theory that gives explanation to settlement and the spread of civilization in Rwanda.

It was from this perspective that colonial historiography was later developed by politicians to achieve their political ends. According to this colonial historiography, the first inhabitants

²⁷ Kanyamacumbi, P., *Société, culture et pouvoir politique en Afrique interlacustre*, Kinshasa, Ed. Select, 2001, p.232.

²⁸ Kagame, A., *Un abrégé de l'ethnohistoire du Rwanda*, Butare, EUNR, 1972, p. 27.

of Rwanda were the Batwa, who belong to the pygmies. The Batwa were regarded to be the original natives of Africa, living by hunting and gathering. The Bahutu are said to have pushed the Batwa to the forest.

There are several theories on the origins of the Bahutu. These theories are confused with theories on the Bantu. Several areas of origin have been proposed: the central and southern Pacific, northwest of the interlacustrine kingdom in Chad, and the Nigerian-Cameroonian belt. Their existence is dated to the First Millennium A.D. It was thought that the Bahutu practiced agriculture, kept small animals, and practiced iron metalwork before or after settling in Rwanda.

The first theory of the Ethiopian origin of the Batutsi goes back to the nineteenth century. The Tutsi and Hima shared a similar origin with the Galla, who were half-Semitic, half-Hamitic. After breaking away from their Ethiopian heritage, these people are said to have founded the Kitara Kingdom, which was later subdivided into several other states. The Tutsi were considered to be herdsmen, and their animals were identical to those of the Galla. Tutsi were thus associated with the Zebu-cow from India. The Hamites are thought to be of Asian origin.

The Hamitic theory goes hand in hand with race-inequality ideology. The notes and field reports available, in addition to publications made in 1891 and 1950, oversimplify the Hamitic theory by stressing the invasion of the Hamite cattle-keepers and their conquest and domination over masses of the Bahutu agriculturalists. These false theories were the main cause of recurrent violence in Rwanda, which culminated in the Rwandan genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994. The divisive theory of the Hutu as the native settlers of Rwanda and the Tutsi as foreign settlers was stressed by President Kayibanda and, later, by Léon Mugesera in their speeches.

The origin question seems to have preoccupied all societies of the world. However, it is in the myths and legends²⁹ of Rwandan society that truth might emerge. Rwandan society created myths and conserved them by transmitting them from generation to generation. It is important to refer to these traditional histories

²⁹ Bishikwabo, C., « Mythes d'origine et croyances religieuses. Base d'une communauté », in Centre de civilisation burundaise, *La civilisation ancienne des peuples des Lacs*, Colloque de Bujumbura (4-10 septembre 1979) 1981, pp. 64-80).

in looking for answers about settlements in Rwanda before analyzing the theories expounded by colonizers towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Far from being a continent of immigrants, Africa is considered to be the cradle of mankind. It is in East Africa that most human fossils have been discovered. Since the twentieth century, these discoveries have inspired new theories on settlements, the development of agriculture and animal keeping, and the advent of metal use.

2.2.1. Local traditions on settlements: myths and narratives

From both missionary and colonial theories on the origin of the Rwandese, it becomes clear that traditional Rwandan society held an opposite view from that of Europeans. In referring to Rwandan myths and legends, handed over from generation to generation, the Rwandese claim a common ancestry. The analysis of these myths is of particular interest to the study of settlements in Rwanda. The myths and legends of Rwandan origin are of various natures, but they share one common denominator; they rotate around two personalities: Kigwa and Gihanga.

The starting point of the myth of Kigwa, or the *Ibimanuka* (those who dropped from heaven), is that the ancestors of the Banyarwanda -- also referred to in some narratives as Sherezo (end) and also called Sebantu -- lived in heaven with the father of mankind. The heavenly father had two wives: Gasani and Nyabunyana. In other narratives, they were also referred to as Nyabuhoro and Nyampinga. Gasani was the favorite daughter of Shyerezo, but she was barren. Nyampinga had a son called Mututsi and a daughter called Nyampundu³⁰. On the advice of her servant, Gasani hid the heart of a bull in a jar where milk regularly flowed until nine months passed and a baby boy was born from this miraculous operation. The child was named Sabizeze, or Mana in some narratives, from the name of Rwanda's supreme power known as *Imana*. Thanks to Mutwa's curiosity, Shyerezo learnt about the circumstances under which Sabizeze was born. He was very angry and threatened to kill the child, but the child escaped from heaven through an opening. After this, he was given the name of Kigwa, or the one who dropped from heaven³¹.

³⁰ Sebasoni, S., *Les origines du Rwanda*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2000, p. 13. ; Kayishema, J.M., « Mythes et croyances au cœur du génocide au Rwanda », in *Etudes Rwandaises*, no. 9, septembre 2005, p. 45.

³¹ Kayishema, J. M., 2005, art. cit. p. 46.

From this narrative, the following scenarios unfold:

- Kigwa and his companions descended on Earth as the *Bimanuka*. When they descended to Earth, Sebizeze became Kigwa. He arrived in the eastern part of modern Rwanda at a place called Mubari. Mubari was ruled by King Kabeja of the Bazigaba clan. Upon his arrival, Kigwa was accompanied by his half-brother Mututsi and his half-sister Nyampundu. They also arrived with a pot-maker called Mutwa, Mutwa's sister, and a series of animals in couples of twos: a bull called Rugira and a cow called Ingizi, a ram called Rugeyo and a sheep called Mudende, a he-dog called Ruzunguzungu and a she-dog called Rukende, and a cock called Rubika and a hen called Mugambira. The *Bimanuka* brought with them grains of cultivatable plants, fire, and four principal jobs: blacksmithing, woodwork, tannery and hunting.
- There were intermarriages between Kigwa and his group, leading to the origins of several clans. The reproduction of the *Bimanuka* group took three directions. One mode was incest: Kigwa married his half-sister Nyampundu, who produced at least two children, one of whom was Sukiranya daughter.
- Fearing incest, Mututsi settled far way across River Akagera. Upon his return, he married his niece Sukiranya, who gave birth to three children: Serwega, Muha and Mukono, the ancestors of the Bega clan, the Baha, and the Bakono. Another version of this myth speaks to an alliance of intruders with natives: Kabeja's granddaughter was married to Kigwa, or his descendant of the sixth generation called Kazi. The boy from this union was Gihanga, the official founder of the Banyiginya dynasty.
- The birth and adventurous life of Gihanga, the founder of the Kingdom. During his youth, Gihanga spent some of his time in Mubari in the East and some in Bugoyi, near Rwerere. Gihanga had several talents: He took over from his father, or Kigwa's ancestors, who was a civilizing hero and the son of a blacksmith. He was himself a blacksmith, and was also skilled in woodwork and tannery. He was an adventurer who was ready to conquer the royal powers in modern Rwanda and its periphery:

Burundi, Nduga, Bukunzi, and Bunyabungo. He founded his royal authority in Buhanga (former Ruhengeri) after marrying the daughter of Jeni, one of the last kings of the Barenge dynasty of the Basinga clan. He imposed the Rwoga drum, the forerunner of the Karinga drum. He is considered the father of all the neighboring kingdoms in the region: Burundi, Bunyabungo, Ndorwa, Bushubi, and Karagwe.

- The discovery of cows and the use of cows for milk: in his escape to the forest after quarreling with Queen Nyirampirangwe or Nyirantibangwa, Nyiraruucyaba, daughter of Gihanga and Nyamususa, met a hunter called Kagesera, or Kazigaba, and they got married. One day, she brought a calf and its mother; this is how Nyiraruucyaba learnt how to treat and churn milk. She administered milk later to her father, Gihanga, who was suffering from dysentery but then recovered. With the help of a soothsayer called Gakara, Gihanga discovered a vast number of cows in Rugezi valley. The bull leading the flock escaped.
- The distribution of animals and power in Gihanga's lineage: Gihanga reunited all of his off-spring in Mutara, Humure, and distributed cows among his sons -- the founders of the dynasties in Rwanda and in neighboring countries³².

Contrary to what was later written by some authors, such as Pagès and Delmas³³, the myth of the *Ibimanuka* never mentions domination or invasion of one group of Rwandan people by another. It is only mentioned that a couple of Twa accompanied Sabizeze, and a Twa revealed the secret of the circumstances by which Sabizeze was born. The name Mututsi is not as used an ethnic group in the myth, but rather refers to the father of Serwega, Muha, and Mukono.

The narratives on Rwandese origins speak of clans while identifying groups that were living in classical Rwanda. These clans played a central role. For example, narratives speak of the

³² IRDP, *Histoire et conflits au Rwanda*, Kigali, 2006, p. 7-8. ; Kagame, A., *Inganji Karinga*, Kabgayi, 1959 (2ème Ed.), pp. 21-23. ; SEBASONI S., 2000, op. cit. pp. 14-17.

³³ Pages, A., *Un royaume hamite au centre de l'Afrique*, Bruxelles, Marcel Hayez, 1933, p. 107. ; Delmas, L., *Généalogie de la noblesse du Rwanda*, Kabgayi, Vicariat Apostolique du Ruanda, 1950.

ritual leader of the Bazigaba during the Nyiginya settlement on the new land. These clan identities also determined preferential matrimonial alliances. Half of these clan entities are represented in this mother-legend, which clearly demonstrates mothers' position in our historical society. Three groups are clearly identified: 1. dynastic clans emanating from Gihanga, that is Nyiginya, Shambo, Hondogo and Tsobe, 2. clans of Queen Mothers originating from Muttutsi, that is Ha, Kono and Ega, and 3. the Basangabutaka clan, or natives who are often considered Hutu, although no source exists to prove it, that is Zigaba, Gesera, Singa³⁴.

The ritual role of those last groups welcomed ceremonies for settling on new land is similar to what is outlined in the original legends. The three great Biru, or ritual kings, came from each of the three groups: Tsobe, Kono and Singa. Having said this, there is a link between the legends of Gihanga and Kigwa and the Ubwiru institution.

The clan identities evoked in the original myths only acquired divisive ethnic meanings in the twentieth century, especially during the Belgian colonial period. Prior, the Rwandese were always identified according to their clans, not their ethnic groups.

Sabizeze's landing point from heaven took place in Mubari. Some researchers, especially those who defend the Hamitic theory, have interpreted this as the location where the Nyiginya arrived in Rwanda from the East. By the term Nyiginya, they meant the Tutsi; they neglected that the fact there were no clans in Rwanda limited to a single social group – that is, there were no ethnic groups. Moreover, the oral tradition on settlements is silent on the question of the ethnic origins of the Zugaba, the Gesera, or indeed any other local groups before the conquest of the Nyiginya. Researchers including M. d'Hertefelt and J.P. Chrétien³⁵ insist on the multi-ethnic composition of the eighteen Rwandan clans.

Some narratives go back to a distant historical past to explain the origin of the Rwandese. Below is the chronological list of ancestors according to different sources:

³⁴ IRDP, 2006, op. cit, p. 8 and see also Nyagahene, A., 1997.

³⁵ D'Hertefelt, M., *Les clans du Rwanda ancien*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1971, Chrétien, J. P., *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Deux mille ans d'histoire*, Paris, Aubier, 2000.

Table 2: Chronological list of *Ibimanuka* in Rwanda³⁶

	Report of the Government during the year 1926, p. 54	Kagame (1943; 1959)	P a g è s (1933)	Delmas (1950)
1	Nkuba		Randa	Nkuba (Shyerezo)
2	Kigwa		Muntu	Sabizeze (Kigwa)
3	Mututsi Nyampundu (sic)			Muntu (Son of Sabizeze and Nyampundu)
4	Kimanuka		Kazi	Kimanuka
5	Kijuru		Nkuba	Kijuru
6	Kobo		Kigwa	Kobo
7	Merano		Kimanuka	Merano
8	Randa		Kijuru	Randa
9	Muntu		Kobo	Gisa
10	Kazi		Kizira	Kizira
11	Gisa	Gihanga I Ngomijana	Gihanga	Kazi
12	Musindi (Abenengwe family)	K a n y a - r w a n d a I Gihanga		Gihanga, father to / with (wife) 1) Nyamususa (Jeni's daughter) - Sebugabo (Abashambo) - Mugondo (Abahondogo) - Kanyarwanda (Abanyiginya) - Nyirarucyaba (Abacyaba) 2) Nyirampingiye - Rustobe's Mother (Abatsobe) 3) Nyirampirangwe - Gafomo (or Gashubi) 4) Nyangobero

³⁶ Nkurikiyimfura, J. N., *Un modèle d'exploitation de la généalogie accompagnée de réflexion sur les chronologies établies à partir de la généalogie dynastique du Rwanda*, Mémoire de D.E.A, Université de Paris I, 1982-1983, p.7.

13	Kasila Nyamigezi (Abazigaba family)	Yuhi I Musindi	K a n y a - rwanda	
14	Gihanga (+ Nyamususa) - Kanyarwanda - Mugondo - Kanyandorwa (+ Nyilampingiye) - Rutsobe	Rumeza	Musindi	
15	Kanyarwanda	Nyarume	Rumeza	
16	Musindi	Rukuge	Nyarume	
17	Rumeza	Rubanda	Rukuge	
18	Nyarume	Ndahiro I Ruyange	Rubanda	
19	Lukuge	Ndoba	Ndoba (sic)	
20	Rubanda	Samembe	Samembe	
21	Ndoba	Nsoro I S a m u - kondo	Nsoro	

In the table above, the ancestors of the Rwandese are presented in a chronological order, though clearly the chronology varies from author to another. This is because all of the information originates from popular narratives, which contain additions, omissions, and regional variants.

Origin legends supply temporal and spatial landmarks where creation took place in Rwanda. They serve as supporting evidence in strategies of power retention. Kigwa and Gihanga are presented as the ancestors of a long lineage of Nyiginya kings. This lineage is supposed to be continuous despite several breaks in the dynastic list. In the legends, Gihanga is always presented as the son of a blacksmith called Kazi, who was not only a blacksmith expert, but also an expert in woodwork and tannery. He was endowed with qualities of a hero, a creator, and the head of the civilizing mission in the empire. As he moved across Rwanda and other kingdoms in the region, Gihanga became a great traveler. He brought many regions under his authority and handed this territory to his sons. He went to Nduga to visit Mashira, he went

to Bukunzi the future ritual kingdom of rainmaker kings, he went to Burundi to see Rwamba in Bunyabungo, he went to Buhanga before the king of the Basinga, and he visited Jeni of Rurenge and married his daughter Nyamususa.

Still, according to this legend, under the reign of Gihanga the kingdom expanded at the expense of neighboring political institutions. From Mubari, which was considered the cradle of Rwanda, he organized neighboring regions. He made many alliances through intermarriage, such as the alliance he made with King Singa Jeni, who initiated him to the monarchical ritual and handed the Rwoga drum to him as a royal emblem since he did not have a male heir. Gihanga founded Rwanda and bequeathed it to his sons: Gahutu, Gatwa and Gatutsi. In some narratives, it is said that Gihanga gave birth to Knayarwanda, to whom he handed Rwanda. In turn, Kanyarwanda gave birth to the three sons mentioned above. Popular narratives present two major symbols to justify the creation of Rwanda by Gihanga. These symbols were the royal drum and the cow. Hence, in the narratives, it is said that the hero is *Gihanga cyahanze inka n'ingoma*, or "Gihanga is the origin of royal cows." He was nicknamed Ngomijana³⁷.

In an attempt to establish the reliability of narratives on settlements, legends shed light on the life of Gihanga, especially by pointing out his former residences, which were located in Buhanga, a few kilometers from the former Ruhengeri *prefecture*, and along the fertile banks of River Mukungwa, in the former chieftaincy of Kibari in Kangoma. The former mission of Rulindo is also thought to have been a residence of Gihanga, on top of Ruhanga mountain, as is Nyamirembe, located in Humure in Mutara. The Rwandan tradition even mentions his wives and children, as enumerated below³⁸:

- Nyamususa was the daughter of Jeni of Rurenge, the king of the Basinga. She was the mother of kings. Sabugabo was one of these kings. He was the father of Mushambo, the founder of Bushambo dynasty;
- Nyirampigiye was Rutsobe's mother, the ancestor of the Batsobe clan. She was also considered to be Nyamususa's

³⁷ Kayishema, J. M., 2005, art. cit., p. 49.

³⁸ Delmas, L., « *Généalogie de la noblesse du Rwanda* », Kabgayi, Vicariat Apostolique du Ruanda, 1950, p. 11.

sister according to some sources, and a servant by other sources.

- Nyirampirangwe was the mother of Gafomo; she was nicknamed Gashubi. According to this legend, he is the one who scared Rutenderi bull.
- Mugondo was the father of Gahondogo, former king of Bugesera.
- Gahima was the youngest son of Gihanga and successor to the throne of Rwanda. He was the ancestor of the lineage of the Basindi; his dynastic name was Banyiginya³⁹.

Finally, oral traditions give some clues as to where Gihanga was buried. It is said that his burial took place in Nyamilembe, Gishubi in the former Territory of Nyanza. All these oral narratives and legends on settlements in Rwanda have not been transcribed, but they constitute a legitimate way of understanding social and political order in ancient Rwanda. Unfortunately, some historians and politicians have manipulated these narratives to suit their political ends.

The striking example is provided by Maniragaba Baributsa⁴⁰ who, among other things, denounced the history of brotherhood which always existed between three Rwandan brothers, i.e. the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. The premises of his thinking are found in the myth of Gihanga's son, which was narrated by Bishop Bigirumwami. The narrative states that Gihanga did not know the appropriate dates for planting seasons. As a result, people cultivated haphazardly and the harvests were sometimes bad. One morning, Gihanga sent his sons Gahutu and Gatutsi to see Kibariro, the wise man, in order to find out the appropriate season for planting each crop.

The two brothers went to see Kibariro. When they arrived, Gahutu told Kibariro that they had a message from Gihanga. Kibariro told him to report slightly before dawn for the answer. They went to sleep. Gahutu vomited, and when Gatutsi saw this, he stood and went to sleep in the hut adjacent to Kibariro's residence. When Kibariro woke, he declared to his wife, "Why didn't the

³⁹ Delmas, L., 1950, op. cit, p. 11.

⁴⁰Maniragaba Baributsa, « Le mythe des fils de Gihanga ou l'histoire d'une fraternité toujours manquée », in Bangamwabo F. X., et al, *Les relations interethniques au Rwanda à la lumière de l'agression d'octobre 1990. Genèse, soubassements et perspectives*, Ruhengeri, EUR, 1991, pp. 61-119.

sons of Gihanga come to ask me about the planting seasons? If they come late, I will not tell them anything or I will lie to them. Kibariro then started conversing with his wife and revealed to her the planting seasons.

Gatutsi, who was sleeping in a nearby hut, overheard the talk of the planting seasons. After eavesdropping on this conversation, he returned to his residence. In the morning, Gahutu woke up and went to see Kibariro but Kibariro only told him lies. When Gahutu tried to ask for explanations, Kibariro replied: "I only speak to intelligent people."

Gahutu and Gatutsi returned home. Gihanga was very happy to see them. When he asked them for the answer, Gahutu answered that Kibariro had given him wrong answers and that he spoke so loudly that he could not understand anything. Gihanga was annoyed because Gahutu, the elder brother, could not give him a correct answer. Gatutsi took his father aside and informed him of the planting seasons. He even told him about Gahutu's strange behavior and sickness during the journey. Gihanga ordered Gatutsi to kill Gahutu, but Gatutsi declined to do so. Then, Gihanga told Gahutu, "You will not be the master as originally conceived, but instead Gatutsi will be your master." From that time onward, Gahutu never slept. Gihanga declared that Gahutu would become Gatutsi's night watchman and servant and would receive milk in return. He added that Gatutsi would lose his cows, but many others would be produced because he had inherited them legitimately. As for Gatwa, Gihanga said that he would become Gatutsi's porter.

Like many other narratives, Maniragaba Baributsa analyzed this tale from a purely ethnic perspective. According to him, the narrative suggests the superiority of the Tutsi over the Hutu by virtue of their heavenly origin, their intelligence, and other qualities. The Hutu or Twa, conversely, display a lot of weaknesses, thus meriting an inferior social status. In this respect, Baributsa joins Delmas, who refuted the heavenly origin of the *Ibimanuka*.

According to Delmas, the *Bimanuka* were contemporaries of the Basita, who were the first Hamite kings who ruled Bunyoro, a chieftaincy of the former kingdom of Kitara. He stresses that they were not related to the Basita but were Hamites like them. He traces the itinerary that the *Bimanuka* followed to arrive in

Rwanda: “While some Basita settled in Bunyoro, others continued their journey towards the south and across Nkore and Mpororo; they finally arrived in Rwanda in the region of Mutara. Although the legend names three people, i.e. Sebizeze, Mututsi and their sister Mpundu, these were not the only members of their clan. They certainly also had Bahutu servants who helped them keep and look after their herds of cattle⁴¹”.

Baributsa and Delmas refute the heavenly origin of Rwandan ancestors. According to them, these myths were invented to show that the Rwandese had a similar origin. This cannot be true because myths of a similar nature are found everywhere else in oral traditions of other people of the world. They represent a social and political charter, and indeed, a non-written constitution of sorts. These traditions are foundations of a social order whose legitimacy is asserted by narratives.

The narratives on origins are supposed to be the foundation of Rwanda’s history. They reveal that political unity is above regional, clan, and social diversity. They have been analyzed to show the heterogeneous nature of the Rwandese. They were narrated in several stages, revised, re-interpreted, and rectified several times. They have been manipulated by foreign scholars and local politicians. What is obvious is that the traditional Rwandan society ignored the migration theories developed by Europeans when they arrived in Africa for the first time, though some of these theories were imbibed and implemented by some Africans.

2.2.2. Modern theories on the settlements in Rwanda: content and application

Establishing the existence of racial groups presents a political and ideological challenge of exceptional importance to Rwanda. The analyses proposed by missionary and colonial historiography were conceived within the context of a racial ideology. They resulted in a “*disseminationist*” theory that was developed towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, the racial and divisive concepts were widely disseminated by information organs and were implemented by some intellectuals⁴² and political leaders⁴³.

⁴¹ Delmas, L., *Généalogie de la noblesse du Rwanda*, Kabgayi, Vicariat apostolique du Ruanda, 1950, p. 8.

⁴² Kagame, A., 1972, op. cit. pp 19-33.

⁴³ Kabwete Mulinda C., « La généalogie de l’idée du peuplement du Rwanda : considérations sur l’autochtonie ou allochtonie de Rwandais », in *Cahiers du centre*

These views were propagated by ethnologists and missionaries who excelled in classifying and categorizing hierarchies of peoples, which were baptized as “races” from different regions: the Bantu, Hamites and Nilotics. From this perspective, the original settlements of Rwanda were associated with migration waves. The entire history of Rwanda was reduced to the migration of conquering races. It is believed that the Hutu came first and pushed the Twa back toward the forested areas. Later, the Tutsi are said to have dominated the two groups.

What is unfortunate is that many political leaders found in these theories arguments that supported their ideology of division, exclusion, and even genocide. Further, this interpretation of Rwandan society has been and still is entertained by some international media. Other theories attempting to explain the original settlements of Rwanda are based on linguistic, archeology, and anthropology.

a. Linguistic theories

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, linguists found a community speaking a prototype-Bantu language. This was an artificial language formed from terms borrowed from modern language. This language permeated through a well-organized society practicing agriculture, animal husbandry, and metal works. This Bantu language was said to have developed in Asia and to have been introduced in Sub-Saharan Africa by groups of Hamites. According to this theory, Hamites are considered to be blacks of a superior race who were responsible for bringing civilization to this part of Africa.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the Hamite ideology was replaced by one of the Bantu. The Bantu became the centre of all ideological and historical conceptions. In an attempt to provide scientific arguments to these views, many linguists believed in the prototype-Bantu language; there were terms which designated activities related to agriculture, animal husbandry and metal works. In the process, they were silent on the presence and the importance of other linguistic groups that preceded the arrival of Bantus speakers, thus denying these groups any contribution to civilization.

It follows that foreign contributions of theory were privileged and that interest was focused on the origins and migrations of groups

de gestion des conflits, No. 5, 2002, pp. 49-70.

of people. The continuous human presence mentioned in the first part of this chapter was not amply taken into consideration⁴⁴. It is necessary to take a multidisciplinary approach to interpret and understand the history of settlements in Rwanda. It is also important to recognize the presence of cultural factors which prove the existence of these settlements. As such, we call for a review of the existing theory on settlements in Rwanda particularly and in the Great Lakes region more generally.

During the last century, several theories were advanced on the themes of origin, migration, and settlement. They can be summarized into the four major stages of their evolution:

The first stage occurred around the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century – between 1863 and 1924. It is characterized by theories that link the origin of African people to Asia⁴⁵. The Pygmies and Bushmen, or San, were the first settlers in Africa. They settled in the forest and savannah, respectively. These theories deal with two last migratory waves, those of the Hamites and the Bantu. The distinction between the Hamites and Bantu was not clear during this period. The Hamites were at first identified with the Bantu by John Speke, as opposed to being related to the blacks and Pygmies⁴⁶. Later, however, when Speke arrived in Ethiopia, he deemed that Tutsi and Galla pastoralists were related.

Some considered the Bantu to be a group resulting from intermarriages between Negroids and Hamites. Others conceived them to be a racial group different from the Hamites⁴⁷. Von Gotzen considered the Batutsi to be Hamites who dominated the Bahutu. This idea of domination was linked to the Hamitic myth emanating from an erroneous interpretation of the Bible, according to which difference in race resulted from a curse to Noah's son, Cain. The blacks were thought to originate from this son and were condemned to become slaves of his brothers, Sem and Japheth. The Great Lakes Region played an important role in the spread of Bantu-speakers⁴⁸ (See Map 3 below):

⁴⁴ Kanimba, M., « Peuplement ancien du Rwanda : à la lumière de récentes recherches », in *Cahiers du Centre de Gestion des conflits*, no. 7, 2003, pp. 47-81

⁴⁵ Lepsius, R., *Nubische Grammatik. Einleitung über die Völker und Sprachen Afrikas*, Berlin, 1880; Van Oordt J. F., *Origin of the Bantu*, Cape Town, 1907, p. 5; Muller, F., *Allgemeine Ethnographie*, Vienne, Alfred Holder, 1879.

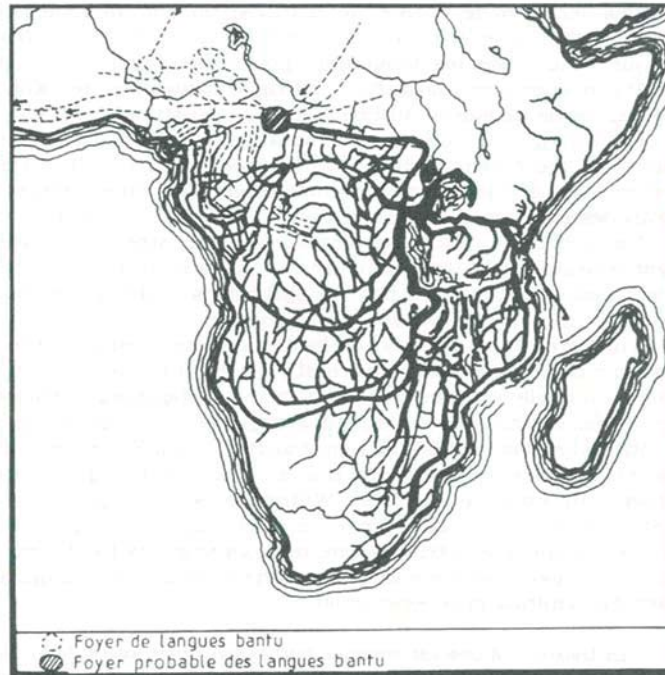
⁴⁶ Cornevin, R., *Histoire de l'Afrique*, Tome II, Paris, OPayot, 1966, p. 152.

⁴⁷ Johnston, H. H., 'The origin of the Bantu', in *Journal African Society*, 6, 1907, p. 335.

⁴⁸ Johnston, H. H., *A comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi Bantu languages*,

Map 3: Homes and migration routes of the Bantu and semi-Bantu

CARTE 1 : Foyers et voies migratoires des semi-bantu et des bantu



Source : J. Johnston 1919-22

Leur expansion aurait commencé vers le 2^e siècle av. J.C. Mieux armés et conduits par une aristocratie hamitisée, ils auraient conquis les peuplades autochtones (Johnston 1919-22 : 28).

Source: Johnston 1919, pp. 22-28

The expansion of the Bantu-speakers is said to have started in the second century B.C. Well-armed and led by Hamitic aristocracy, the Bantu are said to have conquered the natives of the Great Lake Region (Johnston 1919, 22-28).

The second stage stretched from the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century to the end of the Second World War and was characterized by questioning the nature of outside migrations. The Australopithecus discoveries in eastern and southern Africa⁴⁹ in the 1920s contributed to skepticism that Africans had foreign origins.

Oxford, 1919-22, p. 28.

⁴⁹ Cole, S. M., *The Prehistory of East Africa*, New York, MC Million, 1963.

However, the concept of migration continues to preoccupy the views of history, the debate on population movements, and concepts of migration within the continent. From this perspective, the history of settlement in the Great Lakes Region is presented in three phases: the San (Bushmen and Hottentots) phase, the Caucasoid phase, those who imposed themselves on the San, and the Bantu phase, which arrived during the Old Stone Age.

During this second period of theory, the Hamitic hypothesis was widely taught in Burundian and Rwandan schools, where it fell on fertile ground for two reasons. Firstly, the colonial power drew capital from the theory in order to justify its policy of exclusion. Secondly, it was used by the Tutsi and later by Hutu leaders, who were advised and supported in the propagation of this myth by the Catholic Church and the colonial powers in Rwanda. The latter used these theories to justify divisive policies so as to safeguard their interests and ensure the future of their political stay in Rwanda.

The Hamite theory reinforced the biases and cleavages between groups during the colonial period. Coupled with the Bantu theory, the Hamite theory also served to institutionalize ethnicity after independence. The gap between groups was reinforced by imported biases, stereotypes, and ethnographic literature. The divisive reports of Belgian administrators and missionaries were also widely disseminated by missionary schools.

Tutsi cultural authorities welcomed the Hamitic theory because it served to justify the privileges they were endowed with by the colonial government. These privileges were also strengthened by the establishment of internal and external security organs. An awareness of these reforms provoked sentiments of inferiority and exclusion among the masses *vis-à-vis* the privileged class of the Tutsi.⁵⁰

The third stage was characterized by the questioning of the Hamitic theory and controversy regarding the origin of Bantu languages⁵¹. The location of Bantu origins and the means used to arrive at a theory of origins were also questioned⁵². The

⁵⁰ Chrétien J. P., 2000, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

⁵¹ Murdock, G. P., *Africa: its people and their culture History*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1959.

⁵² Greenberg, J., *Languages of Africa*, La Haye, Mouton, 1963, p. 38; Murdock, G. P., op. cit., pp. 279-291; Guthrie, M., "Bantu Origins", in *Journal of African Languages*, 1 (1), 1962, pp. 9-21; Heine B., "Zur genetischen Gliederung der Bantu-Sprachen", in *Afrika und Ubersee*, 56, 1973, pp. 164-185; Heine, B., Hoff H., et Vosen R., "Neuere Ergebnisse zur Territorialgeschichte und Ethnohistorie", in *Afrika Neue Beitrage*

Hamite myth conceived at the end of the nineteenth century to explain civilizational trends in Africa was opposed by 1949 and dismantled by 1954⁵³. It became clear that it was impossible to distinguish a Hamite based on physical characteristics.⁵⁴ The theory of Bantu expansion came to dominate views of settlement in central, eastern and southern Africa. Many anthropologists, archeologists and linguists strived to look for arguments in favor of this Bantu-expansion theory⁵⁵.

The fourth stage was dominated by the Greenberg theory, which located the home of the Bantu in the northwest of the current Bantu territory. This theory is accepted by many linguists. The expansion of Bantu speakers is illustrated by the map proposed by three linguists from the University of Cologne, i.e. B. Heine, H. Hoff and R. Vossen⁵⁶. The map indicates the routes followed and the stages of expansion. The expansion of the prototype-Bantu language is said to have begun around 3500-5000 B.C. while the oriental group began around 1000 BC⁵⁷. This timeline was accepted by many archeologists, who attempted to add new data, especially the dates of technical innovations attributed to the Bantu (See Map 4 and 5 below):

afrikanistischer Forschungen, Berlin, Reimer, 1977.

⁵³ Greenberg, J., « Linguistic Evidence regarding Bantu Origins », in *Journal of African History*, 13(2), 1972, pp. 180-216.

⁵⁴ “It would be well-nigh impossible to point to an individual and recognize in him a Hamite according to racial, linguistic and cultural characteristics to fit the image that has been presented to us for so long. Such an individual does not exist” (Sanders, E. R., “The Hamitic hypothesis: its origin and functions in time theories”).

⁵⁵ Murdock, G. P., 1959, op. cit., pp. 279-291; Hernaux J., “Bantu expansion; the evidence from physical anthropology confronted with linguistic and archeological evidence”, in *Journal of African History*, IX, 4, 1968, pp. 505-515.; Posnansky M., “Bantu genesis. Archeological reflection”, in *Journal of African History*, 9 (1), 1968.

⁵⁶ Heine et al., 1977, op. cit., p. 71.

⁵⁷ Ehret, C., “The First Spread of Food Production to Southern Africa”, in Ehret C., Posnansky M., (ed.), *The Archaeological and linguistic Reconstruction of African History*, 1982, pp. 158-181.

Map 4: Expansion of Bantu languages: stages and dispersion points

CARTE 2 : Expansion des langues bantu : stades et centres de dispersion



Source : Heine et al. 1977

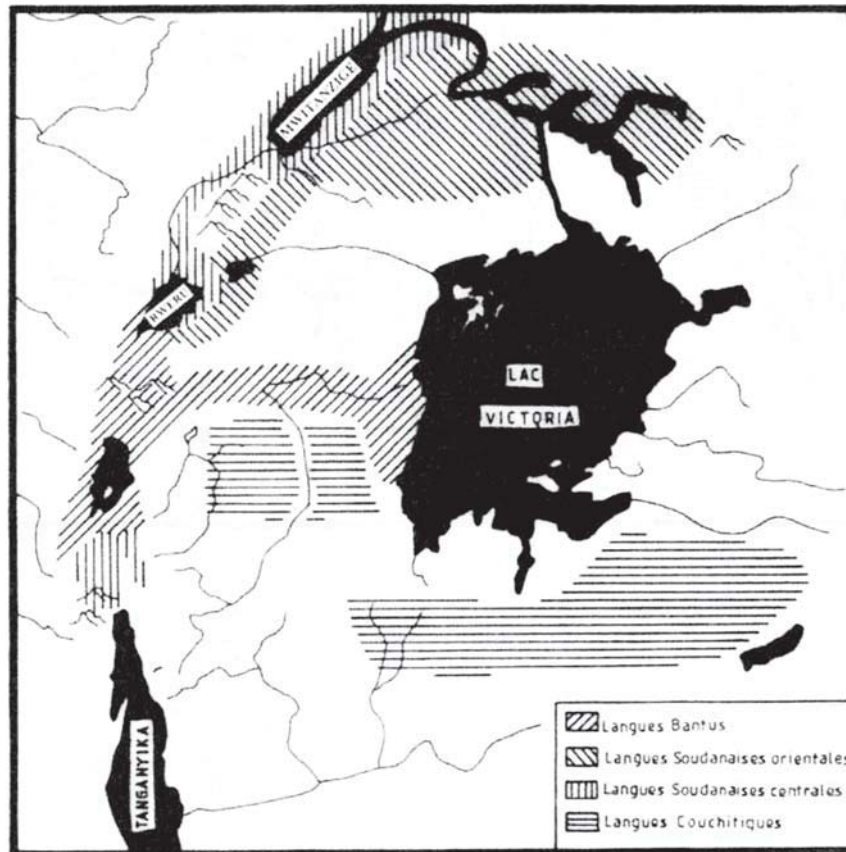
- Le second modèle suggère un développement séparé des langues bantu orientales et occidentales. Les locuteurs des langues bantu orientales auraient à partir du foyer d'origine, région frontalière entre le Nigeria et le Cameroun, contourné la forêt tropicale au nord et se seraient ensuite répandus dans la région interlacustre et de là vers l'Afrique orientale et australe (Coupez et al. 1975; Bastin et al. 1983; Vansina 1984).

Source: Heine et al. 1977

The second model suggests a separate development of Eastern and Western Bantu languages. The speakers of Eastern Bantu languages are said to have their original home in the border

areas between Nigeria and Cameroon, circumventing the tropical forest in the north. They are said to have spread from here to the interlacustrine region. They later spread towards Eastern and southern Africa (Coupez et al., 1975; Bastin et al., 1983; Vansina, 1984).

Map 5: Location of linguistic groups in the Great lake Region from 1000 BC to 500 BC



Source: Schoenbrun, 1998

Archaeological contributions have instigated a review of historical interpretations, especially the chronological timetable⁵⁸. The explanations that dominated the second half of the twentieth century were increasingly questioned and needed qualification,⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Phillipson, D. W., « L'expansion bantoue en Afrique orientale et méridionale : les témoignages de l'archéologie et de la linguistique », in Bouquiaux L., (ed.), *L'expansion bantoue*, Société des études linguistiques et anthropologiques de France, Paris, 1980, pp. 649-684.

⁵⁹ Lugan, B., 1997, op. cit. ; Chrétien J. P.; 2000, op. cit.

to say the least. An examination of the theories on the expansion of Bantu linguistic groups shows that if the theory of their expansion from the West of the interlacustrine region enjoys credence, there still exist some uncertainties on the origins, causes, dates, extent, and direction of their migration movements.

b. Anthropological interpretations

Until the last few decades, the human fossils discovered in Sub-Saharan Africa were classified into four categories distributed over three geographic locations: the Negroid in West Africa, the Europoid and Khoisanoid in Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Pygmies in the dense and wet forest areas. The history of settlements in Eastern Africa that emanates from this perception is presented as follows. The Bushmanoid and Khoisanoid groups formed an ancient stratum, to which the Caucasoid group from North Africa was combined. The lithic, or Caspean, industry and Neolithic innovations were associated with this group.

The advent of the Negroids in Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa was linked to the expansion of Bantu language speakers. This theory won a lot of support until skeletons were analyzed in the interlacustrine region and in Eastern Africa⁶⁰. The fossils from different sites in this part of the continent point to three major conclusions on the history of settlements in the centre of Eastern Africa:

- 1) The Negroid group met in the centre of Eastern Africa in the Pleistocene period. In the valley of Kenya, a specimen was found on Lukenya-Hill. It dates to 17600 years B.C.⁶¹ It appeared at the same time as fossils found in the Upper Semiliki valley. In this valley, many sites yielded human skeletons. In Isahgo 11, a site located on the left bank of Lake Rwicanzige, more than twenty bone fragments were exhumed in the principal fossil level, dating to 20,000 years B.C., and two bones were discovered in the post-emersion zone, located around 6800-6875 B.C. At a distance of 1 kilometer south of Isahgo 11, another site identified

⁶⁰ Brauer, G., « The morphological differentiation of anatomically Modern man in Africa », in *Zeit. Mporph., Anthropol.*, 69 (3), 1978, pp. 266-292.

⁶¹ Rightmire; G. P., « Problems in the study of later Pleistocene man in Africa », in *American Anthropologist*, 77, 1975, pp. 28-51; Gramly, R. M. et Rightmire G. P., « A fragmentary cranium ad dated Late Stone Age assemblage from Lukenya Hill, Kenya », in *Man (N. S.)*, 8 (4), 1973, pp. 57-79.

as Ishango 14 yielded a specimen at a level located between the fossil level and the post-emersion zone. Its date is estimated at more than 20000 years B.C. The site of Katanda 2 also yielded a specimen dating to more than 18,000 years B.C.⁶²

- 2) Many of the bones identified with the Khoisanoid or Europoid groups are categorized in the Negroid group. The specimen from Ishango 11 presents many morphological similarities with the current populations that speak Nilotic or Bantu languages. The more ancient skulls from levels between 25200 years B.C. and 6890 B.C. are categorized among the Negroid fossils discovered in west and north Africa⁶³.
- 3) The diversity of phenotypical groups in the region dates back to a distant past. It is not scientifically valid to resort to the phenomenon of migration to explain the diversity of current groups. However, the anthropological heterogeneity of modern groups is probably not identical with those of prehistoric groups. Communities were dynamic and regularly received new knowledge through assimilation and intermixing.

Archeological proof of early settlements consists of structural objects or human vestiges, as discussed in the first paragraph on the current state of knowledge. There are many knowledge gaps because archeological research is still incomplete. The last studies were conducted in the 1980s and were conducted at very few sites⁶⁴.

A synthesis of the data examined above allows us to make observations, which could form the basis for writing the history of the region in general and of Rwanda in particular. A re-

⁶² Brooks A. S., Smith C. C., 1987, "Ishango revised: New Age Determination and cultural interpretations", in *African Archaeological Review*, 5, pp. 72-75; Boaz N. T., Pavlakis, P.P. and Brooks, A. S., "Late Pleistocene- Holocene human remains", in Boaz N. T., (ed), *Evolution of environments and Hominidae in the African Western Rift valley*, Martinsville, Virginia Museum of natural History, 1990, pp. 291-298.

⁶³ Brooks A. S., "Late Pleistocene-Holocene human remains", in Boaz N. T., (ed.), *Evolution of environments and Hominidae in the African Western Rift Valley*, Martinsville, Virginia Museum of National History, 1990, pp. 291-298.

⁶⁴ Nenquin J., "Contributions to the study of the prehistoric cultures of Rwanda and Burundi", in *Annales, Series 8, Sciences humaines*, no. 59, Tervuren, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1967, pp. 17-19.

examination of history taking into account relatively recent settlements implies a consideration of data obtained from diverse fields. The evolution of the environment from the Holocene period is considered from the standpoints of archeology, anthropology, linguistics, and oral tradition.

Though still significantly limited, archeological discoveries show that Rwandan settlements and historiography extended to the First Millennium A.D. Thanks to its good climate, the Great Lakes Region was subjected to a long period of human occupation. This occupation is evidenced by the presence of lithic tools, representing the prehistoric period. These tools were made of bones of animals and human vestiges. These tools sometimes enriched by artistic elements like jewels, statues, engravings, paintings, and rocks. They provide clues as to the material and artistic cultures of the people to whom they belonged.

Human presence, which dates back thousands of years, should not be confused with the settlements of our Rwandan ancestors who lived in the two first millenniums before our era. Human settlement should also not be reduced to migration trends of groups, notably the expansion of the Bantu. In addition, the history of settlements should not be confused with the myth on origins, which oversimplifies historical processes by conceiving of the beginning of history as the formation of kingdoms.

Towards the end of the Pleistocene period, riverside residents, who became sedentary 25,000 years ago, lived on hunting, fishing and gathering. The abundance of natural resources, notably the presence of aquatic animals and favorable climatic conditions, encouraged more people to occupy banks of lakes and rivers. Technology in the field of hunting and fishing was modified to suit the environment. During this period, there was specialization of industry. In the forest region, bifacial tools were introduced, while in the Savannah, microlithic industries became dominant.

Fishermen living along river and lake banks developed a bone industry characterized by beautiful bone-harpoons. During the Holocene period, this industry was mostly found in the Semiliki valley. It spread towards the Sahara across the Nile valley until it reached East Africa⁶⁵. This region was therefore at the crossroads

⁶⁵ Heinelin, J., *Les fouilles d'Ishango*, Bruxelles, Institut des Parcs Nationaux du Congo Belge, 1957.

of trade and at the center of enlightenment for thousands of years. During this time, settlements were characterized by remarkable complexity but were vulnerable to harsh climatic changes. Many groups lived in different areas. Those who lived near one another experienced similar ecological changes and had similar modes of life and similar economies.

Up to approximately 2000 B.C., the region was occupied by hunter-agriculturalists possessing a purely lithic technology. Toward the end of the First Millennium B.C., cattle keepers who spoke Nilo-Saharan languages, i.e. central Sudanic, proto-Nilotic, and Cushites, who came from the northern and eastern regions respectively, lived a nomadic life in this region⁶⁶. The Nilo-Saharan groups settled from current Uganda to Lake Tanganyika. The Cushite groups south and west of Lake Victoria settled in the eastern part of present-day Rwanda and Burundi.

In addition to keeping cattle, these new groups cultivated cereals, sorghum, and millet. These plants were domesticated in the areas located between Chad and Ethiopia. In the same period, another group of Bantu-language speaking people from the West settled in this region, extending between Lake Rwicanzige and Kivu up to the western part of Lake Victoria (cf. map 5). They cultivated tubers and vegetables, especially yams and vigna-type beans⁶⁷.

In the First Millennium B.C., pottery and iron metal works were also introduced and spread widely. It is difficult to say which group was responsible for these innovations. During the First Millennium B.C., three events characterized the economic, social and political development of the region:

- The immigration of groups from different regions
- The advent of ceramic and metal works
- The spread of agriculture and cattle-keeping

New linguistic groups from the north and west migrated into the interlacustrine region. Between the seventh and third centuries B.C., techniques of treating iron minerals were spread, as evidenced by vestiges of chimneys made of bricks and hard

⁶⁶ Lugan, B., *Histoire du Rwanda. De la préhistoire à nos jours*, Paris, Bartillat, 1997. ; Chrétien J. P., 2000, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

⁶⁷ Schoenbrun, D. L., "We are what we eat: an ancient agriculture between the Great lakes", in *Journal of African History*, 34; 1993, pp. 1-31; Schoenbrun D. L., "A green place, a good place. Agrarian Change, Gender and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century", in *Social History of Africa*, Heinemann, 1998, pp. 41-43.

lumps of iron. Traces of metal works are associated with quasi-identical ceramic products in the entire Great Lakes Region. During this period, and even up to the beginning of our era, there was a coexistence of groups with different modes of life. Some groups still lived on hunting and gathering and used stone tools, while others devoted themselves to cattle-keeping and agriculture, using metal tools.

It should be noted that the practices of agriculture and cattle-keeping before the time of Jesus Christ are not supported by scientific evidence. However, in northern and eastern Rwanda, and in Sudan and Kenya, the activities of cultivating cereals and cattle-keeping are supported by ample evidence from the Third Millennium B.C.⁶⁸ Because Rwanda was located in the corridor where population movements toward the south were taking place, we can therefore conclude that Rwanda received food production techniques before other regions in southern Africa. Sheep rearing was practiced along the Cape Coast in the first century B.C.⁶⁹

During the First Millennium, groups of settlers from different regions exchanged agricultural and pastoral techniques, plants and animals. The ability to harness diverse technological innovations in iron works enabled groups to adapt to different environments. In the third century AD, iron production became increasingly important and was enhanced by trade with the eastern coast.

Towards the seventh and eighth centuries AD, a new type of ceramic appeared which was less decorated and poorly finished. But the size of the pots produced was imposing and there were many varieties of clay containers. These changes made at the level of material culture and technical innovations were probably significant in the social, economic and political fields. The long period of coexistence among different groups resulted in a fusion of cultural and intermarriage factors. Lastly, different linguistic groups were assimilated by the Bantu, which began when first contact had been established.

⁶⁸ Robertshaw, P., "The Elmenteita: an early Food-producing Culture in East Africa", in *World Archaeology*, 20 (1): 1988:59-69; Sutton J.E.G., "Prehistoire de l'Afrique orientale", in Ki-zerbo J., (dir.), *Histoire générale de l'Afrique I. Méthodologie et Préhistoire*, Paris, Stock, UNESCO, Jeune Afrique, 1980, pp. 489-527.

⁶⁹ Avery, G., "Discussion on the age and use of tidal fish traps", in *South Africa Archaeological Bull.*, 30, 1975, pp. 105 -113.

The overly simplistic dichotomy that contrasts Tutsi cattle keepers to Hutu agriculturalists falls under racist and divisive ideology. The exclusive practice of one of these activities provides the need for the complementary activity, leading to better adaptation to a diverse environment. Human activities modified the environment as time went by. It is important to note that the process of modification neither followed similar rhythms nor scopes of development across all Rwandan regions.

The chronology of settlements for the current groups we read about in history textbooks lacks scientific justification. Archeological and anthropological documents prove that some groups existed whose languages have been ignored, which we should now consider in our reconstruction of history. If such factors were to be considered, we could integrate all this data into the table of settlements.

The dating and analysis of the settlements of the people of Rwanda are therefore subject to uncertainties. Much of the origins of Rwanda still remain mythical.

III

THE KINGDOM OF RWANDA FROM THE BEGINNING TO 1900

By Gamaliel MBONIMANA

From the end of the nineteenth century, the kingdom of Rwanda progressively formed from its original nucleus on Gasabo Hill. Gasabo Hill was administered by a chief belonging to the Abanyiginya clan. Rwanda expanded over the course of centuries by embarking on a political, military, economic, social, and cultural organization, attracting the admiration of European explorers, administrators, and missionaries.

3.1. Rwanda of Gasabo and the neighboring “countries”

Originally, Rwanda expanded from the nucleus of Gasabo Hill. Other hills were later conquered and annexed from neighboring localities of Buganza, namely Bwanacyambwe, Buriza, Busigi, and Burasi.

3.1.1. Original Rwanda in Buganza

The original country of Rwanda, referred to as “the Rwanda of Gasabo” (*u Rwanda rwa Gasabo*), was a small territorial entity located in the present district of Gasabo, along the valley of Lake Muhazi, namely Nyabugogo. When the period of historical kings unfolded (“*abami b’ibitekerezo*”), Rwanda came under the reign of King Ruganzu Bwimba – the first king among a series of historical kings who ruled from the fourteenth to the twentieth centuries¹. The kingdom of Rwanda was governed by kings (*abami*)

¹ The text on the beginning and expansion of Rwanda draws from several contributions such as: Kagame, A., *Inganji Kalinga*, Kabgayi, 1943; Kagame, A., *Un abrégé de l’histoire*

who belonged to the *Abanyiginya* clan. This clan later founded the Kingdom of Rwanda. Other clans, including the *Abasinga*, *Abega*, *Abaha*, *Abakono*, *Abazigaba* and *Abatsobe* clans, were intimately associated with the *Abanyiginya* clan when the kingdom was founded. Each of these clans had specific roles to play. As a family or lineage chief of the relatively important clan of *Nyiginya*, King Ruganzu Bwimba managed to declare himself a king with the royal symbol of a drum called *Rwoga*. It was from this area that farming, cattle-keeping and hunting were practiced. Rwanda expanded under King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri toward the western part of River Nyabarongo, becoming a vast kingdom.

According to official tradition, the original King of Rwandodom peacefully coexisted with neighboring political entities, with which she formed a “confederation” of sorts. At that time, these were small-sized chieftaincies, referred to at that time as “countries” (*Ibihugu*). These chieftaincies were those of *Buganza*, *Bwanancyambwe*, *Buriza*, *Busigi* and *Busarasi*.

a. Mythical origins of the Abanyiginya

The origins of the Nyiginya dynasty were transmitted in the form of an epic narrative called “*Ibirari*” (traces)². This narrative speaks in a mythical way about Sabizeze, or Kigwa, who was born from the sky in a jar of milk. Unhappy with the mysterious birth of his son, Shyerezo provoked his son’s departure. Sabizeze descended to the earthly world and landed in Mubari, which was inhabited by the Abazigaba with their king called Kabeja. Kigwa was with his brother, Mututsi (ancestor of the Abega, Abaha and Abakono), their sister, Nyampundu, and a number of domestic animals. According to the myths of their origins, Kigwa was intimately related to *Gihanga* (the creator), the mythic founder of the kingdom. A social tradition narrates that *Gatutsi*, *Gahutu* and *Gatwa* were sons of *Kanyarwanda*, whereas another myth, which is politically motivated, notes that *Kanyandorwa*, *Kanyabuha*,

du Rwanda Butare, EUNR, 1972; Anonyme, *Historique et chronologie du Rwanda*, s.l.; J. Vansina, *L'évolution du royaume Rwanda : des origines à 1900*, Bruxelles, 1992; J. Vansina, *Le Rwanda ancien. Le royaume Nyinginya*, Paris Karthala, 2001.

² Delmas, L., *Généalogie de la noblesse (les Batutsi) du Ruanda*, Kabgayi 1950, p.6 ; Coupeze, A. and Kamanzi, Th., *Récits historiques Rwanda*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1962, pp. 18-25 ; P. Smith, *Le récit populaire au Rwanda*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1975, p. 71.

Kanyabungo, and Kanyaburundi were sons of Gihanga. Gihanga had wives from the clans of the Abasinga, Abatsobe, Abashambo, etc. He travelled across Rwanda and Burundi up to Rutshuru, in present day eastern DRC.

b. What do you think about this narrative?

Mythic language is not a language of historic narrative as some people have been led to believe. It stresses the origins of only some Rwandan clans – those that were more or less linked directly to the *Abanyiginya*, and consequently, to the royal family. The following narratives prove this point:

- Of the clans of the descendants from the heavens above (*Ibimanuka*), namely the *Abanyiginya*, *Abega*, *Abakono* and the *Abaha*, the last three constitute the clans of the *Ibibanda*, or the matri-dynastic clans. These clans are destined to provide Queen Mothers, such as the case of the sole Queen Mother of the *Abagesera* clan, Mother of Kigeri III *Ndabarasa*, who is an example of those exclusive ones who are full of luck;
- The clans of the *Abasangwabutaka* (those who were found on Planet Earth), namely the *Abazigaba*, *Abagesera* and *Abasinga*, had members who belonged to lineages originating from clans that enjoyed specific ritualistic privileges as of old. These privileges included the choice of the location of residence for other clans, especially for kings, the right to conduct mourning ceremony rituals, and the right of conducting the rituals of enthroning a new king.

Heavenly and earthly origins do not correlate to the North or South, as some ethnographers and ethnologists – especially missionaries – have imagined. Instead these origins refer to several locations, i.e. “on the right, on the left, behind, in front, the forest, marsh land, plain, and mountain,” which describe diverse spatial units of the Rwandese universe. Origins cannot be interpreted to mean a distant origin of the *Ibimanuka*, as some explorers and missionaries have transcribed it. Interpretations regarding how people originally settled in Rwanda, as expressed by these authors, is not premised on any data originating from

tradition. Further, the places mentioned in the myth show that they were adjusted, because they coincide with the expansion of Rwanda at the end of the nineteenth century. Let us now look at Rwanda's neighboring countries and their respective roles.

➤ **Bwanacyambwe**³

At its inception, Bwanacyambwe linked Rwanda to Southern Buriza in the Kabuye mountain region, Jabana, Bweramvura). This is the area that belonged to the *Abongera* clan dynasty. The king of Bwanacyambwe was called Nkuba, son of Nyabakonjo. He ruled with the symbol of a royal drum known as *Kamuhagama*⁴. With part of Bwanacyambwe under their possession, the descendants of Bwimba sought to create an important kingdom. The increase in the number of healthy animals in Rwanda prompted prosperous herdsmen to expand in search of pastures. After Ruganzu Bwimba, the *Abanyiginya* Kingdom changed its capital.

➤ **Buriza**

The name of the country "Uburiza" ("*bwa gasabo*") means the "elder brother of Gasabo". Buriza enjoyed a privileged position both politically and culturally. It is here that the royal tombs of *Butangampundu* were located. At that time, Buriza was part of the dynasty which was represented by a king called Migina who had a royal drum called *Bushizimbeho*. He was killed by King Kigeri I Mukobanya. Buriza was among the political clan entities of original Rwanda. Rwanda was principally inhabited by the *Abasinga* clan, consisting of the Barenge, Abacyaba, and Abongera. The Abongera were a dominant clan in the entire region, i.e. a territory that comprised not only the whole of Buriza, but also part of Bumbogo and Bwanacyambwe⁵. The Abongera are considered to be one of the oldest clans in Rwanda.

³ Many areas in Rwanda have names that begin with the phrase « bwana » which has a relationship with « bene », that is the 'descendants of...'

⁴ Nyiligira, Th., *Monographie historique du Bwanacyambwe des origines à 1930*, B.A. dissertation in History, Ruhengeri, NUR, 1988

⁵ We can talk of Northern Ubwongera to oppose it to Southern Ubwongera bringing together the region of Southern Uburwi of present-day Rwanda extending up to Busanza. During the time of Ruganzu II Ndori, Southern Ubwongera was governed by Nyaruzi, son of Haramanga. Its capital was located at a place called "Mu mukindo wa Makwaza" near the marshland valley of Akanyaru, south of the present district of Gisagara.

➤ **Busigi**

Busigi⁶ was the area of the *Abavubyi* (rain makers). It comprised a small part of Rukiga. Apart from the mountainous area of Buhembe where the town of Byumba is located (present district of Gicumbi), the rest of Rukiga was part of the “Rwanda-neighboring countries”. Many works on the history of Rwanda mention the existence of a dynasty of ‘rain makers’ called the *Abasigi* – those who inhabited the area called Ubusigi.

Oral tradition narrates that it was King Ruganzu II Ndori of Rwanda who bestowed the first rain-maker in Rukiga the power to invoke rain. The inhabitants of Rukiga were gratified by this honor. This contributed to the exceptional hospitality they extended to the king. Often, the *Abasigi* declare that they belong to the *Abasindi* clan. It is probable that *Nyamikenke*, the most renowned of all these clansmen, was given magical and religious powers to rule over the inhabitants of Busigi.

• **The powers of the *Abasigi* rain makers**

The *Abavubyi* (rain makers) who originated from the *Abasigi* family comprised a lineage of chiefs. The authority of the chief of the *Abasigi* included a moral obligation to defend the people under his jurisdiction and to ensure their security. This was necessary because, for example, the act of grabbing cows from a weak family was considered as an act of bravery. Raiders were respected because, hitherto, personal vendetta was an accepted practice. In this situation of permanent insecurity, isolated individual was easily stripped of their rights and deprived of their herds and land by more powerful families. To avoid falling victim to such acts, the parties involved would form blood pacts with the strongest chief(s).

The *Abanyaruko* belonged to the lineage of *Minyaruko*’s descendants, son of *Nyamikenke* (*Munyaruko ya Nyamikenke*). This constituted the most powerful lineage in Busigi. Not all *Abasindi* wielded magical and religious powers. This role was played by this particular lineage. The Busigi rain-makers did not have an administrative body charged with respecting codes and rules of government like those found in almost all other

⁶ KAGBALI J. P., *L'évolution socio-politique du Rukiga de 1985 à 1945*, B.A. dissertation in history. Ruhengeri NUR, 1988.

chieftaincies in the Great Lakes Region. This is why Busigi was not a true kingdom, even if its chief refused to take orders from *King* Nyinginya of Rwanda. In addition, Busigi citizens were not obliged to give gifts to the Abavubyi. Owing to their religious and magical powers, the Abavubyi rain-makers were feared because they could put curses on crop harvests. This fear prompted lineage chiefs to voluntarily give parts of their crop harvests to the rain-makers. In cases of calamity, citizens from other regions converged to Busigi to seek blessings from the *Abavubyi*.

- **Critical thinking**

Busigi was not a political entity of original Rwanda. Strictly speaking, it was not a kingdom like Nduga, Gisaka or Ndorwa. A lineage of rain-makers exercised religious and magical influence on these people for a long time. This practice did not disturb the Nyinginya court. However, there is no evidence to prove the existence of known rain-makers in original Rwanda.

In effect, the deep genealogical structure of Busigi leaders was considerably shorter in comparison with that of King of Rwandas. This has posed a serious problem insofar as some authors only mention two Basigi chiefs from the time of King Ruganzu II Ndori. In the following table, a comparison of genealogies of kings of two territorial entities is given, i.e. Rwanda and Busigi.

Table 3: The kings of Rwanda and Busigi

Abami (kings) Nyiginya	Abavubyi of Busigi			
According to A. Kagame	According to A. Kagame	History and chronology	A. Pagès	J. P. Kagubali
1. Ruganzu Ndori (1510-1543)	1. Nyamikenke 2. Minyaruko	1.Nyamikenke 2.Minyaruko 3.Mudahimurwa	1.Nyamikenke 2.Nzarubara 3.Minyaruko	Nyagasongo I Nyamikenke I Minyaruko Mudahimurwa Gacoco Nyamikenke II Nzarubara Nyagasongo II Mpungirehe
2. Mutara Semugeshi (1543-1576)				
3. K i g e r i Nyamuheshera (1576-1609)				
4. Mibambwe Gisanura (1609-1642)				
5. Yuhi Muzimpaka (1642-1675)				
6. Cyirima Rujugira (1675-1708)				
7. Kigeri Ndabarasa (1708-1741)				
8. Mibambwe Sentabyo (1741-1746)				
9. Yuhi Gahindiro (1746-?)				
10.Mutara Rwogera ((?- 1853)				
11.Kigeri Rwabugiri (1853-1895)				
12.Yuhi Musinga (1897-1931)				
13.Mutara Rudahigwa (1931-1959)				

Source: Data compiled by the authors indicated in the table

Different versions of Rwandan tradition relate that King Nyamikenke I was a contemporary of King Ruganzu II Ndori. In addition, King Nyagasongo II Mpungirehe lived under the reign of King Mutara III Rudahigwa. Therefore, Nyiginya kings ruled for almost twelve generations whereas the Abasigi rain-makers only ruled for five generations. This discrepancy is due to the fact that King Ruganzu II Ndori was certainly a historic king whose deeds were weaved in legends. He was one of the reference people responsible for the creation of several institutions. The

inevitable conclusion is that the traditions of the Abasigi consider their ancestors to have been contemporaries of the famous King Ruganzu II Ndori. The mere association of a person with King Ruganzu II Ndori would confer upon that person some kind of extraordinary character, associated with *Imandwa* spirits whose chief was called *Lyangombe*. In this tradition, Lyangombe is presented as a contemporary of King Ruganzu II Ndori.

➤ **Busarasi**

Busarasi was governed by Sambwe, son of Cyabugimbu. It covered many hills which crossed the former *communes* of Tare and Shyongi. Whereas the region covering the former *communes* of Musasa and Rushashi was known under the name of *Gitindagasani*, Busarasi is the former name for Bumbogo. Different sources of Rwandese tradition affirm that Bumbogo was not of the same size as the province with the same name during the Belgian colonial rule, which was conquered by Mukobanya (who became Kigeri I): “He finally attacked Sambwe, son of Cyabugimbu, whose territory, *U Busarasi*, probably extended to the boundaries of the former Province of Bumbogo minus Mountain Nyamweru (which was later added to it by the colonial administration) and less the localities of Shyorongi Kanyinya, which surely belonged to Mugina dynasty, since his descendants lived in Shyorongi, which was their capital. They later became known as the ancient dynasty that commanded the esoteric code. Sambwe perished during this conflict and his successor, Prince Karimbi, was the half brother of Prince Mukobanya”

It is not currently possible to know exactly when the name *Bumbogo*⁷ came into use. The fact remains that, before the conquest of Nyinginya, this region was dominated by the *Abega*, hailing from the *Abaswere* lineage. It seems that they did not resist the advance of the *Abanyiginya*. However, they retained their traditional role of organizing the harvest feast (*umuganura*), an important royal ceremony for the Nyinga clan. There were four principal plants (*imbuto nkuru*) used during this ceremony at the Rwandan royal court: sorghum, *isogi*, pumpkin (*inzuzi*), and millet. All these foods were produced in Bumbogo. Apparently, it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century that Bumbogo got dominated by the *Abatsobe* who, together with *Abega Baswere*, used to help kings with the organization of the national harvest ceremony.

⁷ Kagame, A. 1972, op cit pp. 65-66.

The capital of the *Abega-Baswere* was Huro and these exercised the function of king “*Abami b’I Bumbogo or abami b’ umuganura*”. Huro was a stable capital made of several huts, especially made for royal courtiers. The king collaborated closely with family chiefs, who paid dues to the king from their harvests. The dynastic drum of the Abega from Bumbogo was called *Karihejuru*. It had three dynastic names: *Nyamurasa*, *Musana*, and *Mumbogo*⁸. The king of Bumbogo used to announce the name of his successor to secret custodians of his kingdom (*Abiru*); succession was always kept secret. The new king was enthroned with his mother during nighttime festivities.

3.2. Expansion of Rwanda

According to tradition, Rwanda was an immense country whose borders were limited only by the sky. This shows the extent to which the idea of expansion was conceived in Rwandan tradition. It was under the spirit of territorial aggrandizement that several territorial gains were made. The annexed territory included: Gisaka, Nduga, Bukunzi Busozo, Bunyambiriri, Bwanamukari, Burwi, Bugoyi, Bufumbira, Mubali, Bugesera, Ndurwa, Bwishya, Busigi, Bufundu, and Buyenzi.

3.2.1. Rwanda versus Gisaka: Ruganzu Bwimba and Robwa

When the reign of *King Ruganzu I Bwimba* began, Rwanda had its capital at *Gasabo Hill*, located at the southwestern point of *Lake Muhazi*. At this time, the king was still young. He therefore governed Rwanda under the system of regency whereby his mother, *Nyiraruganzu Nyakanga*, who belonged to the *Abasinga* clan, made all decisions. In discharging her duties, the Queen Mother was helped by her cousin *Nkurukumbi*, son of *Nyebunga*. Among other important personalities in court service were the great trustees of the esoteric code (*Abiru*), such as *Nyaruhungura* (from the *Abatsobe* clan), *Cyenge* (*Abanyiginya* clan of *Abakobwa* lineage), *Gitandura* (*Abasindi* clan), and *Mukubu* (*Abaha* clan)⁹.

King Bwimba had a younger brother, and he had a sister who had attained the age of marriage. Her name was Robwa. His

⁸ The last Mwami of Bumbogo *Nyamurasa IV Kabano*. He was enthroned in 1925 and deported to Kinyaga in 1928 by the Belgian colonial administration.

⁹ Kagame, A., 1972, op. cit. , p. 57.

young wife was called Nyakiyaga. She hailed from the Abega clan. The Rwandese tradition relates the heroic death of King Ruganzu I Bwimba and his sister Robwa who were regarded as liberators of the kingdom.

At that time, two powerful kingdoms were rising next to the Kingdom of Rwanda. In the south was Bugesera Kingdom, which was ruled by Nsoro Bihembe. In the east was Gisaka Kingdom under the reign of Kimenyi I Musaya. The Monarchy of Bugesera enjoyed friendly relations with the Rwandan royal court. On the other hand, Kimenyi I Musaya wanted to annex the territory of the Abanyiginya, and, to this effect, he asked Rubwa for marriage because the diviners had predicted that this marriage would produce Rwanda's future conqueror.

When Ruganzu Bwimba and his advisors heard the plans of the king of Gisaka, they opposed this marriage. However, the Queen Mother and the her son Nkurukumbi were in favor of this marriage, hoping that it would establish a useful alliance to the country. Their idea prevailed, and Kimenyi I Musaya married Robwa. Nonetheless, before concluding the marriage pact, King Ruganzu Bwimba informed his sister about the situation and Rubwa promised that she would not let Kimenyi produce for her an evil son. Sometime later, she announced to her brother that she was pregnant and that she was going to commit suicide before giving birth to the child.

The Rwandan royal court decided to identify another person to be sacrificed with Robwa. The oracles pointed to Nkurukumbi, who was to be sacrificed in the battlefield. However, he refused to be sacrificed. Then, the oracle identified the king himself. But before the king made the decision to be sacrificed, he made a decree that from that time onwards, the Abasinga clan should never produce Queen Mothers as punishment for Nkurukumbi's refusal to spill blood for the sake of the kingdom. In the meantime, Nyakiyaga, the wife of the king, gave birth to a son who was named Rugwe. Gitandura transmitted this news to the king. Because of this, Gitandura and his descendants were accorded the privilege of naming royal children before the monarch did so.

Since Rugwe was still young, the king could not back out of his decision. He asked Cyenge to be in charge of the court until such a time when his son Rugwe would be in a position to

rule. After making these arrangements, Ruganzu declared war with Gisaka and was killed during the battle of Nkungu near Munyaga. A messenger announced the sad news to princess Robwa. Kimenyi I Musaya handed the *Rukurura* Royal Drum to Robwa, declaring her the future Queen Mother in consolation for losing her brother. But Robwa hastened towards the drum and committed suicide with the child she was carrying. Due to this act, Rwandan tradition regards her as a great hero and liberator of the kingdom like her brother Ruganzu Bwimba. Up to now, there is no information to confirm this narrative, which praises the bravery demonstrated in Nyiginya kingdom.

3.2.2. Conquest and occupation of Nduga: a new center power in Rwanda's expansion

This section will be presented under four major phases: the expansion under Cyirima Rugwe's regime, the invasion of the Abanyoro during the reign of Kigeri Mukobanya, the second invasion of the Abanyoro and their panic under Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi, and the occupation of Nduga by Rwanda.

a. Expansion under Cyirima Rugwe

The original kingdom of Rwanda was composed of Mageragere *Nyamweru* mountains, which, up to that time, formed the enclave of Bugesera, ceded "willingly by King Nsoro Bihembe, of Bugesera."¹⁰ King Cyilima Rugwe, seconded by his son Mukobanya, put an end to Rwanda's "confederation system," composed of the entities mentioned above. He replaced the kings of the entities with dismissible chiefs. However, an exception was made when it came to the area of the Busigi rain-makers. Lastly, it is said that with the assistance of Mukobanya, King Cyirima Rugwe crossed River Nyabarongo and undertook to conquer territories located to north of Nduga Kingdom, i.e. Bushegeshi (which later became Uruyenzi in the current District of Kamonyi), Bunyagitunda (known as Gishubi and later as Rukoma during the Belgian colonial rule), and Bunyatwa (which became later Burembo as well as the surrounding areas constituting the entire Ndiza during the Belgian colonial rule). At that time, Ngoga son of Mashira led a number of expeditions against Rwanda, to the east of Nyabarngo. The King of Nduga occupied Nyakabanda for some time,

¹⁰ Kagame A. 1972 op. cit. p. 257.

which is located in the current district of Nyarugenge, and he took his cows to drink in Mihima.¹¹

b. First invasion of the Abanyoro and Kigeri

According to Rwandese tradition, the first invasion of the Abanyoro took place under the rule of Kigeri Mukobanya; these invaders were descendants of Cwa, king of Bunyoro¹². The invasion of the Abanyoro was terrible, scaring, and disastrous. This event was always narrated by several sources, such as dynastic poetry and historical narratives. There were magical ceremonies intended to ward off disaster. A memorial tree called *Umuganzacyaro* (the triumph on a foreign country) was planted on the site of victory during the counter-attack mounted along the Runda mountains in the present district of Kamonyi. The invasion of the Abanyoro is an uncontested reality because the Abanyoro lineages have of recent been noticed in Indara, not far from Butare, and Buringa, in the current district of Muhanga.

c. Second invasion of the Abanyoro under Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi

To the west of Nyabarongo, Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi is said to have conquered part of the kingdom of Nduga, ruled at that time by Mashira, son of Nkuba, son of Sabugabo, hailing from the Ababanda dynasty. But Nduga quickly regained her independence. During the second invasion of the Abanyoro, Mibambwe Mutabazi was forced to escape. But, while Mibambwe Mutabazi was on the run to Kinyaga, Kimenyi Shumbusho, king of Gisaka, likely annexed Buganza and Bwanacyambwe.

d. Actual occupation of Nduga

The actual occupation was achieved when Mibambwe Mutabazi returned from exile. Using his troops and allies (especially the Abasinga), he assassinated Mashira and exterminated many of his family members. The event took place in Nyanza, in the present district of Nyanza. Several families of the Ababanda were forced to leave Nduga to seek refuge in Burundi. Those who remained organized a ferocious resistance which lasted for three

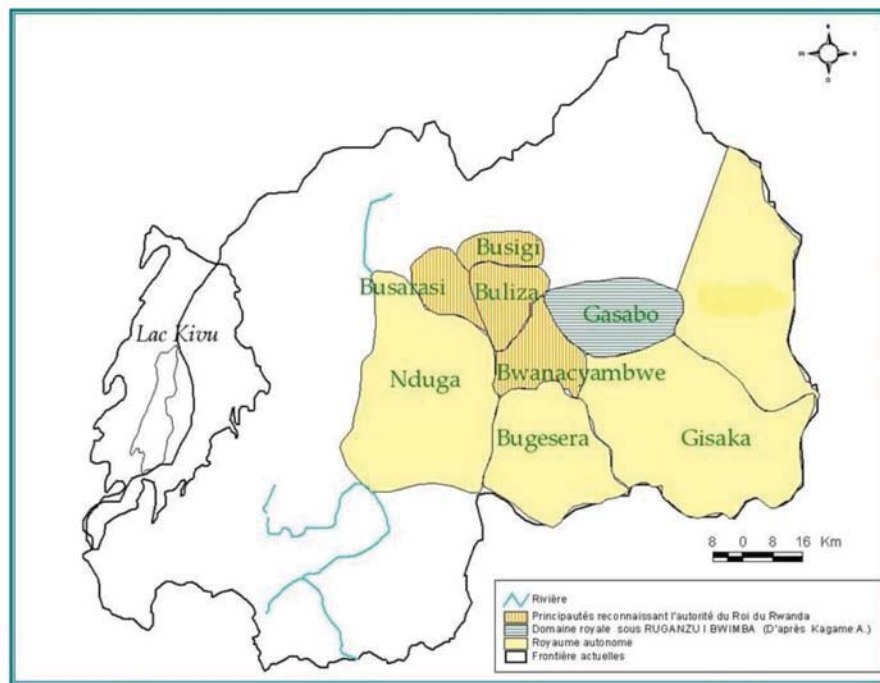
¹¹ Ibid. p.76. The official tradition dismissed this fact to which Kagame A. makes a reference as follows: "on her part, Ndunga sent without any doubt expeditions against Rwanda. Those which have been conserved went very far to the extent of reaching the eastern part of Nyabarongo which was under the command of Prince Ngiga son of Mashira" (ibid.p.76).

¹² "Abenecwa": A term designating the Abanyoro (cf. poèmes dynastiques / Collection de Jan Vansina, not edited).

centuries. Meanwhile King Yuhi Mazimpaka incorporated the resisters in what came to be known as the ‘war training’ of the Ababanda¹³ (“*Umutwe w’ Ababanda*”), under the responsibility of his son Prince Nyarwaya Karuretwa.

Hence, King Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi was nicknamed “*Nkovimbere*” owing to his facial scar that was caused by arrows shot by the Abanyoro during the battle of Musave. Ultimately, King Mibambwe annexed Nduga, where several Nyiginya kings established their residences. From that point, most war conquests and expeditions started from Nduga. The loss of Buganza and Bwanacyambwe, as well as the uncontested power of Gisaka to the east and Ndorwa to the north, forced the Abanyiginya dynasty to establish its political capital west of Nyabarongo (current Southern Province), in the current district of Kamonyi and Ruhango. See Map 6 below:

Map 6: Original map of Rwanda (Gasabo) and neighboring “countries” (14th Century)



Source : LUGAN B., Histoire du Rwanda : De la préhistoire à nos jours, Paris, Bartillat, 1997, p.84.

¹³ A person called Rubuguza member of the Ababanda militia. Under Cyirima Rujugira, he was considered as “liberator” of Rwanda from Gisaka.

3.2.3. Major political crisis: Yuhi Gahima and Ndahiro Cyamatatare

a Yuhi Gahima

King Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi was succeeded by King Yuhi Gahima. When the latter died, he was buried in Kayenzi, located in the present Northern Province. Kayenzi was a place for royal tombs of monarchs bearing the name of Yuhi. The royal drum was known as *Kibanza II*. Among his many sons was Juru, an ancestor hailing from the family title of Abenejuru and Bamara, the father of Byinshi. This was the ancestry title for the large family of the Abanyabyinshi, which was the most illustrious family among the Banyamulenge.

a. Death of Yuhi Gahima and war of succession

The official Rwandase tradition affirms that when King Yuhi Gahima died, an opposition party against his successor Ndahiro Cyamatatare was formed¹⁴. Among the principal members of this party were Juru and Bamara, both of whom were sons of Yuhi Gahima. However, their brothers Binama, Gacu, and Karangana remained faithful to Ndahiro Cyamatatare, who was considered by the opposition as the one who had usurped power. Cyamatatare took up arms in a battle which saw Juru killed.¹⁵ Bamara made claims to succeed his brother Juru. He ruled East of Nyabarongo¹⁶. When he died, he was succeeded by his son Byinshi.

b. Death of Ndahiro Cyamatatare

During the internecine wars and struggles, Nsibura Nyebunga, the Petty King of Idjwi Island, collaborated with Nzira, son of Muramira and king of Bugara, to attack Ndahiro Cyamatatare at Gitarama in the former region of Cyingogo (in the present Western Province). Ndahiro was hurt in the valley. Henceforth, the valley came to be known as Irasaniro (*place of combat*). He crossed Kibilira stream and mixed his blood with

¹⁴ Kagame, A. , 1972, op. cit., p.87.

¹⁵ Juru is the ancestor of the title name of Abenejuru . They were not many in number but were well known.

¹⁶ Kagame, A.1972, op. cit., p.88.

the waters of that stream. In commemoration of this event, no Rwandan monarch could cross Kibilira; they were supposed to go upstream to bypass its source. This tradition was especially observed by Kigeri Rwabugiri, Mibambwe Rutarindwa, and even by Yuhi Musinga in 1929 during the visit of Prince Léopold of Belgium to Rwanda. The Rugarama mountainous region where Cyamatare was massacred by the warriors of Bugara was henceforth called “*Rubi rw’i Nyundo*” (Nyundo sad news). This tragic event was associated with the following events:

- The killing of Queen Mother Nyirandahiro Nyirangabo and the death of the Cyamatare women. These events took place at the same location. The place was since named *Mu Miko y’abakobwa* (Erythrins of noble ladies);
- The commemoration of this calamity, which occurred at the beginning of a new moon in June,¹⁷ was marked by organizing a national mourning event (*Icyunamo*) of two weeks in the lunar months of April and May (Gicurasi) before the celebration of the feast of new rains (Umuganura);
- The loss of the *Rwoga* drum, a symbol of royal power and prestige. The drum was stolen by Nsibura;¹⁸
- The recovery of the *Cyimumugizi* Royal Drum by Gitandura. It was found in a cave located at “*mu Rutaka*,” in the current district of Muhanga. Gitandura is the ancestral title of Abasindi Abatandura, which was given to Bihubi. According to this tradition, Abasindi Abatandura imposed his names on the children of Yuhi Musinga;
- The unprecedented calamities which took place after the disaster of *Rubi rw’i Nyundo*: famine, epidemics, animal diseases, hatred, and frequent murders. Due to these tragic events, there was need for a savior – a king who would usher in a new era. King Ruganzu Ndori fulfilled this duty.

¹⁷ Kagame, A. op. cit. p. 91.

¹⁸ Ibid.

3.2.4. Restoration and consolidation of the monarchy

a. Ruganzu Ndori

Undeniably, King Ruganzu Ndori was the most famous king in the lineage of the Abanyiginya. His popularity gave him a status that was legendary in character. At the same time, he was a true creator and organizer of institutions, qualities which, among other things, deeply characterized the history of Rwanda under his regime. The literary narratives dedicated to his rule recount his numerous marvels and achievements¹⁹.

➤ Who was Ndori?

According to tradition, Ndori was the son of King Ndahiro Cyamatatare. Cyamatatare was preoccupied with ensuring the security of his son Ndori, his future successor. He therefore took Ndori to his paternal aunt Nyabunyana, the wife of Karemera Ndagara king of Karagwe. After the king's death, Nsibura Nyebunga sent a messenger by the name of Kavuna. The announcer crossed the country and invited major personalities, who were supporting Ndori, to organize for his return. The slogan used for the return of the prince was, "*Sindushye ndashonje, mumfungurire njye kubandura Ndori ya Ndahiro*" (I am not tired but I am hungry, give me something to eat and drink so that I can remove Ndori son of Ndahiro from his hiding place). The messenger set out for Karagwe, where he alerted Ndori about the disastrous situation prevailing in Rwanda.. This is how Ndori returned to Rwanda, escorted under utmost secrecy.

Karemera Ndagara, the King of Karagwe, requested Ndori as a souvenir in exchange for his protection. Karemera's dynastic name was henceforth adopted in Rwanda in the lineage of Banyiginya. This name was given to Rwaka, the son and successor of Yuhi Mazimpaka. Owing to this protection, Rwandan monarchs avoided war against Karagwe as much as possible²⁰. However, the promise that Rwanda would never attack Karagwe was short-lived; there was war between Karagwe and Rwanda during the reign of Gahindiro²¹.

¹⁹ Kagame, A. 1972, op. cit. p. 93.

²⁰ Kagame, A. 1972 op. cit., p.94-99

²¹ Katoke, J. K., *The Karagwe Kingdom: a history of Abanyambo of North western Tanzania. C.1400- 1915*, Nairobi, 1975

➤ **Ruganzu Ndori's achievements**

Ndori is remembered in Rwandan tradition for having restored the monarchy. He is said to have come from the northeastern part of Rwanda. He spent some time at Gatsibo and Busigi where he is said to have inaugurated the *Karinga* dynastic drum frequently nicknamed "*Mukiga*". In the dynastic poetry (*ibisigo*), it is said that this drum came from Rukiga. Ndori embarked on a broad set of activities:

- After the acquisition of the *Karinga* dynastic drum, King Ruganzu Ndori defeated Byinshi son of Bamara;²²
- He conquered Nduga, including Rukoma, Muyaga, Kabagari, and Marangara. King Ruganzu Ndori made several conquests in Nyundo, Bunyogombe at the periphery of Ruhango town;
- He organized the army by creating a shock battalion made of *Ibisumuza* Militia under the command of Muvunyi, son of Karema;
- He introduced a new drum emblem called *Nangamadumbu* (I have rebellions). It was sounded in Rwoga but was later stolen by Nsiburanye Nyebunga. Ndori is remembered for having introduced two royal drums, namely Karihejuru and Bariba.

In addition to the above achievements, Ruganzu Ndori also:

- Attacked Bunyabungo (Bushi) as an act of revenge against Nsibura. He occupied the eastern bank of Lake Kivu up to Rusizi and conquered Ijwi Island. Tradition has it that under King Ruganzu Ndori, Bunyabungo was attacked and ravaged on several occasions;
- Attacked Bugara under Nzira, son of Muramira, who had succeeded Nsibura after the death of Ndahiro Cyamatare;
- Undertook military expeditions of conquest at the expense of the neighboring native provinces. Thus, he annexed Bunyambiriri, whose petty-king Gisurere-

²² Vansina, J., 2001, op. cit., p. 67.

Suti (*Suti ya Banega*) living in Kaduha, was killed. He subdued Bwanamukari by killing his notables who included: Nyakarashi (residing in Zivu in the current district of Gisagara), Mpandahande who lived in Ruhande (present district of Huye), Nyaruzi, son of Haramanga, and petty-king Burwi. Nyaruzi was the last chief representing the Abarenge clan; his territory was annexed by Rwanda;

- Conquered the regions of Bugoyi, Byahi, Bwishya and then Bufumbira – the territory near volcanoes and beyond.

Ruganzu enjoyed friendly relations with Rwagitare, king of Bugesera. This kingdom extended west, up to the neighborhood of Ngozi. Tradition also narrates that the southern border was partly demarcated by Rubyironza. In the south-eastern part, it was demarcated by Ruvubu. It should be noted that the kingdom of Burundi progressively changed the posts of this border, extending it towards the north. Rwagitare, once at war with Ntare Kibogora of Burundi, called on Ruganzu for support and help. The *Ibisumizi* dashed to Burundi to make war. Ntare II's warriors were beaten and defeated by this coalition. Later, two institutions were put in place to act as pillars of his authority in King Ruganzu's kingdom: the *Itorero* and *Ubuhake*²³.

b. Rwanda under King Mutara I Semugeshi (1648)

According to the esoteric code, Mutara I was a single child of King Ruganzu II Ndori. As prince, his name was Bicuba. It is not well known how this king acceded to the throne, but he is remembered for annexing the state of *Abenengwe* to Rwanda. At that time, the annexed territory comprised Bungwe, Bufundu, and some parts of Busanza.

c. Rwanda under King Kigeri II Nyamuheshera (1672)

King Kigeri II Nyamuheshera was known to be a great warrior who fought alongside a professional army called “*Inkingi*” or “the pillars”. He used this army to annex Bukunzi, Busozo and Kinyanga. When Ndorwa was defeated, Bwanacyambwe was ceded back to Rwanda.

²³ Vansina, J., 2001 op. cit., p. 66.

d. Rwanda under King Mibambwe II Sekarongoro II Gisanura (1696)

King Mibambwe Gisanura never annexed any territory. However, he is famous for his generosity; he was nicknamed “*Rugabishabirenge*” (one who makes donation even with his feet). He donated to the poor, the under-privileged, and the deprived. He was an upright man (cf. a history of the Kamegeri rock or *Urutare rwa Kamegeri* and the saying that “justice done at Mutakara,” his residence, which meant “perfect judgment”).

3.2.5. The great expansion: from King Cyirima Rujugira to King Kigeri Rwabugiri

a. King Cyirima Rujugira

King Cyirima Rujugira dominated the eighteenth century. This was a result of his ritual and military reforms, his wars of conquest, and his longevity. However, he proved to be “a rather dull administrator.”²⁴ According to official tradition, Rujugira was son of Yuhi Mazimpaka. He is reported to have escaped towards Gisaka to evade death; his father wanted to kill him following bouts of insanity, and he killed many people. On his return, he succeeded his half brother, Karemera Rwaka, with the ancestry title of *Abaka* lineage. Rujugira imposed his legitimacy thanks to the ideologues who supported him. He defeated *Abaka* and discredited them, although they continued to assert their influence – most notably during Rwanda’s wars of conquest.

King Cyirima Rujugira was a famous military king. His reign, like that of his son Ndabarasa, was characterized by long military campaigns. The first part of King Rujugira’s rule saw a prolonged war between Burundi and Rwanda. It was during this war that Rujugira’s son, Gihana, died. In Rwanda, Rujugira came to be known as “*Umutabazi*,” meaning ‘liberator’. During the fourth campaign against Burundi, King Mutaga of Burundi died at Nkanda in Buyenzi²⁵.

Rujugira’s army, which conducted the fourth campaign against Burundi, was composed of a group of renegade soldiers from Gisaka. King Cyirima Rujugira acceded to the Nyiginya throne

²⁴ Ibid p.129.

²⁵ Vansina, J., 2001 op. cit. p.150- 151.

with fatal poisoned arrows known as “*Ubusherwe*”. He created marching camps (*ingerero*) as an innovation in strategic military planning. This helped to protect and expand the kingdom of Rwanda. It was at this time that King Rujugira decided to equip the border territory with military administration and training. He divided the region into several units and put military regiments in charge of these regions. He introduced defensive military camps to prevent new invasions²⁶.

The camps mentioned below operated a defensive strategy while fighting against Burundi. They were strategically created along River Akanyaru, which separates Rwanda from Burundi. They were:

1. *Mututu military camp* (Muyira): formed by Abarima of Prince Gihana, son of Rujugira. They were stationed opposite the border of present Bugesera²⁷.
2. *Gakoma military camp* (Muyaga): formed by Ababanda under the command of Prince Nyarwaya Karuretwa, son of Yuhi Mazimpaka (who was called *Gakoma k’Akabanda*)
3. *Buhanga-Ndara military camp*: It was located at Kararambogo and formed by Indara, of Chief Rwasamanzi, son of Mukungu (son of Yuhi Mpazimpaka)
4. *Imvejuru military camp*: located at Nyaruhengeri/ Save: Imvejuru of Chief Byavu
5. *Nyakare military camp* (kigembe): formed by Inyakare of Chief Nkoko, who belonged to Abashingo family
6. *Bashumba military camp* (Nyakizu): formed by Abashumba of Prince Kimanuka (ancestry title for the Abamanuka), son of Kigeri Ndabarasa
7. *Nyaruguru military camp*:
 - *Inyaruguru military camp* of Prince Rwahame of Gako;
 - *Indirira military camp* (those who went to war under the command of Prince Mukwiye, son of Yuhi Mazimpaka of Runyinya near Kinyovu);
 - *Abadahemuka military camp* of Chief Rubona, son of Rusimbi, who lived near Giseke. Rubona died as a liberator in Bunyenzi.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Kagame, A. 1972 op. Cit. p.137-139.

Apart from these military camps against Burundi, there were others that deserve mention, such as:

- *The Munyaga military camp*: this was intended to fight against Gisaka

When the war with Burundi was over, King Cyirima Rujugira decided to attack Gisaka. To achieve this objective, he organized several armies under the supervision of his sons. His first son was Sharangabo, who had an ancestry title of *Abasharangabo*. The second son was Ndabarasa, who fought against Gisaka and the enclave of Gasura. During the decisive battle of Gasabo, Sharangabo's army advanced to the east and south of Lake Muhazi. He commanded the *Abakemba*, nicknamed "man destroyers" – those who could mercilessly tear bodies of their opponents. He attacked Gisaka south of Lake Muhazi and emerged victorious at Bwanacyambwe. He fought against and repulsed the *Imbogo* army (the buffalos), commanded by Mudirigi, son of Karemera. Sharangabo died and was succeeded by his son, under whose command the occupation of Buganza was accomplished. It was at Munyaga²⁸ that he established a military camp. During the reign of King Cyirima Rujugira, Buganza was entirely conquered. Even its eastern part of Buganza, which had never before belonged to Rwanda, was annexed.

- **Gatuka and Rutare military camps**

King Cyirima Rujugira established a second military camp at Gatuka in Northern Buganza, adjacent to Mubari. A third camp was established on Mountain Rutare. However, this last camp was abandoned after the death of Ndabarasa²⁹. In short, King Rujugira initiated big offensives against Gisaka and Ndorwa with the aim of making further territorial gains for Rwanda. By the time Cyirima Rujugira died, Ndorwa had ceased to exist as an independent state and Gisaka had been reduced to its former provinces of Gihunya, Mirenge and Migongo.³⁰ In addition, the whole of Buganza was conquered by Rwanda.

b. King Kigeri Ndabarasa: The Conquest of Ndorwa and Mubari

When King Cyirima Rujugira died at the age of almost 65 years, his succession was not so contested. This was a rare thing, and

²⁸ Vansina, J., 2001 op. cit. pp.150- 151.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 154.

³⁰ Kagame, A., *L'histoire du Rwanda en raccourci*, Leverville, 1958, pp. 5-6.

his sons celebrated by referring to themselves as ‘*Abatangana*’ (those who never hate one another). The process of power transition was peaceful due to the following reasons:

- Ndabarasa was enthroned as a co-ruler before the death of Rujugira;
- Rujugira had a very powerful army at his disposal;
- Rujugira’s two sons and his army commanders – Gihana and Sharangabo – had already died before him, which gave him uncontested power;
- Ndabarasa was militarily sharp and politically active from the beginning of his father’s reign.

After the battle of Gasabo against Gisaka, Ndabarasa captured the mountainous region of Rutare where the tombs of Kigeri Mukobanya were located. In this endeavor, he was supported by Chief Kamari. Ndabarasa killed Rubanda, who had succeeded his father Gahaya Muzora, king of Ndorwa. He established his capital in the *Ruhinda* region. From there, he raided the kingdom of Nkore. After conquering Ndorwa, Ndabarasa was throned king³¹. King Ndabarasa ruled both Rwanda and Ndorwa, though he ruled Ndorwa for a much longer time.

King Kiger Ndabarasa attacked Mubari (amazinga), whose King Biyoro and his mother were killed. King Biyoro’s mother had predicted the arrival of Europeans to Rwanda. Thus, Rwanda extended up to Akagera, a natural boundary that existed between Rwanda and Karagwe. Later, when Mubari progressively became drier and drier due to drought, it was abandoned. This explains why Rwanda lost interest in conquering the region. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Mubari was practically an autonomous region. However, after the First World War this region was re-annexed to Rwanda

c. King Mibambwe Sentabyo: Annexation of Bugesera

Under the rule of King Mibambwe Sentabyo, whose reign ended in 1741,³² Rwanda annexed the northern part of Bugesera. King Ntare Rugamba of Burundi took the remaining part of

³¹ See the dynastic poem Igisigo “batewe n’iki uburakare?” (What has made them annoyed?)

³² Kagame, A., *L’histoire du Rwanda en raccourci*, Leverville, 1958, p.6.

this kingdom under circumstances that are still unclear. King Mibambwe Sentabyo died of smallpox at an early age, though some claim that he was poisoned. He left a baby that he had with Nyiratunga, the widow of a hero called Gihana. The baby was named Gahindiro and received a dynastic title of *Yuhi*.

d. King Yuhi Gahindiro

When King Mibambwe Sentabyo died, there was a war of succession which ended victoriously for Gahindiro and his mother, Nyirantunga. Several incidents characterized King Yuhi Gahindiro's long rule, including sound administrative organization, the training of new army militia (*imitwe y'ingabo*), and cultural development. He fought against Burundi, which was under Ntare Rugamba. He fought Gisaka, Murari, Buhunde, and even Karagwe. "When he attained the age of maturity, he declared war to Petty-King Karinda of Burundi who was defeated and killed. His mother Nyirakarinda was taken prisoner to Rwanda where she was executed"³³. From the cultural point of view, during Gahindiro's reign, a new Rwandan literary gender was born: *Amazina y' Inka* (names of cows).

c. King Mutara Rwogera: annexation of Gisaka

During the first decade of the nineteenth century, King Mutara Rwogera managed to annex Gisaka to Rwanda. However, his kingdom was later torn apart by internal wars: " (...) just before the death of Rwoyera, three Gisaka's armies were assimilated into the kingdom. One of these armies was under the exclusive command of Nkoroko. The remaining two were commanded by Nyamwasa, son of Rwabika, who was also son of Gahindiro. It should be noted that the former commanders belonged to Gisaka army but they retained their positions as second-in-command. They continued to take instructions from their former commanders."³⁴ Rwoyera died of tuberculosis, probably in 1867. The Queen Mother, Nyiramavugo Nyiramogi, was assassinated by her brother, Rwakagara, because she had refused to commit suicide as culture and custom demanded.³⁵

³³ Kagame, A., 1972 op. cit., p. 89.

³⁴ Vansina, J. 2001, op. cit. p.192

³⁵ Kagame, A. 1972 op. cit. pp.208-210

d. Rwanda under King Kigeri Rwabugiri

King Kigeri Rwabugiri is known in the history of Rwanda for his many adventurous and victorious wars of conquest that were intended to expand the kingdom of Rwanda. He had several titles that marked his glory (*Ibisingizo*), including: *Inkotanyi*, *Rwangakugwabira*, and *Rukayababisha*. His military and political career was so great that it attracted the admiration of the Belgian colonizers. By virtue of his renowned bravery – almost equal to that of Ruganzu Ndori – King Rwabugiri became known near and far. He defeated the Banyabungo and the Bahima. He conquered Ijwi Island and killed Kabego, the king of that island. He made war against Nsoro. He fought and killed the king of Bushi and Lutubuka, the leader of Kwushunga (*ku Ishunga*). King Kigeri Rwabugiri was not always content with his military expeditions and conquests. There is no region in Rwanda where he did not construct a personal royal *boma* (residence). Everywhere he went, he generously offered gifts of cattle he raided from his enemies. He gave cows to his subjects from whom he expected to get sympathy, support, and allegiance. Before King Rwabugiri died, he appointed Rutalindwa Mibambwe as his successor”³⁶.

Rutalindwa Mibambwe did not make any territorial gains, especially due the colonial presence in Rwanda. Under King Rwabugiri, Rwanda acquired a larger territory than its present boundaries; “He even penetrated Bufumbira (north of the volcanoes) and later attacked Nkore. Lastly, under his regime, King Rwabugiri enabled the Rwandan monarchy to entrench itself definitively to the West, along the banks of Lake Kivu and Rusizi (from Bugoyi in the North up to Kinyaga in the South). The Bahavu of Ijwi Island and the Bashi were more or less dominated. To the East, Rwabugiri also intervened among the Bushubi. Thus, Rwanda reached the apogee of her territorial aggrandizement during the reign of King Rwabugiri. This made Rwanda’s neighbors in the region look at her with suspicion.”³⁷

³⁶ Report of the Belgian Government, 1926, p.57.

³⁷ Chrétien, J.P., *L’Afrique des Grands Lacs. Deux mille ans d’histoire*, Paris, Aubier, p.136.

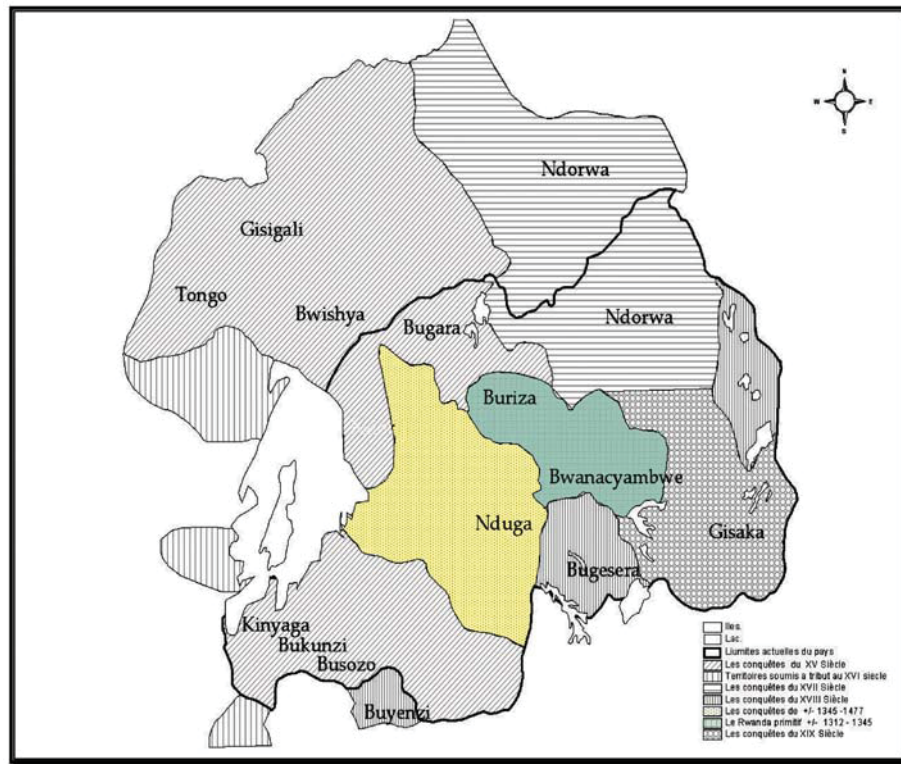
Soon after the death of King Rwabugiri, the inhabitants of Ijwi Island regained their freedom and declared their independence from Rwanda. When he died in 1895, the territory he wanted to conquer and annex to Rwanda (i.e. Ijwi Island and beyond) had already been taken by the Congo Free State, in French *Etat Indépendant du Congo* (EIC). This state was the personal property of Belgian King Leopold II.

In conclusion, the several characteristics of King Kigeri Rwabugiri's reign can be summed up as follows:

- Organization and administrative skills;
- Unkind repression of opponents such as Nyamwesa, elder son of Rwogera, who pretended to be the rightful heir of Rugereka and Abagereka;
- Consolidation of newly annexed territories: military occupation of Rugenge in Bugesera and Sakara in Gisaka;
- Numerous expeditions motivated by several objectives such as conquest and cattle rustling;
- Contact with the outside world: Rwabugiri and Rumaliza Bugarama's meeting.

For a summary of other territorial gains, see Map No. 7 below:

Map 7: Rwanda after six centuries of expansion



Source: Lugan, B., 1997, op. cit., p108.

3.3. Organization of the kingdom

The political and administrative structure of pre-colonial Rwanda, or of the nineteenth century under the rule of King Kigeri Rwabugiri, rotated principally along a militaristic ideology coupled with administrative skills and professionalism. Rwanda's political system and ideology were built on four pillars: a theocratic monarchy, a two-headed monarchy with a King and Queen Mother, territorial aggrandizement and conquest, and patriotism. All of these pillars were inculcated constantly to the people, especially through literary institutions.

Since all of these factors were intertwined, several institutions reinforced one another. That is, political organization and authority reinforced the king and his representatives. Several of these institutions can be cited, including: *Ubwiru* (court secrets), *Ubuhake* (gifts of cows), *Ubusizi* (dynastic poetry

legitimizing the ruling king), *Ubucurabwenge* (knowledge of the dynastic genealogy), and *Ibitekerezo by'Imiryango* (family historic narratives). The structure of King Rwabugiri's political organization was complex, but the entire system of government rotated around the king and his court.

3.3.1. Political Organization

a. The King, Queen Mother, and the Court

At the top of the kingdom was a centralized system of government organized on a hierarchical basis. This was a complex system characterized by the king, on the one hand, and the queen mother and the king's court on the other. The *Ubuhake* system and the army were the principal instruments used to achieve the monarchy's objectives, but the court was the workshop where the *Nyiginya* State was shaped. It is therefore necessary to see systematically the development of this court, the kingdom itself, and the elite associated with this kingdom.

The king and dynastic drums were the very essence of unity in the kingdom. They lived in the epicenter of the capital. The king was a personality *par excellence*. Following his nomination, he identified himself as a separate entity from the nobility, giving him a special rank. The essence of the monarchy was that "the king was God."³⁸ The term *Imana* (God) refers to the Creator, but also to the essence of life and the fertility of land and humans. This fertility essence further manifested itself in all sorts of objects used to make predictions for favorable results. These objects were then conserved as material proof of *Imana nziza* (positive fate).

The Rwandese of long ago conceived the notion of *Imana* as a special being – a creator and a perfect benevolent being. Hence, the king participated in the realization of the divine right to rule while at the same time remaining a man among men. God did not physically distance himself from humans. The importance of his status "as a separate entity" increased as time went on, particularly under the reign of King Cyirima Rujugira. It should be noted that the Rwandan monarchy was biocephalous: ruled

³⁸ Kagame, A., *Poésie dynastique du Rwanda* (poem No 17: *Umwami si umuntu*/ the king is not human)

by the King and Queen Mother.³⁹ From the beginning, the royal court⁴⁰ was not only the residence of the king and queen mother, servants, bodyguards (*Intore*), specialized artisans, ritualists, and diviners, but it was also a place where great notables lived. They used to spend time there with their herds of cattle. Their presence attracted hungry beggars who used to come looking for something to eat.

As a result of acquiring many healthy herds of cattle and other sorts of riches, the royal court got wealthier. Hence, it attracted more courtesans and called for more domestic and political personnel to perform various tasks. At the beginning of Gisanura's rule, every chief ruled his territory and lived there. But later, King Yuhi Mazimpaka demanded that great chiefs be allowed to spend a significant amount of their time at the capital. It was also during this reign that the chiefs produced many sons, among whom some were allowed by the king to establish themselves at the royal court and to start a family lineage.

The court was the center of gravity for the kingdom. It was constituted by dynastic poets and knowledgeable musicians, who were masters of musical instruments such as *insengo*. These were whistle-like instruments made of clay. In addition, there were tambourines, ritual drums, and rituals for *Ryangombe* cults.⁴¹ The royal court was an economic center where the management of big business and wealth took place. Many goods were presented to the king in the form of payment of royal dues. These included cows, harvested food grains, and other items paid as tribute. Many of these goods were partly redistributed to the poor in the name of the king.

b. Ubwiru (secret of the monarchy or the esoteric code)

As a political and religious institution, the *Ubwiru* institution played a dual role in Rwanda's political life. In order to ensure prosperity and to avoid bad omen, the *college of Abiru* was charged with appointing Rwanda's future kings and queen mothers. The college also had another duty of transmitting the kingdom's

³⁹ Vansina J., 2001 op. cit. , pp. 110-111

⁴⁰ Lugan, B., « Nyanza, une capitale royale du Rwanda ancien », in *Africa-Tervuren*, XXVI, 1980, 4, p.101.

⁴¹ Schumacher, P. cité par Vansina, J., 2001, op. cit., p. 107

official history. The recruitment of *Abiru* was governed by special rules. The way this institution functioned had a positive and profound impact on the management of the state; the *Abiru* institution contributed to the conservation and development of the “*Ubwami*” institution.

➤ **The notion of Ubwiru**

Ubwiru was perhaps the most important institution among all the other subsidiary institutions of the kingdom. It was an esoteric institution which was essentially political in nature; its major role was to preserve, adapt, present and glorify the monarchy as a “sacred” institution. It should be noted that the dynasty was supposed to belong to the clan of *Abanyiginya*. This principal was even poetically chanted in the *Ubucurabwenge* dynastic genealogy.

As far as the term *Umwiru* was concerned (plural *Abiru*), it referred to legal ritualists who were the custodians of the *esoteric code* of the Nyiginya Monarchy. In other words, the *Abiru* manufactured big drums and played them.

➤ **Content of Ubwiru**

The content of Ubwiru is presented as follows:

- (a) *Irage ry’ abami* (the last permanent will of kings);
- (b) *Umurage w’ingoma* (formal proof of succession to the throne);
- (c) *Inzira z’ubwiru* (methods or procedures of the code);
- (d) *Intekerzo z’ubwiru* (history and commentaries of the three previous titles)⁴².

The content under subheadings a, b and c remain unknown up to the present day. However, only seventeen procedures are available; they were published by Marcel D’Hertefelt and André Coupez,⁴³ whereas A. Kagame identified eighteen. These

⁴² Kagame, A., « Le code ésotérique de la dynastie du Rwanda », in *Zaire*, 4, I, 1947, p.363

⁴³ D’Hertefelt M. et Coupez A., *La royauté sacrée de l’ancien Rwanda. Texte, traduction et commentaire de son rituel*, Tervuren, 1964. In 1968 A. Kagame accepted to sign with M. d’Hertefelt and A. Coupez a note which confirmed the authenticity of this document. As pointed out above, it was a copy taken from the archives of

procedures or “methods” were useful in accomplishing different royal tasks. They had the following characteristics:

- Throne (enthronization, competition, fire);
- Cow (bull of the throne, plague, drinking trough for cows);
- Agriculture (drought, floods, first rains);
- Foreigners (offensives, trophy, decoration of royal drums, hiding the king, invasion);
- Independent procedures (bees, hunting, funeral).

It can be seen that political and economic duties were very important activities in the kingdom. As for social-cultural and religious functions, they covered the entire trajectory of the royal ritual. It should also be observed that there was much interest in economic activities such as animal husbandry, agriculture, hunting, and honey collection. The *Ubwiru* institution contained both the fundamental law of the monarchy, i.e. the rules and regulations, and specific rites that were intended to counteract real or imaginary misfortunes. These included giving fertility to soils, people, and animals, and territorial annexation and conquests of foreign countries by Rwanda.

➤ **Actors**

The principal actors of the monarchy included, first of all, the King, and then the *Abiru*. Their roles varied according to clans, families, and lineages. All were invited to participate actively in different matters concerning:

- *Inzira ya Gicurasi* (procedures for mourning or, more specifically, the procedures of national mourning)
- *Inzira y’umuriro* (fire procedures)
- *Inzira y’ umuganura* (procedures of handling the feast of the first rains)

Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa during a period which is not specified but which is likely to be between 1959 and 1962. A. Kagame himself and probably some few *Abiru* who were still living at that time contributed to giving clues leading to the interpretation of this code which otherwise would have remained incomprehensible for the most part. Alexis Kagame who died in a brutal way abroad (Nairobi), was perhaps not given chance to reveal where he would have hidden some documents pertaining to the *Ubwiru* institution.

In principal, the *Abiru* was hereditary and only for men. Only the sons of *Abiru* who had been presented by their father to the king and nominated by the latter had the right of performing this function. It was therefore not enough to be son *Umwiru* to succeed one's father automatically. There was however one exception to this rule. In the history of the *Abiru* institution, there was a person named *Nyiramuhanda*, a war captive, who was accorded the rare opportunity of being considered as a member of the *College of Abiru*. This was done based on the role he had played during war. In recognition of his contribution, King Yuhi Gahindiro appointed him a member of this college and allowed him the right to pass this favor to his descendants. Among these descendants was *Kayijuka*, the famous traditionalist. *Kayijuka* hailed from the *Abanyiginya* clan in the lineage of *Abasigaye*.

➤ **Evolution**

The institution of *Ubwiru*, as espoused in the beginning of the nineteenth century, was a culmination of a process of assessment. It was modified as time went on in order to adapt it to the new circumstances of the day and to fulfill the political duties of the time. The modifications made in this institution varied from the reign of King Ruganzu Bwimba to that of King Yuhi Musinga. Before pointing out the different events which characterized this modification, it is important to note that the institution of *Ubwiru* is linked to Gihanga, one of the reference people in the myths/ history of Rwanda. What is more is that the three most important families of *Abiru* (*Abatsobe*, *Abatege*, who were considered as members of *Abasindi* clan by some, and the *Abaheka*, who belonged to the clan of *Abazigaba*) all trace their origins to Gihanga. According to the myth, Gihanga is said to have handed over the *Rwoga* Royal Drum to the first Rwandan monarch. Similarly, the invention of fire (*umuriro wa Gihanga*) is associated with Gihanga. Gihanga also created cows and the kingdom (*Gihanga cyahanze inka n'ingoma*).

Following the *Robwa* event and of *Kimenyi Musaya*, who was King of Gisaka, it was decreed that the *Abasinga* clan was no longer allowed to file a Queen Mother to the dynasty of the *Abanyiginya*. This was a decision aimed at the social-political exclusion of the *Abasinga*. The decision to exclude them was made by King Ruganzu Bwimba against the girls of the *Abasinga* clan. This was because of the danger posed by *Nyakiyaga*,

who had become Queen Mother under the dynastic name of *Nyiraruganzu (Nyakanga)* and who actually originated from the Abasinga clan, and who had offered her daughter *Robwa* for marriage to King Gisaka⁴⁴.

Thus, Cyirima Rugwe made a decree that all Queen Mothers were prohibited from getting married again. Indeed, since his mother, Nyakiyaga, got married to his brother-in-law, Mwendu, the latter tried to take over the throne and to poison Rugwe when he was still young. In addition, Cyenge⁴⁵ was compensated for his faithfulness as a regent during Rugwe's childhood. This was a special privilege accorded to the Chairman of the Abiru and Custodian of *Abega Drum* – the symbol of the dynasty. *Rwoga* was later replaced by *Karinga* under Ruganzu Ndori. This dignity was supposed to be enjoyed by his descendants. The royal court respected this decision made by Cyirima Rugwe.

Lastly, the tradition of Abiru affirms that Cyirima Rugwe established the dignity of Umwiru, King of *Nyamweru* from the Abakono clan, as a *Mwiru* King. This king was charged with the duty of conserving the will of succession – the arrangement according to which matri-dynastic clans (*Ibibanda*) were supposed to provide Queen Mothers. The *Ibibanda* clans were the *Abaha*, *Abakono* and *Abega*. Later on under Cyirima Ruganzu, the *Abagesera* were also included.

Under King Kigeri Mukobanya's rule, the *Abatsobe* were assimilated into the royal Ubwiru of Abanyiginya. Under Ndahiro Cyamatara, Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi, and Yuhi Gahima, there was no change regarding this arrangement. On the other hand, Ruganzu Ndori established on the throne a new drum symbol called *Karinga* (proof of hope), intended to replace *Rwoga Drum*. The *Rwoga Drum* had been taken by Nsibura, King of Bushi, during the defeat and death of Ndahiro Cyamatara at Rubi Rwinyundo. It is said that King Ruganzu Ndori made four other drums. They were made of the similar wooden material like that of *Karinga Drum*. King Ruganzu considered them his brothers and they were to succeed him, one after the other. King Mutara Semugeshi was enthroned first under the dynastic

⁴⁴ Kagame, A. 1972. op. cit. p.59

⁴⁵ Cyenge was a member of Abanyiginya clan. He hailed from the Abakobwa lineage, i.e. a descendant of Mukobwa, son of Ndoba (9th member of the dynasty according to official genealogy).

title of *Bicuba*, but he later received the title of *Mutara*. According to official tradition, he made the following important decisions regarding the institution of *Ubwiru*:

- The king would reveal the name of his successor and his last will to three confidants. The first confidant was ‘*Umutsoke*’, the second ‘*Umutege*’ and the last one an army chief⁴⁶.
- The dynastic names were supposed to follow a fixed program according to the following arrangement:

1st Term: *Mutara*, *Kigeri*, *Mibambwe*, and *Yuhi*

2nd Term: *Cyirima*, *Kigeri*, *Mibambwe*, *Yuhi*.

- It was the *Abiru* of *Mutara* who were supposed to indicate the matri-dynastic clans which provided Queen Mothers for successive kings during specified terms.
- The dynastic names of *Nsoro*, *Ndahiro*, and *Ruganzu* were removed from the list for the following reasons: the name *Nsoro* was removed because it was also used in *Bugesera*, which was a powerful kingdom ruled by *Abahondogo* at that time. The name *Ndahiro* was removed because *Cyamatare* had last used it and perished in tragic circumstances and lost *Rwoga* Drum, the first symbol of dynasty. Lastly the name *Ruganzu* was dropped because *Bwimba* and *Ndori*, who had used it last, were killed by the enemy. This name therefore carried a bad omen.

Under *Yuhi Gahindiro*, the institution of *Ubwiru* was effectively hereditary. The number of the *Abiru* at the King’s court was considerably limited. But, beginning with *Gahindiro*’s reign, their number generally increased. However, an epidemic that took place during this period almost decimated those who had memorized the ritual of the procedure of ascendancy to the throne by all kings with the name of *Yuhi*. Hence, *Gahindiro* decided to reduce the number of the *Abiru* “in order not to expose them again to similar accidents which were unfortunate for the country”⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ Vansina, J.1962, op. cit., p.68

⁴⁷ Kagame, A. 1947, op. cit., p.366

At the beginning of the reign of young King Yuhi Gahindiro, the country was under the regency of *Nyirayuhi Nyiratunga*. There was a drought which led to famine nicknamed “*Rukungugu*.” For this reason, the court introduced a ‘Department of Rukungugu’ (*Inzira ya Rukungugu*); this department was intended for disaster preparedness⁴⁸.

King Kigeri Rwabugiri prevented *Kalinga*, who was of *Ubwiru* origins and head of *Abakobwa* lineage, from attending the assembly of the *Abiru Committee*, a post that he had held since Cyirima Rugwe. He gave this privilege to the *Abatege*. However, the *Abatege* merely accepted it as a formality, leaving the *Abakobwa* as *de facto* members._

Similarly, after enthroning King Rutarindwa, the son and nephew of Rwabugiri was adopted as co-ruler, under the dynastic name of *Mibambwe*. Kanjogera of the of the Abega clan became the adopted Queen Mother (the late mother of Rutarindwa Nyirabunga, from the Abakono clan). Some Abiru warned King Rwabugiri about the imminent danger to the country regarding Kanjogera’s son, Musinga, who wanted to become king. King Rwabugiri ignored their advice. He indirectly contributed to the *Rucunchu massacres* in 1896.

It was probably under King Rwabugiri reign that the Abiru decided the King who would succeed Yuhi should bear the dynastic name of *Mutara*, and not *Cyirima*, as was stipulated in the program of ascendancy. This was based on the fact that Mutara Rwogera had not attended the ceremony to commemorate the burial of Cyirima Rujugira’s body. In effect, the *Ubwiru* institution was opposed “to the view of allowing two kings bearing the name of Cyirima to celebrate consecutively the ceremony of the first rains.” That is why King Rudahigwa, who was enthroned by the colonial authorities in 1931, received the dynastic name of *Mutara* as proposed by Mgr Classe, who had been informed about this secret by one *Umwiru*⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Kagame, A., *Inganji Kalinga*, Kabgayi, 1959, p.29

⁴⁹ Kagame, A., 1947,op.cit, p.378

➤ **King Mibambwe Rutarindwa and King Yuhi Musinga (1896)**

During the Rucunshu incident, Rutarindwa, his wife, and his children (Nyamuheshera, Rangira and Sekarongoro) perished in a fire. People feared that the fire had destroyed *Karinga* Dynastic Drum. During this incident, Kabare declared “*Haguma umwami, ingoma irabazwa*”, meaning that the king was more important than the drum since the latter was just something which could be manufactured. *Karinga* Drum was thus deconsecrated⁵⁰.

In 1952, under the Belgian mandate, the *Abiru College* was undermined by the colonial administration. Mgr. Classe made secret plans to achieve this objective. Gashamura, son of Rukangirashyamba and head of the Abiru, was exiled by the colonial administration to Gitega, Burundi, where he died shortly after. His son, Rwampungu, was brought back and enrolled for studies in Nyanza. He was baptized in 1928 in the Catholic Church. Although the Abiru had lost their prestige and privileges under the colonial regime, they did not disappear. When King Mutara Rudahigwa was enthroned in 1931, the position of the Abiru had been seriously undermined. However, as a member of the *Abiru College* in the 1940's, Alexis Kagame was able to penetrate the ranks of the monarchy.

**e. Ubucurabwenge or dynastic genealogy
(*Amasekuruza y'Abami*)**

Ubucurabwenge can be translated literally as “the workshop of wisdom.” The *Abacurabwenge* were “those who manufactured knowledge.” This social and political institution dealt with specialized knowledge of royal genealogy and its organization and transmission. *Ubucurabwenge* consisted of a text outlining the names of kings, queen mothers, and ancestors. The text outlined a list of names divided in paragraphs which all ended by stating the objectives of the monarch. The text was important because it gave the chronological order of the *Banyiginya* monarchs. Whoever speaks of the history of Rwanda must make reference to this text. Effectively, in a society where there was no writing culture, this genealogy serves as a framework for the preservation of history, putting in perspective all the different events that took place in the past and their methodological transmission from one generation to the next.

⁵⁰ Smith, P., *Le récit populaire au Rwanda*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1975

Nobody can state with precision when the *Ubucurabwenge* institution started.⁵¹ As far as its structure is concerned, *Ubucurabwenge* was orally transmitted in an apparently static form. The *Ubucurabwenge* narrative was published extensively by Kagame⁵². It is presented in the form of a series of stanzas, each of which is dedicated to a particular monarch, beginning with the most recent ones and going back to the founders⁵³. Every stanza contains:

- The name of the rule of the king and queen mother;
- The personal names of the king and his mother before enthronement;
- The clan genealogy of the mother, which serves to determine her clan;
- The genealogy and name of the clan of the queen mother; each stanza ends with the same chorus in this way: “Hence, (so and so.... from the clan of Queen Mother so and so....) produces kings in concert with *Abanyiginya*. *Abanyiginya* being the clan from which the dynasty originated.

Here is an extract of a narrative prepared according to *Ubucurabwenge* experts:

1. “*Uyu mwami twimitse ni Mutara, izina lye ari umututsi ni Rudahigwa. Nyina ni Nyiramavugo, izina lye ari umututsi ni Kankanzi ka Mbanzabigwi, ya rwakagara, rwa Gaga, lya Mutezintare, wa Sesonga, ya Makara, ya Kiramira, cya Mucuzi, wa Nyantabana, ya Bugurande, bwa Ngoga, ya Gihinira, cya Ndiga, ya Gahutu, ka Serwega, rwa Mututsi: akaba umukobwa w’Abega. Nyina ni Nyiranteko ya Nzagura ya Mbonyingabo akaba umukobwa w’Abashambo. Ahoga Nyine Abega bakabyara na Abami n’Abanyiginya.*”
2. “*Mutara ni uwa Yuhi; izina lye ari umututsi ni Musinga Nyina ni Nyirayuhi; izina lye ari umututsi ni Kanjogera, ka Rwakagara, rwa Gaga, lya Mutezintare, wa Sesonga,*

⁵¹ Vansina, J., *L’évolution du royaume Rwanda*, p.25; Kagame, A., *La notion de génération*, pp.24, 26-27

⁵² Kagame, A., *Inganji Kalinga*, Kabgayi, 1943, pp. 92-108. This book was re edited in Kabgayi in 1959. An extract of *Ubucurabwenge* translated in French by the author was published in 1959 in *La notion de génération*, pp.15-17

⁵³ Smith, P., « La forge de l’intelligence », in *L’homme*, Paris, 1971.

ya Makara (...) akaba umukobwa'Abega, Nyina ni Nyiramashyongoshyo, ya Mukotatanyi, wa Kimana, cya Kabajyonjya, ka Rwaka rwa Yuhi Mazimpaka, Umwami wa Rubanda; akaba umukoba w'Abanyiginya. Ahoga nyine Abega bakabyarana Abami n'Abanyiginya!"

d. Historic narratives (Ibitekerezo)

Ibitekerezo (singular *igitekerezo*) comes from the verb “*gutekereza*,” which means to narrate. It should be noted that translating the noun “*ibitekerezo*” to “thoughts” does not make sense. There are two major categories of *ibitekerezo*, namely *ibitekerezo by'abami* (royal historic narratives) and *ibitekerezo by'imiryango* (family historic narratives).

➤ **Royal historic narratives (Ibitekerezo by'abami)**

Royal historical narratives comprise a literary genre composed of narratives on Gihanga, the official founder of *Abanyiginya* dynasty. His ten successors known as ‘austerity kings’ (those who painfully set out to establish Rwanda at inception) are not dealt with in the narrative. The narratives start their trajectory from King Ruganzu Bwimba, the eleventh king after Gihanga, eighteen generations past. Narratives were the work of court story tellers.⁵⁴ A narrative is a literary genre like others; it is subject to specific modes of interpretation. The story teller who transmits it only preserves the major ideas of the narrative.

➤ **Family historic narratives (Ibitekerezo by'imiryango)**

The studies conducted by A. Kagame identify another source of history for Rwanda, namely “family history.”⁵⁵ At present, this source has not been catalogued as such. However, by identifying names in poems of different traditions, especially war poetry (*ibywugo*), it is possible to realize the composition of a people’s genealogy. In the corpus of scattered and unedited notes by A. Kagame entitled “the historic families of Rwanda,” some members of the genealogy tree were preserved with their short histories and achievements. For example, we know that so and so lived under such and such a monarch, and that he belonged to such a

⁵⁴ Kagame, A., 1972, op. cit., 15.

⁵⁵ The scattered notes on historic families in Rwanda were available in the library of A. Kagame in 1995 in Butare Procure (Guest House).

group with certain military training (or militia). It is also possible to know whether he perished during an expedition abroad and whether he was under the command of a certain army.

Family narratives give information on the circumstances prevailing when such and such a person arrived in Rwanda under such and such a regime. They also inform us if the descendants belonging to such and such a genealogical tree were Rwandese, or if they had origins from Burundi, Ndorwa, or elsewhere. The initial list that deals with people cited in different sources, transmitted by narrators, is broadened to include all Rwandans who played a significant role, no matter how small. Family historic narratives are therefore precious instruments whose importance must be lauded.

a. Dynastic poems

Dynastic poems are a literary genre of ancient Rwanda that transmit the country's ethno-history⁵⁶. The importance of this genre is based on its age relative to other genres; the first dynastic poems date back to the rule of King Ruganzu Ndori, from 1510-1544. Dynastic poems rely on their principle of invariability; they were transmitted as they were composed. Knowledge of dynastic poems (*Ibisigo*) is therefore indispensable in preserving the history of Rwanda.

3.0.2 Military organization

Rwanda's military organization consisted of a set of activities: recruitment, training, socialization of recruits, participation in military expeditions, sharing of wealth and war booty, and protecting members of each group.

If we refer to the events narrated by the Rwandan tradition, we can identify some principal periods regarding the organization of Rwanda's armies. The first period started with King Ruganzu Bwimba up to the rule of King Rujugira at the end of the sixteenth century. The second period took place during the rule

⁵⁶ Kagame, A., *La poésie dynastique au Rwanda*, Bruxelles, ARSOM, Butare, 1951. It presents an inventory of 176 poems, totaling up to 22,026 verses; KAGAME A., *Introduction aux grands genres lyriques*, 1969, pp. 151-244. He makes a contribution in this work, giving translations of model thematic areas.

of King Cyirima Rujugira in 1900; his rule was centre stage in the history of the ‘cattle armies’ in Rwanda⁵⁷.

It should be noted that all these armies were under the king. Membership to each regiment was a hereditary affair. The members of each regiment came from all over the country, and recruitment was done on lineage basis. In principle, every adult man was called upon to defend his country. However, as far as the recruitment of carrier warriors was concerned, it was the ‘head of *Umuryango*’⁵⁸ who appointed those who were supposed to join the army⁵⁹. In general, the names of the heads of regiments were retained. Similarly, those who distinguished themselves on the battle field and those whose achievements needed to be remembered were also included. Lastly, every military camp was named according to one or several cattle groups. For example, ‘*Umuhozi*’ cattle formation corresponded to ‘*Abashakamba*’ military formation and *Ingeyo* cattle formation corresponded to ‘*Uruyange*’ military formation.

The internal organization of armies depended on their period.⁶⁰ Apart from war combatants, cattle raiders (*Ibitsimbanyi*) were charged with stealing cattle belonging to the enemy during wars while the carriers and servants provided spears and spare arrows. They were also responsible for providing supplies, accommodation, and carrying war booty. In short, they did all complementary jobs that the army needed. In times of peace, their role included socio-political duties, notably sensitizing the population.

The recruits were called ‘*Intori*’, literary meaning ‘those who were selected.’ They attended prolonged training in sports and military drills, including the handling of traditional arms such

⁵⁷ Nkurukiyimra, J-N, *Le gros bétail de la société rwandaise, évolution historique : des XII-XIVème siècles à 1958*, Paris, L’harmattan, 1994, p. 49.

⁵⁸ From 50 family heads to 630 sub-chiefs who were in service between 1947- 1948. Father Delmas published ‘La généalogie de la noblesse (the Batutsi of Rwanda). In 1954, A. Kagame published *Les organisation socio-familiales de l’ancien Rwanda*.

⁵⁹ In principle, each regiment was made of the Batutsi, Bahutu and Batwa. A. Kagame identified 126 ‘Cattle armies’ and 88 militias, For each cattle army, he gave its history, its successive heads with their personal history, (their origin, appointment and destitution circumstances) their corresponding militia, attributed pastures, and their services to the court. In his *Histoire des armées bovines dans la création du Rwanda*, A. Kagame gives for each militia the factors surrounding its creation, its successive heads and, often, with their personal history, family, appointment, destitution, achievements, etc., major events especially military campaigns, political intrigues, services given at the royal court.

⁶⁰ Vansina, J., 2001, op. cit, p. 100.

as spears, bows and arrows, shields, and swords. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, they developed the art of dance, public speaking, debate, and memorization and recitation of war poems. They were encouraged to acquire moral values such as military courage, perseverance, generosity towards the poor, acceptance of responsibilities, self-control, and emotional control.⁶¹

To a lesser extent, military expeditions were aimed at defending Rwanda against foreign invaders. This was the case in the Rwageta expedition at the beginning of the rule of Mutara Rwogera. During this expedition, Rwandan warriors were defeated by Burundi invaders, who had penetrated up to Mvejuru with the intention of burning and humiliating the Royal Court.⁶² However, in most cases, Rwandese military expeditions were initiated by Rwandans and were directed to neighboring countries. The causes and aims of these expeditions varied, but the major themes can be summarized as follows:

- Wars of conquest, territorial expansion, and annexation of neighboring territories (first expedition by King Rwabugiri against Bunyabungo);
- Assertion of authority and power (first expedition by King Rwabugiri against Bunyabungo);
- Wars of vengeance, punitive expeditions against any insurgence to royal authority (second expedition against Bunyabungo);
- Demonstration of power against Ndorwa (during the expedition named '*Igitero cy'Imigongo*');
- Wars against cattle raids (known as '*Igitero cyo Mu Lito*' in Burundi).

Unofficially, some expeditions were organized with the aim of getting rid of people who were considered undesirable by the regime in power; they were not supposed to shed their blood on Rwandan soil. During the expedition named '*Igitero cyi Mu Lito*' in Burundi, it was Prince Nkoroko who was targeted, but having been informed of the plot, he did not participate in the expedition. Additionally, making raids to obtain girls and women

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 101

⁶² Kagame, A., 1972, op, cit, p. 192

for marriage was another unofficial objective of such expeditions; an example of such expedition was called '*Kara-minwe*,' under Rwogera against Gisaka.

The preparations for a given expedition assumed a mystic character. Before its organization, divine consultations were made to see if the expedition would be successful or not. If the opinion was confirmed by the oracle's representative, an offensive would be launched by one officer (*Umutabazi w'umucengezi*). Rarely, blood was sacrificed, on voluntary basis, in the territory to be invaded. In the psyche of the Rwandese people, this blood portended bad omen for the targeted territory; it was a sure way of victory for the Rwandese army. Later, a commander-in-chief (*Umugaba w'igitero*) for the expedition would be named.

The commander-in-chief was not necessarily a military man. He played a quasi-magical role in the expedition. With his position in the battlefield, his uniform, and the objects with which he decorated himself, he conferred courage and victory to the Rwandan warriors. In addition, the military expeditions were organized in the name of the *Karinga* Drum; this was called "*Kuyirwanira*" fighting for *Karinga*, or *kuyivira* – 'sacrificing one's blood for *Karinga*.' Before proceeding to the battlefield, vigils were organized (*Inkeru y'imihigo*) and every combatant was supposed to make repetitive declarations of bravery in the forthcoming battle. This would boost morale and strengthen the warriors.

In general, wars took place during day and were constituted of arranged battles. Several Rwandan militias participated in expeditions, each of which was commanded by a commander. During King Rwabugiri's rule, the major arms used were spears, bows and arrows, swords, and shields. From King Cyirima Rujugira's reign, marching armies were created aimed at defending the borders.

3.3.3. Territorial Organization and Administrative Diversity

a. Triple hierarchy of chiefs: *Umunyamutaka*, *umunyamukenke*, *umutware w'ingabo*

Among the king's representatives were chiefs who imposed taxes.⁶³ The provincial chiefs were, above all, representatives of

⁶³ Classe, L., "L'organisation politique du Ruanda", in *Congo*, 1992, p.685

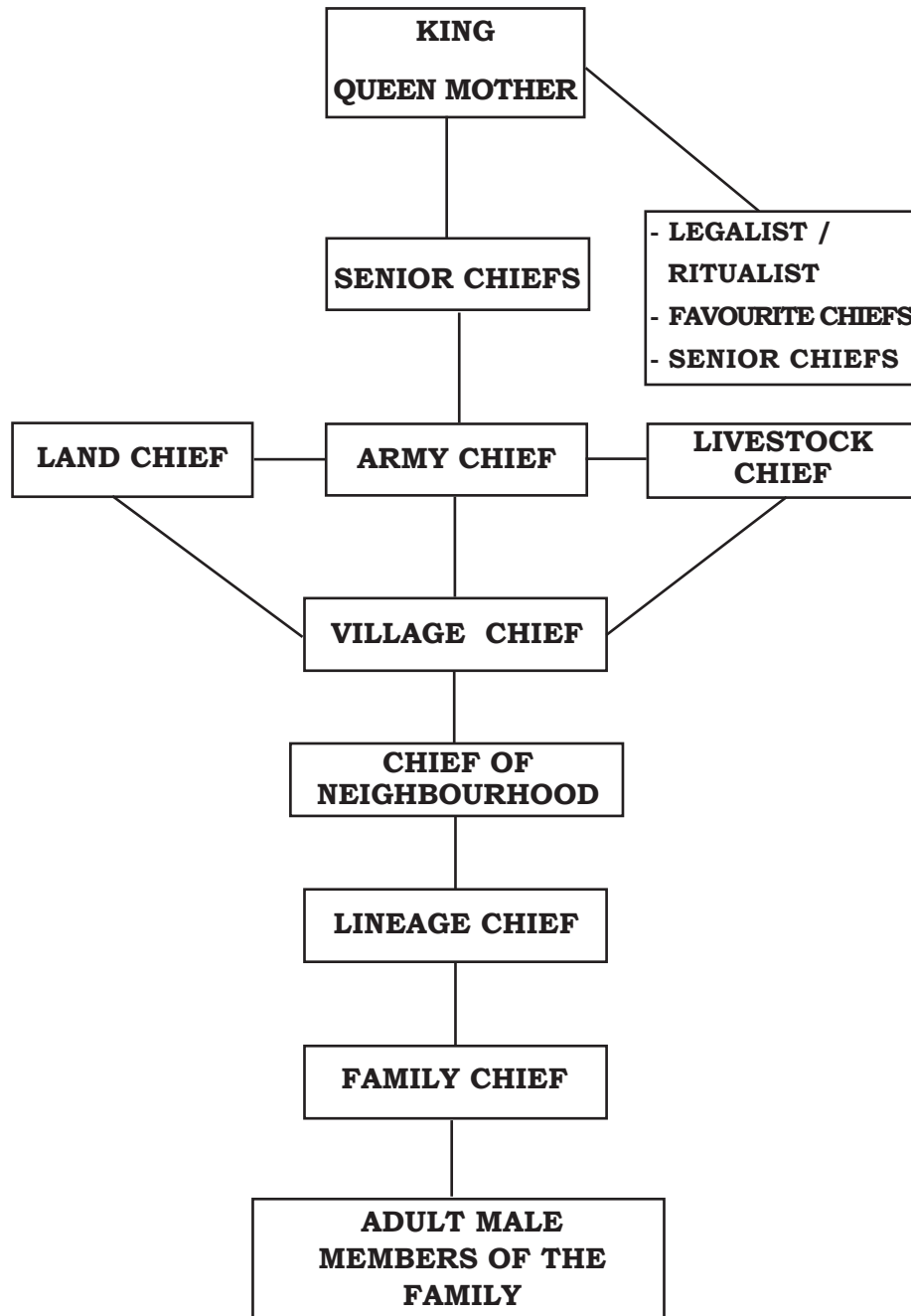
the royal authority – the king and his court attendants. They imposed and collected taxes in the provinces. Thus, the royal residences scattered throughout the entire kingdom under King Kigeri Rwabugiri had political and physical functions. The royal tribute (*ikoro*) was taken to the royal residence and was managed by the king's wife.

In the areas where the *Ubuhake* institution prevailed, provincial administration was enforced by senior chiefs or by army commanders. Beyond provinces and marching camps (*ingerero*), three leaders exercised power beginning with the rule of King Yuhi Gahindiro:

1. Land and agriculture chief (*umutware w'umunyabutaka*)
2. The chief in charge of pastures (*umutware w'umukenke, umunyamukenke*)
3. War chief (*umutware w'ingabo*)

Senior Chiefs, the King, and the Queen Mother controlled these three chiefs. At a lower level of the hierarchy, there were four stages – as seen below in figure 9 – of the political and administrative hierarchy, dating from the reign of King Cyirima Rujugira:

Figure 9: Political and administrative hierarchy from King Cyirima Rujugira



Source: Maquet J.J., *Le système des relations sociales dans le Rwanda ancien*, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1954, p.163.

There were a few exceptions to the multiple functions of chiefs. In Buhanga-Ndara, Chief Mbanzabugabo, alias Bikotwa, doubled as ‘*umutware w’ubutaka*’ and ‘*umutware w’ingabo*’. As for the Impala Province (Kinyanga-Cyangugu), it was Rwabirinda, son of Mutara Rwogera, who was ‘*Umutware w’ubutaka*’ and ‘*Umutware w’umukenke*’ in 1900.

Many regions which had been annexed recently experienced military occupation. In Gisaka, royal residences were scattered in Sakara and Bugesera, and in Ndorwa, royal residences were located in Gatsibo. In the northern part of Rwanda, the administration was enforced by lineage chiefs, clan chiefs, and chiefs who were replaced by representatives (Ruhanga), such as the representative of Nshozamihigo in Murera in the 1900’s. As far as clan entities in the north were concerned, the dominating clan chiefs were called the kings’ chiefs (*Abatware b’umwami*). They reported directly to the court without passing through an intermediary. Most of these chiefs were Hutu and paid tribute to the king of Rwanda as a sign of allegiance⁶⁴.

b. Enclaves (free zones)

In addition to the regions that were administered by chiefs appointed by the royal court (central, south, east and west), some enclaves were established. These areas demonstrated diverse and complex systems of administration:

- Royal enclaves in the hinterland of the central, southern and eastern regions of Rwanda. Here, the king and queen mother had their own territorial entities which were directly answerable to the royal court (*i bwami*). They were under chiefs who administered them in the name of the king and the queen mother;
- Abiru enclaves (custodians of the royal secret);
- Bumbogo region enjoyed a special status as a result of its ancient tradition of cultivating and supplying commodities, working with the Abiru Batsobe to supply millet and sorghum cereals used to celebrate the national feast of the first rains (*Umuganura*);
- The kingdoms of Bukunzi and Busozo in Kinyaga enjoyed relative autonomy given that they were

⁶⁴ Anonyme (Résidence du Rwanda), *Historique et chronologie du Rwanda*, s.l .,p.124

governed by rainmaker kings (*Abavubi*) and kings (*Abami*) with whom these kingdoms participated in economic exchange. They also exchanged gifts with the Rwandan court.

In short, there was a political entity that was politically united with a diversified and heterogeneous system of administration. The presence of a centralized administration was felt, particularly during the reign of King Kigeri Rwabugiri. By the end of the nineteenth century, the political and administrative structure proved to be too complex and precarious. Nonetheless, beyond the struggle for power and the need to assert political influence, a certain degree of separation of powers and specialization existed at the time. At the top of the '*Abatware b'intebe*,' '*abatware b'ubwami*,' '*abatware b'amacibiri*' (whose role is not clearly specified today), and the '*Abiru*,' there were artisans and workers who depended directly on the royal court. Lineage or military chiefs (*umutware w'ingabo*) largely fulfilled the obligations of the people towards their leaders.

3.3.4. Social and Economic Organization

From the eighteenth century, socio-economic practices began among Rwandan institutions. Before speaking of these economic factors, it is important to consider the '*clientilist system*,' which profoundly characterized socio-economic relations between the Rwandese and the practices of the '*Uburetwa*' and '*Igikingi*' institution.

a. The clientilist system

Traditional Rwanda was governed through various forms of economic dependence. Some types of typically Rwandan dependence, notably '*Ubuhake*' and '*Ubukonde*,' are summarized below:

- **Ubuhake**

Ubuhake was an institution that established socio-economic dependence between different strata of society. Several definitions for the term '*Ubuhake*' have been proffered:

- A pastoral serfdom contract was a voluntary contract by which a servant (*Umugaragu*) worked for a person of a higher social rank, '*Shebuja*,' in order to obtain heads of cattle⁶⁵.
- Clientilism between individuals of an inferior status and a superior status where the former would offer his services to the latter in exchange for cows and protection.⁶⁶
- A contract freely agreed upon between the *master* and *servant*. The former conceded to the former cattle.⁶⁷

'*Ubugake*' was a voluntary contract between a cattle owner and someone who wanted to own cows. In addition, the servant sought protection from his master. '*Ubugake*' cannot truly be compared with European feudalism during the Middle Ages; the Rwandan landed gentry did not resemble feudalistic system of land ownership and distribution.⁶⁸ The '*Ubugake*' system established between the '*Umugaragu*' and '*Shebuja*' were based on the dynamics of friendship, which manifested as common understanding, participation, and cooperation.

- **Categories and attributes of Abagaragu**

The *Abagaragu* were divided into three categories: house maids, court attendants, and exempted courtesans. In Buganza, it was not until the 1930's that the *Abagaragu* started cultivating (*gutanga imibyizi*) for their *Shebuja*.

The process of '*Ubugake*' started with someone introducing a servant to the future master. This was done by a third party who was already *Umugaragu*. However, some people introduced themselves personally. Parents introduced their children and would help them to perform particular tasks in the home of *Shebuja*. The *Abagaragu* were sent off at puberty and returned to their homes for marriage. In this case, they received '*Ubugake*' cows on top of those given by their fathers. During the introduction

⁶⁵ Kagame, A., *Le code des institutions du Rwanda précoloniale*, Bruxelles, ARSOM, P.18

⁶⁶ Maquet, J.J., *Le système des relations sociales dans le Rwanda ancien*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1954, p.151.

⁶⁷ Bourgeois, R., *L'évolution du contrat de bétail à cheptel*, Bruxelles, 1958, pp.1-2

⁶⁸ Chrétien, J. P., "Echanges et hiérarchies", pp. 1328-1332 et dans "Vocabulaire et concepts tirés de la féodalité occidentale et administration indirecte en Afrique orientale", in Nordman D, et Raison J.P. (ED), *Sciences humaines en Afrique et conquête coloniale. Constitution et usage des sciences humaines en Afrique (XIXe -XXe siècles)*, Paris, 1980, pp. 47-63.

ceremony, beer was served to the master. Occasionally, pottery items like pots and smoking pipes were distributed⁶⁹.

- **House maids**

Housemaids constituted the lowest category of *Abagaragu*; their tasks were restricted to housework in the home of *Shebuja*. A subgroup of housemaids (*Abahange*) expected to get a cow from *Shebuja* (*umunyafu*) in order to become true *Abagaragu*. This was a period of probation during which a house maid performed different tasks with a lot of care. He also had to demonstrate profound respect to *Shebuja*. This phase took place for an undetermined period of time.⁷⁰ The tasks given to the *Abahange* generally entailed the following:

1. Accompanying *Shebuja* during his private errands. Only an *Umuhange* who had won confidence from *Shebuja* was allowed to carry the latter's smoking pipe and tobacco leaves, put in a special container called *Uruhago*. The *Umuhange* who carried this container was known as *Umunyaruhago*;

2. Domestic tasks such as fetching water and firewood.

During this period, the *Abahange* on probation was under the supervision of *Shebuja*'s wife. She could influence her husband by imploring him to reduce the period probation for the *Umuhange* and to give him, without delay, the coveted gift of a cow. Similarly, the *Abahange* offered numerous gifts to *Shebuja*'s wife.

- The *Abahange* could sometimes rub shoulders with the *Abanyanzu*, or the housemaids posted to do various tasks in *Shebuja*'s house. These housemaids were entrusted with keeping milk and wine made of bananas, brewing beer, doing kitchen work, and serving meals to guests. For young girls, these tasks were very cumbersome and challenging.

- **The stewards**

This was a category of *Abagaragu* who, after spending some time in the service of *Shebuja*, proved that they had acquired a sense of organization and experience to attend to their duties with

⁶⁹ Nzeyimana, A. 1990. op.cit. p. 107.

⁷⁰ In the central part of Rwanda and in Buganza, the duration of ubuhange could go from some months to five years

expertise. Generally, they lived near the residence of *Shebuja*, which facilitated their availability. The job description for the *Abagaragu* can be summed-up by the following major tasks:

1. *Kubaka inkike*: constructing and maintaining the *Shebuja's* enclosure;
2. Looking after the cattle and attending to other related services⁷¹.

- **Exempted Abagaragu**

These were the *Abagaragu* who had their own *Abagaragu*. They would get advice from *Shebuja* and accompany him during his errands.

- **The responsibilities of the master**

The master was charged with protecting his servant in various circumstances: bailing him out in case he was kidnapped, giving him a bull-calf and milk, helping him conduct discussions, helping him establish a new herd of cattle if they were attacked by cattle plague, and giving him a hoe if he was not be in a position to secure one.⁷²

• **Historic evolution of Ubuhake**

The exact period when the *Ubuhake* system started is not known. It is possible that in the beginning, *Ubuhake* was a purely economic relationship related to cattle, goats, and sheep.⁷³ Mention is also made of the *Abagaragu* during the events that characterized the reign of King Ruganzu Bwimba; they speak of *Abagaragu* of *Nkurukumbi*. The *Ubuhake* started during King Ruganzu Ndoli's accession to power. It gradually became a socio-political and administrative tool at the height of the King of Rwandadom, especially during the reign of King Cyilima Rujugira, who introduced the institution of the official troops

⁷¹ Before the colonization of Rwanda, Umugaragu was hardly made to cultivate the fields of his *Shebuja*.

⁷² It is important to note one aspect which is not dealt with here, namely 'Ubuhake and the social composition of the Hutu-Tutsi'. As far as the period considered is concerned (before 1900), the analysis of this aspect is not relevant due to lack of data.

⁷³ Nkulikiyimfura, J. N., *Le gros bétail et la société rwandaise : L'évolution historique dès XII –XIV siècle à 1958*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 1994, p. 120

(*cattle armies*). King Ndori transformed the *Ubuhake* institution into the first pillar of his authority⁷⁴.

It was under King Gahindiro in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that other forms of *Ubuhake* were introduced, especially with the creation of the *Igikingi* and the appearance of cattle chiefs. With the emergence of political and administrative clientism, *Umugaragu* received cows and/or orders from his master. This was clientalism that was purely related to *land* and *pastoralism*, underscoring the importance of the cow and land as objects of economic wealth in Rwanda. During colonization, *Ubuhake* underwent some modifications as a result of administrative measures adopted by Belgian colonial authorities.

- **Practice of Uburetwa**

The *Uburetwa* was forced labor that the population did for traditional authorities. Originally, it was a form of dependence related to land. Poor people without cows bought land by working for two days a week in the fields of the village chief or the landowner on whose land they lived.

- **Origin and evolution of Uburetwa**

The beginning of this forced labor is not exactly known. Rwandan tradition shows that King Rwabugiri imposed *Uburetwa* on the *Abahutu* in order to punish them for their responsibility in his defeat in Nkore⁷⁵. According to another tradition, *Uburetwa* dates back to Seruteganya, the Provincial Chief of Bigogwe, who demanded dues in kind from his subjects. His example was emulated elsewhere in the county.

Contrary to the erroneous claims by advocates of popular etymology who insist that the term *Uburetwa* was introduced by colonialism, it is believed that this institution was used even before the colonial period.⁷⁶ Under King Rwabugiri, the royal court increased its representatives in the country and in semi-autonomous regions. This multiplied the services of chiefs who introduced *Uburetwa* in previously unfamiliar regions. However,

⁷⁴ Vansina, J., 2001, op. cit., p. 66

⁷⁵ Rwabukumba, J. and Mudandagizi, V., quoted by IRDP, 2005, pp. 53- 54

⁷⁶ Muzungu, B., « Poètes du clan Abanyiginya », in *Cahiers Lumière et Société*, n° 27, septembre 2004, p.23.

the origin of *Uburetwa* was not during this period,⁷⁷ and the practice was not homogeneous throughout the entire country.

Very poor individuals without land or protection were involved in *Ubuteretwa*, while *Ubuhake* affected all those who wanted to have cattle and protection. This meant that a chief could become a client of another, more powerful person. The practice of *Uburetwa* was associated with some colonial burdens. The chief of the land asked all families that depended on agriculture in his area of jurisdiction to give him a good part of their harvest and to offer him labor services. The colonial administration resisted abolishing *Uburetwa* as it was considered a customary institution.

b. Ubukonde⁷⁸

Before the country was opened to Western influence, Rwanda was governed by a dual land tenure policy called *Ubukonde* and *Isambu*. This policy operated in forest and non-forest regions.

Local and foreign researchers have dealt with the issue of *Ubukonde*⁷⁹ in Rwanda. Everywhere, settlers made demarcations of areas of occupation for themselves and their descendants. Even non-agriculturalist populations such as hunters shared the unexploited forests among themselves. The *Ubukonde* system was therefore a method of collective land ownership followed by the first settlers on Rwandan soil. This form of settlement was found in the north and northwest of Rwanda along the crater of the Congo-Nile Basin and in the former *prefecture* of Byumba. The first settlers paid a tribute called *Urwugururo* to the *Mutwa*, who was considered the master of the forest. He thus became *Umukonde*, or the person who operated the *Ubukonde* land tenure scheme.

⁷⁷ Vansina, J., 2001, op cit., pp 171-172

⁷⁸ The practice of *Ubukonde* is a land system which was found in the Western Province, especially in the North.

⁷⁹ Kagame, A., *Les organisations familiales de l'ancien Rwanda*, IRCB, Bruxelles, 1954; Murego, D., *La révolution rwandaise, 1959-1962. Essai d'interprétation*, Louvain, 1975; Ruhashyankiko, N., *Le droit foncier du Rwanda*, Butare, UNR, 1977; Reisdorff, I., *Enquêtes foncières au Rwanda*, s.l., 1952.; Pagès A., « Note sur le régime de biens dans la province du Bugoyi », in Congo, 1931; Adraenssens, J., *Le droit foncier au Rwanda*, Butare, 1962 (inédité)

- **Who was Umugererwa?**

The members of one lineage did not divide their land into smaller pieces. Every member had a right to exploit it. If the person who acquired land was a stranger to the lineage in the forest region, the ceded land took the name of *Ubugererwa*, from the verb *kugera*, i.e. to measure. The lineage of *Umugererwa* enjoyed full rights on the acquired land, but the title of ownership remained in the hands of the lineage head. The *Umugererwa* was neither supposed to offer dues in kind nor was he supposed to offer any services. Instead, he was expected to give his first harvest of sorghum, beans, millet, and peas, to which he added a crate of beer. This offer was called *Ifuro*.⁸⁰ The *Abakonde* expected both allegiance and collaboration from their *Abagererwa*. They strengthened their solidarity to facilitate the defeat their neighbors. A blood pact enhanced this collaboration. But the free *Abagererwa* looked down upon such alliances and looked for allies elsewhere. This was the case of *Ababanda* from *Bukonya* vis-à-vis their *Abasindi* hosts.⁸¹

- **Different forms of Ubukonde**

The *Ubukonde* institution underwent several transformations, both internal and external. Before the conquest of the Nyiginya Kingdom, the *Ubukonde* was organized under two types depending on their aims and objectives. On the one hand, there was the '*Ubukonde bw'Inzogera*', or those who practiced hunting, gathering, and harvesting wild crops in the forest region. On the other hand, there was the '*Ubukonde bw'abahinzi*', or the '*Ubukonde* of the hoe' for farmers. The Nyiginya conquest introduced a third form of *Ubukonde* called '*Ubukode bw'inka*,' reserved to cattle pastures.

- **Ubukode bw'inka (of cattle)**

This was a specific form of *Ubukonde* found in specific regions, especially in Bigogwe and Rwankeli. Elsewhere, this form of *Ubukonde* was often confused with *Igikingi*. The *Ubukonde* of the herdsmen in Rwankeli was reserved to animal husbandry, but it also had an agricultural objective because the herdsmen had land clients who they allowed to settle on their land and who were

⁸⁰ Pauwels M., *Le Bushiru et son Muhinza ou roitelet hutu*, p.311

⁸¹ Nahimana, F., *Rwanda : Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1993, pp.122-123

supposed to supply agricultural produce. This form of *Ubukonde* was restricted to areas that were sparsely populated, or where the influence of the Nyiginya royal court was not pronounced. Cattle keepers occupied this land from the sixteenth century.⁸²

- **Ubukonde bw'isuka (of the hoe)**

Also referred to as '*Ubukonde bw'abahinzi*' or '*Ubukonde* for agriculturalists,' this type of *Ubukonde* land tenure system was the most widespread in the country. It consisted of forest regions valued by agriculturalists who used hand hoes. The forest area for cattle was also used for agricultural activities of secondary importance; the hand-hoe user partook in pastoral activities also.

- **Ubukonde bw'inzogera (of the cow-bell)**

This referred to forest areas reserved for 'bells' because hunting dogs, which accompanied the Batwa, had collars with bells. The Batwa demanded tribute from whoever crossed their woodlands. The '*Ubukonde bw'Inzogera*' was imposed on hunters and those who harvested forest crops. This type of *Ubukonde* disappeared first because of demographic factors, i.e. pressure by agriculturalist and herdsmen on the forest areas. The Batwa, who were deprived of government protection, partook in artisan activities such as pottery. There were a few groups that remained in Gishwati and in the natural forest of Nyungwe. The evolution of the land system progressively introduced other modalities of land acquisition which customary law eventually accepted.

- **Ubukonde bw'umuheto (of the arrow)**

This was a form of land ownership that came into existence as a result of the victory of *Ababanda*. After the collapse of the Bugarura federation, King Ruganzu Ndori used the '*Ubukonde bw'umuheto*' to welcome several foreign lineage groups.⁸³

- **Ubukonde bw'inzigo (of punishment)**

This was a rare land tenure system which appeared whenever an individual killed a person who was from outside his family

⁸² Adrianssens, J., 1962, op. cit. p. 10.

⁸³ Adrianssens, J., 1962, op. cit. p. 10.

lineage. In Rwandese tradition, the offended lineage killed another person from the lineage of the murderer. This was *vendetta* law. If they managed to reach an agreement, one could give part of his land as a form of appeasement. This was the case with *Abagwabi* from *Bugoyi*, who gave part of the *Rugerero* village to *Abungura* for having killed one of its members.⁸⁴

- **Ubukonde bw'ubuntu (gratuity)**

The *Abagererwa*, who were land clients of the *Abakonde*, could win the confidence of the lineage chief by virtue of their sociability or their matrimonial alliances with other groups. After consulting his group, the chief could give part of his land to their clients. These clients were free to exploit it with all associated *Ubukonde* rights. This form of *Ubukonde* sometimes engendered family conflicts, which forced the client to abandon the land given to him free of charge.

- **Ubukonde bw'uwaguze (of the buyer)**

The land of *Ubukonde* could be rented and sold as the owner wished. To this effect, the quality of land was always taken into consideration during the process of bargaining. The price was generally paid in terms of small livestock (e.g. goat, sheep, etc.) for a small piece of land and in terms of cattle for bigger portions of land. The chief of the lineage made prior consultations with members of his family. In Gisebeya for example, the *Ubukonde* land belonging to a person called Bandali was sold for three hand hoes or one sheep or heifer for a hectare.⁸⁵

- **Historic evolution of Ubukonde**

The types of *Ubukonde* mentioned above were the result of an evolutionary process. In the beginning, the first occupation accompanying the first settlements was deemed legitimate. Later, customs were subject to diverse influences and eventually accepted other forms of *Ubukonde*.

The German and Belgian colonizations did not manage to totally modify the customary land tenure system. The German administration got involved late in making land reforms.

⁸⁴ Reisdorff, 1952, op. cit., P.85

⁸⁵ Bourgeois, R.,1958,op.cit., p.194

Effectively, German law only governed areas which were not inhabited by natives. This type of land law dealt specifically with land bought or rented by religious missions for commercial purposes. It also dealt with land bought by urban authorities. Hence, 'Ubukonde' in the north and northwest of Rwanda was less entrenched during the *Nyiginya* influence. The individual property, i.e. *Isambu* and *Ibikingi*, and land covered under the European *written law* coexisted with one another.⁸⁶ Belgium encouraged the evolution of this land ownership system without seeking to overhaul radically the traditional system.

c. Igikingi

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the system of *Ubuhake* was closely linked to the *Igikingi* system. According to J. Vansina, the organization of the administrative system was closely linked to the land question. *Igikingi* consisted of division (a hill or a sub-hill) rich in pastures and part of the provincial division. The king gave land to cattle keepers, who became his direct clients and who were only indebted to him.⁸⁷ A. Kagame defines *Igikingi* as a basic administrative ladder. The *Ibikingi* were similar to subchieftaincy divisions of the colonial era.⁸⁸ There were two types of *Ibikingi*: the 'administrative *Igikingi*' and 'pastoral *Igikingi*.' It should be noted that some administrative *Ibikingi* coincided with pastoral *Ibikingi*.⁸⁹

The land policy under the *Ibikingi* system was not generalized throughout Rwandan territory. It was imposed in areas like Buganza, Buriza, Bwanacyambwe, Rukoma, Nduga, Mayaga, Busanza, Buhanga-Ndara, Muvejuru, Bashumba-Nyakare, Buyenzi, and Bufundu. However, the *Inkingi* almost never existed in other regions dominated by pastoral activities such as Ndorwa-Mutara, Bugesera, Gisaka, and Mubari.

In the political field, the introduction of reserve pastoral areas led to increased pressure on political authorities to help weak

⁸⁶ Hitabatuma I., *L'évolution historique de l'Ubukonde au Rwanda: l'exemple du Nyantango*, Ruhengeri, 1982, pp.73-74.

⁸⁷ Vansina J., *Le Rwanda ancien. Le royaume Nyiginya*, Paris, Karthala, 2001, p.168.

⁸⁸ Kagame A., 1975, op.cit., p.185

⁸⁹ Mbonimana G., « L'intégration politique face aux institutions Igikingi et Uburetwa sous le règne de Rwabugiri (1867-1895) », in F. Rutembesa, A. Shyaka, J. Semujanga (dir.), *Rwanda : identité et citoyenneté*, EUNR, 2003, P.36.

social classes. The big proprietors of *Ibikingi* got a bigger clientele. Whoever possessed *Igikingi* had a right of custodianship on the pastures and the people who lived there. Among other things, custodians had the right of receiving services and dues of all sorts. The creation of departments led to a social stratification and accentuated poverty among farmers and herdsmen. The Provincial Chiefs also lost their advantages regarding their animals.⁹⁰

Consequently, dues and forced labor increased. This was followed by the introduction of *Ibikingi* that led to separation of the post of District Chief into two: the Land Chief and Animal Husbandry Chief. It should be noted that the *Abahutu* and *Abatusi* were property owners of the *Ibikingi*. This was the case with some women in some parts of the country such as Northern Buganza.⁹¹ The problem of the *Ibikingi* is therefore associated with lack of pastures.

As for the evolution of *igikingi*, it was during the regime of Yuhi Gahindiro that *Igikingi* system started flourishing in Buganza and Nduga. A few reasons help to explain this development: demographic pressure, increase in the number of livestock following the annexation of areas rich in cattle (e.g. Ndorwa and Mutara), competition among army chiefs, and the political willingness of King Gahindiro to favor his supporters. Note that the *Ibikingi* increased during the reign of King Mutara Rwogera because of high livestock population density. There were patriarchal grazing lands given to people in power, especially army chiefs. Under King Kigeri Rwabugiri, the power of political authorities increased at the expense of the lineage chiefs. The former distributed big portions of land to themselves and received rent from those who grazed on their land.

The *Ibikingi* system faded by 1929; this marked the date when the system was removed by the Belgian colonial administration. However, the *Ibikingi* institution continued to exist even after the abolition of *Ubuhake*. The chiefs and sub-chiefs later extended the *Ibikingi* system to areas where it never existed before in order to get grazing land in areas where the chiefs were appointed. The

⁹⁰ Nkulikiyimfura, J. N., *Le gros bétail de la société rwandaise, : Evolution historique des XII et XIV siècles à 1958*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1994, pp. 96-97.

⁹¹ Kabagema, I., *L'évolution socio-politique du Buganza-Nord des origines à 1931*, UNR, 1985, p. 109.

problem of *ibikingi* was fought by the ‘*Conseiller Supérieur*’ in the country in 1950’s, but this was without any tangible result. It was the ‘Special Resident,’ Colonel Guy Logiest, who, on May 2, 1960, signed a decree removing the *Ibikingi* system. During the implementation of this decree, the PARMEHUTU authorities and other influential people took advantage of their position to distribute land to themselves.

d. Economic exchange

The controversy on whether economic activities existed in ancient Rwanda is irrelevant. Not long ago, some authors denied the existence of economic history in societies they described as “archaic.”⁹² According to them, economic exchange in Rwanda at that time fell under the framework of family relationships, where gifts were made without any economic goal. Haremans states that Rwanda was a subsistence economy incapable of producing commercial surplus:

“(…) Rwanda had a closed economy in the sense that the ‘*Urugo*’ was a unit which was supposed to produce practically all that was necessary for the subsistence of its members (...). Commerce was less developed. The exchange of Agriculture production, crafts and pastoral production were done by administrative and military structures. Economic surplus was drained by the ruling class. (...)”⁹³

The above view is premised on prejudice and not on research findings. Research findings have proved the existence of a market economy in traditional Rwanda.⁹⁴ In this economy, there was a standard of exchange with recognized values and teams of professional businessmen whose aim was to get profit. In order to explain and qualify these affirmations, it is important to deal with the terminology involved in this trade, the general organization of

⁹² Malinowski, B., *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, New York, 1921; Mauss, M., *Essai sur le don, forme archaïque de l'échange*, New York, 1924.

⁹³ Heremans R., *Introduction à l'histoire du Rwanda*, Kigali, Editions rwandaises, Bruxelles, Editions de Boeck, 1972, pp.55-56.

⁹⁴ Ruzindana, E., *L'évolution du commerce au Rwanda du dernier quart du XIXe siècle à 1950*, mémoire inédit Louvain, 1974.; Lugan B., *L'économie d'échange au Rwanda de 1850 à 1914*, Université de Province, 1976.; Nyagahene, A., *Les activités économiques et commerciales du Kinyaga dans la seconde partie du 19e siècle*, Butare, UNR, 1979.

exchanges, the nature of the market, the businessmen involved, and types of products traded.

The commercial vocabulary used shows the existence of a juxtaposition of both traditional and modern commercial structures. To begin with, the word “*isoko*” is a Swahili word. It has an Arab origin “*es-souk*,” which means market. In Kinyaga, for example, the traditional name designating ‘market’ is *igerero* (plural *amagerero*), which comes from the verb ‘*kugera*’, ‘to measure.’ This shows that quantities of exchange were implied. Another word ‘*iguriro*’ (plural *amaguriro*) from the verb ‘*kugura*’ (to buy) was used in daily use language. Among the products found in these ‘*amaguriro*’ were bracelets made of weaved fibres called “*ubutega*.” This word of Tembo origin arrived in Rwanda thanks to the Bushi⁹⁵.

The verb ‘*gutunda*’ (performing a commercial job), from which the noun ‘*umutunzi*’ (professional business person) emerges presupposes the idea of profit. This is contrary to ‘*guhaha*,’ which is a simple action of going somewhere to barter goods. In Kinyarwanda, there are other terms such as:

- *Gucira* (declaring the price of one’s goods), from which the word ‘*igiciro*’ (price) originates;
- *Guhoza* (imposing taxes on goods);
- *Kubandika* (bartering some butter in exchange for food crops);
- *Kuzegura* (playing an intermediary role) is a word which has disappeared from common parlance;
- *Amasoko y’amazege* (hoes to compensate middle men).⁹⁶

Among the foreign words which were found in the Rwandan barter-trade market, there were words like ‘*amageta*’ – meaning red-beads imported to Rwanda by the Bashi, but introduced by Arabs in Central Africa. It is not known if this word is of Arab or Shi origin. Similarly, bracelets made of copper were found in this market. These were known as *Imiringa* and *ibitare* respectively (*mringa* and *birhale* among the Bashi).

⁹⁵ Newbury, D., “Lake Kivu regional trade during the nineteenth century”, in *Centre for African Studies*, Dalhousie university, Halifax, Nova Scotia, p.2.

⁹⁶ Nyagahene, A., *Les activités économiques et commerciales du Kinyaga dont la seconde partie du 19e siècle*, Mémoire de Licence, Butare, UNR, 1979, pp.30-32

- **Markets and personal business**

Currently, there is no sufficient oral testimony on the way pre-colonial markets started in Rwanda. There is likelihood that their origin started with private initiatives under the influence of Rwanda's neighboring kingdoms, especially the Bashi. The influence of a strong lineage or an influential trader in a given area created monopolists capable of establishing attractive centers for businessmen and goods in a given place. In the second half of the nineteenth century, such market centers acquired a certain degree of organization. At the top was a chief who was recognized as the principal organizer of the trading centre.

There was a *market chief* who was responsible for the administration of the market. He played a dual role as a security officer and administrator. He was also charged with ensuring that justice was done regarding small crimes committed within the market. In addition, it was he who received taxes. He was assisted by his sons or people from his lineage. However, his presence did not prevent theft or acts of brutality from taking place in this market. At the end of the pre-colonial period, thieves in such barter-trade markets were tied up, beaten, and forced to return stolen objects or to pay a fine for their release. Sometimes, they got killed from the pushing of sharp objects into their bodies.⁹⁷

The market chief received taxes⁹⁸ and gave part of these to the local chief. This hierarchy was often avoided by going directly to the *King*, to whom luxurious objects were periodically given. This led to an increase of his influence in the area. The taxes consisted of hoes, goats, salt, tobacco, and foods grains. A cow was exchanged with one or two hoes or an equivalent quantity of bracelets levied as taxes. 50 Ubutenga-bracelets were paid as tax for one goat. Whoever refused to obey was excluded from the market, beaten up, or had his goods confiscated.

In the market where goods were bartered, two areas were distinguished. In one part, there was an area where animals were sold. In another, food stuffs such as grains and cooked

⁹⁷ Mutombo, R., *Les échanges commerciaux dans la région de Masangano à la fin de la période précoloniale*, Butare, UNR, 1978, p.175

⁹⁸ The tax had many names such as *ihoro*, *indamu*, or *uruhino*. The latter tax consisted of a hoe.

food were sold. The role of women in this trade was restricted. Around the major markets, there were secondary markets where commercial transactions were done. The permanent markets were held on a specific day of the week,⁹⁹ while others were organized periodically.

Most items sold in the market were from rural areas. They were brought by peasants themselves or by businessmen and hawkers. Whenever exchange took place between homes, farmers bartered items from house to house. They looked for items which they needed for immediate use. For example, beans were bartered with peas. Hawkers travelled from one village to another, buying items with lesser value in order to get some profit. Several categories of businessmen were identified at that time:

- *Intermediaries or transit traders*: these were generally big businessmen who were rich; they had caravans of goods and employed people who carried their goods. Alternatively, some had big herds of cattle. They frequented markets which were far from their places of birth.
- *Hawkers*: these moved from village to village, buying food items houses along the way , and buying especially livestock and foodstuff. They carried these items to markets where they would be bartered. They obtained some profit, which was not as high as that from business done in distant areas.
- *Middlemen*: these were people who played the role of intermediaries. Some also served as interpreters between traders speaking different languages. They performed this service at a fee, such as receiving some items for the services rendered.
- *Famine traders*: these appeared occasionally because famine was not permanent. It was generally periodic. Effectively, people hit by famine were forced to barter their property. They thus transacted trade for only one day.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ The traditional Rwandese week was made of 5 days of which 4 of these were devoted to work and the fifth day was called 'akadogo'. It was set aside for rest. In the royal court, the fifth day was given the name of *Cyumweru*. This was a person who was related to Kibogo, (half brother) of Ruhganzu Ndori. The name of *Cyumweru* is said to have been borrowed by the first Catholic Christian missionaries at the beginning of 1900.

¹⁰⁰ Mutombo, R., 1978, op. cit., p. 158 and Nagahene, A., 1979, op. cit., pp. 159-164.

These markets existed in several regions of the country and brought together different people from different corners of the country. Apart from the 40 national markets, there were international markets such as Bitare, Mururu, and Nyagahinga in Kinyaga, which brought together Abanyarwanda, Abahavvu, Abarega, Abarubdi, Abafulero, Abanyetambi, Ibishugi, Mushwiza, Ryabizige in Bugoyi, and Gasakuza, Gacaca, and Mpenge in Mulera brought together Abahunde, Abanande, Abayira, Abanyankore, and Abanyarwanda. Rwanza market in Bwanamukali, was frequented by Abashi, Abarundi, and Abanyarwanda.¹⁰¹

It should be noted that insecurity existed along commercial routes. The long distances involved compelled traders to sign pacts and make alliances with people from distant regions. Among these alliances, there were blood pacts followed by an exchange of cattle and friendship reinforced by gifts. Such pacts were practiced especially by *Abanyakinyaga* and the people from West of Rusizi.¹⁰² Hence, at the height of these commercial expeditions in Bushi or Kinyaga, each group of traders was protected by allies.

➤ **Commerce and economic complementarity**

Self-sufficiency in all items has never characterized any society. Ancient Rwanda thus practiced barter trade to satisfy their needs. Traded goods were generally based on food and artisan products. In agriculture, the predominance of certain products in one region would prompt people from other regions to look for it.

In addition, the craft industry existed in many forms and entailed items from the blacksmith industry, pottery, basketry, clothes made of skins or bark-cloth extracted from the ficus tree (*impuzu*), and carpentry. Blacksmiths looked for iron-ore in order to manufacture their items. In some parts of the country such as Kinyaga, where minerals did not exist, or in areas where iron was of poor quality, iron-ore was imported in the form of objects, which were transformed by blacksmiths.

¹⁰¹ Ntezimana, E., « Informations et communications au Rwanda avant 1900 », in *Dialogue*, n° 122, mai-juin, 1987, pp. 81-82 ; Ndekezi S., Nyetera P. C., Nyagahene A., *Ubuhashyibw'Abanyarwanda bo hambere*, Kigali, 1987, pp. 51-90; Mutombo R., 1978, op. cit., pp.85-130.

¹⁰² Chubaka, B. quoted by Nyagahene, A., 1987, op. cit., p. 164.

Blacksmiths were paid in the form of food items if the buyer pressed an order of locally-made items (*kugemura*). However, in the barter-market, the blacksmiths sometimes asked for other items of exchange like *Ubutega*-bracelets or small-sized livestock such as goats and sheep. The organization of the blacksmith industry was based on family lineage, although some volunteers existed – notably those who repaired damaged utensils.

The pottery industry was equally important because it provided utensils made of clay intended for cooking food, conserving grains of all types, and keeping liquids such as water and beer. This industry was an activity exclusively done by the *Batwa*. However, some families from the *Abayovu* clan who assimilated to the *Hutu* acquired some specialized knowledge in clay works. The items produced were also commercialized; buyers could access such items either in the home of the craftsmen or in the market where they were bartered.

Among other things, woodwork provided milk jugs, plates, wine brewers, and mortars. These items were delivered after orders were made, or they were bought in the barter market. The manufacture of garments made of skin and *impuzu* bark-tree bark required the services of specialists who sometimes inherited this skill from the lineage.

Some items played the role of currency because they became means of exchange as they were easily converted into smaller units and sub-units. This was the case for food grains, livestock, and non-perishable items such as hoes and bracelets. As far as bracelets were concerned, two units were used: *Igihumbi* (one thousand bracelets) and *Inzovu* (elephant), or two thousand. In purchasing big livestock such as cattle, the *Inzovu* measurement was especially used. When purchasing small-sized livestock like goats and sheep, the *Igihumbi* standard of measurement was used. For precious stones, there were two measurement units: i.e. *ipfundo* (knot), which was tantamount to ten bundled pearls (*ubuhivu*), and *akagozi*-fibre, which amounted to 100 pearls.

Big-size livestock were of capital importance in Ancient Rwanda. The cow provided milk, butter, and meat. Its skin was used to manufacture clothes; its hair on the tail (*ubusenzi*) was combined with jewels to make artistic products. The end parts of its horns were used as brushes in tannery works. The tails were used in

divine science. Cow-dung was used to strengthen baskets. In its dry form, cow-dung also served as fuel.

The cow was bartered for products of high value such as hoes, food crops, or pearls. Bulls and sterile cows were mostly sold. In general, a cow was exchanged with 8 or 9 hoes.¹⁰³ It should be noted that these prices varied from one region to another. For example, in Kinyaga, a cow cost between 20 and 60 hoes.¹⁰⁴ In the same region, a bull was valued at 15,000 bracelets and in rare cases 20,000 bracelets; this was based on the 'Inzovu' scale of measurement.

- **Barter trade and small livestock**

The small-sized livestock, such as sheep and goats, were used as items of exchange for hoes, food items, and other home utensils. A goat was valued at four or five hoes in most areas of the country. The number of hoes exchanged varied according to their strength and durability. Whenever one kept a goat or sheep for another person, one received its kid for the service rendered.

- **Barter trade and foodstuffs**

The price of foodstuffs varied from one period of the year to another and according to the supply of crops harvested. During harvest season, in order to get a hoe, it was necessary to bring two basketfuls of beans or double the amount of sorghum. In periods of drought, a single basketful of beans was equivalent to two hoes; one basket of sorghum was bartered for one hoe. If an item was found far from its place of manufacture, it was more expensive.

- **Barter trade and honey**

Honey was consumed by many Rwandans. Treated honey was kept in pots. This honey was used to buy important items like hoes, butter, and livestock.

¹⁰³ Ndekezi, S., Nyagahene A., Nyetera P.C., 1987, op.cit., p.19.

¹⁰⁴ Nyagahene, A., 1987, op.cit., p.156.

- **Barter trade and crafts**

The most used craft items were hoes. They were made of different types and varied in value according to their durability and place of manufacture:

- *Imberuka* manufactured in Buberuka in the current Northern Province of Rwanda
- *Indamba* from Buramba in the present district of Muhanga
- *Inshikazi* from Bushi, Buhavu (in the present Democratic Republic of Congo)
- *Gikondo* manufactured in Gikondo in the current town of Kigali
- *Giheshyi* of Gisaka (crafts quickly got depleted in this region)
- *Rusengesi* from Nyantango (present Western Province)¹⁰⁵

Here are some examples of prices of crafts and the way they were exchanged:

- 1 hoe = 2 big mats
- 1 hoe = 1 small spear
- 1 hoe = 1 sword
- 2 hoes = 2 mats each for 4 people and 1 goat.
- 1 basket = 1 bulkhead
- 1 knife = 1 basket

- **International trade**

Some products were imported. This was the case for salt from Lake Katwe near Lake Edward (*Rwicanzige*) or from Burundi. Copper came from Shaba, pearls came from Butemb, o and hoes came from Bwishya or Buvira.¹⁰⁶ According to A. Kagame's chronology,¹⁰⁷ oral tradition affirms that products of European or Asian origin appeared for the first time in Rwanda under the

¹⁰⁵ The blacksmiths from this region manufactured hoes for the royal court. This activity was widespread in many areas of the country like Gishamvu and Mpungwe near Huye. The hoes from Buberuka were the strongest and were therefore sold everywhere in the country. These areas were very famous. See Ndekezi S., Nyagahene A., Nyetera P.C., op. cit., pp.103-104.

¹⁰⁶ Ndekezi, S., Nyagahene A., Nyetera P.C., 1987, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

¹⁰⁷ Kagame, A., op. cit., 1972, pp. 131-132.

reign of King Yuhi Mpazimpaka, between 1642 and 1675. It was the Banyamwezi who linked the Coast up to Karagwe and Bushubyi. They sent gifts of precious stone and cloth to the Rwandan monarch.¹⁰⁸ Under the reign of King Yuhi Gahindiro (1749-1802), the quantity of cloth material increased. Cloth was worn by chiefs.¹⁰⁹ Under King Mutara Rwogera, using cloth as garments extended to many parts of Rwanda. As far as luxurious items were concerned, they were used by the ruling class and were therefore not part of mainstream trade.

It was during King Kigeri Rwabugiri's rule that Arabs made their first attempts to penetrate Rwanda.¹¹⁰ Slave trade was a problem with socio-economic, political, and humanitarian dimensions. King Rwabugiri's policy consisted of keeping Arabs and their auxiliaries at a distance. However, this policy gradually changed as the king became interested in obtaining luxurious goods. His supporters were thus enticed to begin slave trade in Rwanda. Slave trade was characterized by the presence of intermediaries between Arabs and Rwandan traders.

House maids were especially sold in slavery. These were often captured during raids and transported to distant areas for sale. In addition, during famine, children from many families were targeted for sale. Thieves and merchants captured these children. Slave trade in Rwanda can be traced as far back as 1890, and was especially prevalent in 1905-1906 during the *Kimwaramwara* famine. Otherwise, as demonstrated by E. Mujawimana, there were no slave trade markets in Rwanda.

Slave dealers posed as merchants who wanted to buy slaves. This business took place in slave trade centers. Kivumu, in the present district of Muhanga was a major centre involved in slave trafficking, contrary to the wishes of King Rwabugiri. Other trade centers were Rugerero in Bugoyi, Rwanza near Save, Mubuga in Bukonya, and Byahi in Bugoyi,¹¹¹ including Rukira in Gasaka. The choice of Rukira slave trade center was motivated by political

¹⁰⁸ Van Noten F., *Les tombeaux du Roi Cyirima Rujugira et de la Reine Mère Nyirayuhi*, pp.56-66.

¹⁰⁹ Kagame, A., « Les premiers contacts du Rwanda et de l'occident », in *Grands Lacs*, n° 135, 15 septembre 1950, p.8.

¹¹⁰ The sea-Arab merchants reached the East African Coast before the twelfth century. From the twelfth to the fifteenth century, their presence was concentrated at the coast where ivory and slave trade expanded. This trade extended to the hinterland of Africa.

¹¹¹ Ndekezi S., Nyagehene A., Nyetera P.C., 1987, op. cit., pp.79-80, A. Pagès, 1933, op.cit. p.163.

and commercial factors. The powers given by King Rwabugiri to the chiefs of Gihunya and Mirenge – his intermediaries for slave dealers – encouraged the development of slave trade as time went on. Rukira was the only center where slaves of Rwandese origin were exported, including those in transit from Bwishya and Bufumbira.

The cost of these slaves varied according to age, beauty, and origin. A child aged less than three years cost one goat or some cloth materials; a young lady was valued at cloth material for three people, or fifteen garments.¹¹² It should be mentioned that slave trade was not as widespread in Rwanda as in other neighboring countries, such as Tanganyika or Congo (present DRC). The Congo was ravaged by Tipo-Tipp, or Rumariza. The Rwandese did not support this type of trade because King Rwabugiri prevented his subjects from selling their compatriots. He even fought those who supported this trade, including Rumariza.

3.3.5. Cultural and social organization

a. Politics and literature

The term ‘culture’ has more than one hundred definitions. However, here one aspect of culture will be stressed - the arts. Arts involving dance and music will not be handled here. Special importance will be placed on court literature. This official literature was composed of *Ibisigo* (dynastic poems), *amazina y’inka* (cow poetry), and *ibiyivugo* (poems of heroic warriors). These three literary genres correspond to three stages of the evolution of Rwandan society and monarchy: the king, the cow, and war. These three things were important to the social, political, and even religious life of Rwandese.¹¹³

The art comprising ‘*Ibisigo*’ (singular *Igisigo*) is known as *Ubusizi*. *Ibisigo* can be understood by their content, importance, transmission, and evolution. Here, only the first two aspects will be developed. The content of dynastic poetry took two forms. The first form was fundamental. It dealt with the central and dominant theme – the glorification of the *Nyiginya* Monarchy.

¹¹² Ndekezi S., Nyagehene A., Nyetera P.C., 1987, op.cit., pp.79-80, A. Pagès, 1933, op.cit. p.84

¹¹³ Kagame A., « Le Rwanda et son roi », in *Aequatoria*, no 2, 1945, p.41

The second form was secondary and was expressed either directly or indirectly. It was the final supplication of the poet, who defends his interests and asks for compensation for his poetic contributions.

The glorification of the monarchy rotated on a few principal symbols. The *Karinga* drum constituted the essence of the monarchy. The symbol of the ruling king was always associated with the Queen Mother and the ancestors of the ruling king. The poem was addressed to these ancestors, comprising a normative aspect of dynastic poetry. Indeed, the poet repeated verses that praised the actions of the ruling king so as to satisfy his audience; he repeated that the king had succeeded in imitating his predecessors, but also had surpassed them because “*Umwami uhawe Uruharo arwigiza imbere*” (the king who has a task to accomplish must simplify it for his people).

Dynastic poetry was of fundamental importance to Rwanda’s political ideology and its history. The political dimension of dynastic poems was understood by its content. As far as its historical importance was concerned, dynastic poetry constituted a major reference point for the chronology of facts that took place in Ancient Rwanda. A series of poetic contributions was called “*ibisigo by’impakanizi*.” It should be noted that paragraphs of dynastic poems followed one another according to the chronology of queens, from Ruganzu Bwimba to Mutara Rudahigwa.¹¹⁴ The *Ibisigo* poems were supposed to be transmitted in their entirety.

e. Family (family poems)

The family was an important unit in ancient Rwanda. In general, it had a four-fold function: economic value, reproduction, satisfaction of sexual needs for spouses, and socialization of children. In traditional Rwanda, the family was composed of spouses and their children.¹¹⁵

- *The nuclear family*: this was composed of a woman, man, and their children;

¹¹⁴ Kagame A., *Introduction aux grands genres lyriques de l’ancien Rwanda*, Butare EUNR, 1969 p.187; B. Muzungu, « La problématique de l’histoire du Rwanda », in *Cahiers Lumière et Société*, no 33, mars 2006.

¹¹⁵ D’Hertefelt M., Trouborst A. A., Scherer J. H., *Les anciens royaumes de la zone interlacustre méridionale Rwanda, Burundu, Buha*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1962, pp. 51-52.

- *The polygamous family*: consisted of a man, his wives, and their children. Each wife had her own homestead.¹¹⁶ The man considered himself indispensable to the various nuclear families and thus visited his wives in turn;
- In the case of the death of a spouse, a woman would remarry one of the members of the family of her deceased husband in order to form a *Leviticus* family. The children resulting from this union were socially considered the same as those of other spouses. A stranger to the lineage could cohabit with a widow, especially with the consent of the family.

The family played several roles. It was the basic unit of cooperation and economic production. It produced all that it needed; people only went to the market if it was unavoidable. For a polygamous family, every nucleus family comprised an independent unit of production. The husband sold his labor. The occupations of women depended on the social status the family. Rich families had big-sized livestock while poor ones kept small-sized livestock.¹¹⁷ According to the Rwandan mentality, a large number of children brought happiness and strength to the family. The marriage of a daughter made it possible to extend alliances with other lineage groups. A daughter was considered a linking factor between families (*umukobwa ni gahuzamiryango*). Sexual intercourse between spouses was prescribed during marriage, at birth, during purification of the mourning ceremonies, at death, and during the enthronement of a king or during planting and harvesting seasons.¹¹⁸ The lineage and, eventually, the army were responsible for the socialization of children. (See the below section on traditional education.)

In traditional Rwanda, marriage was a union between a man and woman, after the former had paid dowry (*inkwano*) and after a ceremony where big quantities of beer was served (*Imihango yo gusaba no gukwa*).¹¹⁹ The *Inkwano* generally consisted of a

¹¹⁶ Maquet J. J., *Le système des relations sociales dans le Rwanda ancien*, Bruxelles, MRCB, 1954, p. 94.

¹¹⁷ D'Hertefelt M., et al. 1962, op. cit., p. 33

¹¹⁸ Buregeya S., *Les paysans du Bumbogo face aux autorités traditionnelles et coloniales, 1900-1956*, Butare, UNR, 1996

¹¹⁹ Bigirumwami A., *Imihango n'imigenzo n'imiziririzo mu Rwanda*, Nyundo, 1974, pp. 112-132; Ndekezi, S., *Ubukwe bw'Abanyarwanda*, Kigali, 1983.; Ndekezi, S., *Rituel du mariage coutumier au Rwanda*, Kigali, 1984.

cow, but it could also consist of goats and hoes. For people of lower social standing, dowry consisted of services rendered by the future husband in the home of his future father-in-law. This last category was tantamount to a free marriage.

A woman who only produced girls was divorced.¹²⁰ Whenever a lineage chased away a woman, this act was tantamount to divorce. The *Inkwano* was not refunded if the woman had not produced children for her husband.¹²¹ A woman who was chased without dowry on her head could remarry. It was mostly orphans who failed to get dowry. A family that never received *Inkwano* could, by a way of compensation, kidnap a brother-in-law (*muramu*) if the two spouses continued to live together.¹²² On the wedding day, wealthy citizens with lots of cows brought two cows, one of which was given to the groom.¹²³

Marriage took place between different ethnic groups and classes of Rwandan society, except between the *Batwa*. Sometimes, parents would be opposed to the marriage of their children to a particular person. They would decide who their child should marry. The young girl lived with her young husband. There were some superstitions involved, such as spitting milk on the young girl or touching her using the branch of a special tree.¹²⁴ In some cases, a young man would also elope with a young girl to make an illegal marriage. A. Bigirumwami describes the different stages of Rwandan marriage as follows:¹²⁵

- Firstly, look for *Umuranga* (a go-between of sorts), the paternal uncle or father of the boy;
- Make consultations to know the behavior of the girl;
- Consult the diviners to know if the fiancée is allowed by her family to get married, if she comes from a prosperous homestead, etc;
- *Gusaba* (asking for the hand of the girl) with crates of beer. In some families, the father of the girl asks for a

¹²⁰ Mukanyamurasa O., « *L'évolution du rôle socio-politique de la femme rwandaise de 1975 à 2000 : éducation et prise de décisions* », Mémoire de Licence, Kigali, KIE, 2004, p. 11.

¹²¹ D'hertefelt M. et al., 1962, op. cit., p. 54.

¹²² Bigirumwami A., « *Imihango n'imigenzo n'imiziririzo mu Rwanda* », Nyundo, 1974, p. 116.

¹²³ Ibid, p.114.

¹²⁴ D'Hertefelt M. et al., 1962, op. cit., p.49.

¹²⁵ Bigirumwami, A., 1874 op.cit. pp. 112-132.

gift of beer. In other families, the *Umuranga* says that the prospective groom is seeking to become a member of the new family and that he should be supported and accepted (*nje guhakwa, mumpake neza, mundeme amaboko n'amaguru, mumpe ubuhake nanjye nyoboke mpakwe*). At this stage, the family of the girl is given a hoe and *Isando* (a piece of special stick);¹²⁶

- Giving *Inkwano* – at this stage, the date of marriage is fixed;
- In the girl's home: consultation of spirits before marriage day;
- Also at the girl's home: advice is given by aunts of the girl on the eve of marriage;
- At the boy's home: consultation of the spirits is made;
- Look for the branch of a special tree and milk for the marriage ceremony;
- Marriage ceremony.

The importance attached to education of the child was reflected by what people thought about the child¹²⁷ All young children were educated by their mothers. As far as knowledge was concerned, boys and girls were considered to be equal. For example, they all learnt folktales and learnt about famous poets. They were taught that the first poet was a woman called *Nyirarumaga*.¹²⁸ As children grew up, girls were initiated to domestic work whereas boys learnt how to be courageous and to persevere. They were taught to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their country. They were initiated to specific duties and activities according to their social environment.

At sixteen years of age, a young girl began taking advice from her mother. The latter instructed her daughter on the dos and don'ts of society and on superstitions. The girl learnt how to keep the homestead clean by imitating those who were older than her. At

¹²⁶ Before the introduction of the cow, the hoe was the major item of wealth. *Isando* was brought according to the legend by Nyirarucaba. It brought prosperity to livestock and gave long life to the family.

¹²⁷ Mukamanase M.C., *La position socio-juridique de la femme rwandaise face à l'égalité de l'homme et de la femme*, Mémoire de licence, Butare, UNR, 1983, p.28.

¹²⁸ Kanakuze J.A., *L'évolution de la scolarisation de la femme rwandaise de 1952 à 2002 à la lumière de la vision 2020*, Mémoire de licence, Kigali, KIE, 2005, p.26.

the age of fifteen years, the girl was educated by her peers. Her peers gave her advice on sexual life and behavior regarding her future spouse. Tradition prevented the mother from speaking of certain things, especially sex-related matters, to her daughter. If a girl became pregnant when she was still single, she was severely punished.¹²⁹ Virginity was considered a symbol of pride for the family. Once married, the education of the wife was influenced by the family of her husband and neighbors.

The boy was taught to defend the interests of the family and the nation. He represented his father in the home and in society.¹³⁰ For the defense of the nation, every new king trained a new army when he was enthroned. The recruits, referred to as “*Intore*,” received prolonged sports and military training in the court. They also learnt the art of dance, rhetoric, poetry, and perseverance. They acquired qualities of generosity, tolerance, and courage.¹³¹ The education given in “*Itorero*” was a formal training in traditional Rwanda.

f. The place of the woman

In ancient Rwanda, the woman played a key role.¹³² She was present everywhere up to the highest level of the political, administrative, and military hierarchy. She was the wife and mother in the family structure. She handled all light domestic work. It was her duty to take care of all necessary supplies for the subsistence of the homestead. A man who interfered in the

¹²⁹ Mikamanase, M.C., 1983, O.P.C.I.T., P.29

¹³⁰ Kanakuze, J.A. , 2005, op.cit.,26.

¹³¹ Heremans, R., *Introduction à l'histoire du Rwanda*. Bruxelles, Editions A. De Boeck, Kigali, Editions rwandaises, 1973,pp.43-44

¹³² Nyirasafari, G., « La situation de la femme rwandaise », in Dialogue, no 26, mai 1971; Erny P., *De l'éducation traditionnelle à l'enseignement moderne au Rwanda (1900- 1975). Un pays d'Afrique noire en recherche pédagogique*, Thèse de Doctorat, Université de Lille, 1981; E. Mukamanase, *La femme rwandaise et le développement socio économique*, Mémoire de licence, Butare, UNR, 1982 ; Mugwaneza A., Recueil des études et ouvrages ayant trait à la femme rwandaise, Kigali, 1998 ; Nyiracumi A. M., *La situation socioculturelle de la femme rwandaise de 1900 a 1975. Cas d'Astrida/ Butare*, Mémoire de licence, Butare. UNR, 2001 ; Kawema C., *L'émancipation de la femme au Rwanda (1975-1999)*, Mémoire de licence, Butare, UNR, 2002; Rutabana E., *Le rôle des associations de veuves dans leur intégration psychosociale. Cas des associations Avega (PVK)- Duhozanye (Shyanda)*, mémoire de licence, Butare, UNR, 2001 ; Uwamaliya E., *L'évolution des relations entre l'homme et la femme pendant l'époque coloniale belge 1916 -1962*, Kigali, KIE

daily management of the home was badly conceived by society.¹³³ Beyond the homestead, the role of the woman was almost nonexistent: “in public life, not only was she forced to remain at home due to the multiplicity of domestic duties she had, but also the culture of the homestead excluded her from anything beyond the homestead. In fact, the woman basically contributed to the prosperity of the home.”¹³⁴

Some proverbs as well as do’s and don’ts help to explain the sexism which impacted the woman and which conferred a status of inferiority:

- A woman does not sit on the chair of her husband as long as the husband is still alive (*Umugore ntiyicara ku ntebe y’umugabo we igihe akiriho*);
- It is prohibited for a woman to lend her husband’s spear, arrow, or axe. This can bring her bad omen. (*Umugore ntawe yatiza icumu cyangwa u uheto cyangwa intorezo. Ngo byakenya umugabo we*);¹³⁵
- The hen never sings in the presence of the cock (*Nta nkokokazi ibika isake ihari*);
- In the homestead where a woman makes noise, quarrels never end (*Uruvuze umugore ruvuga umuhoro*).

These proverbs expressing dos and don’ts were accepted by society regarding the activities of women and men. This distinction was observed in the ceremonies and practices which followed the birth of a boy and a girl. Considering the roles that each of them was supposed to play in society, a spear and shield were given to the boy when he was given a name to wish him well as a successful warrior. A girl was given material for weaving baskets as a symbol of good management skills in the homestead.¹³⁶

¹³³ Kagame, A., *Les organisations socio-familiales de l’ancien Rwanda*, Gembloux, Editions Duculot, 1954, p.234.

¹³⁴ Mukanyamurasa, O., 2004, op. cit., p.7.

¹³⁵ Bigirumwami, A., *Imihango n’imigenzo n’imizirizo*, Nyundo, 1974, pp. 43-44; Mukanyamurasa, O., *L’évolution du rôle socio-politique de la femme rwandaise de 1975 à 2000: éducation et prise de décision*, Mémoire de Licence, Kigali, KIE, 2004, p.7

¹³⁶ MIGEPROF, FNUAD, *Etude sur les croyances, les attitudes et les pratiques socioculturelles en rapport avec le genre au Rwanda*, version finale, Kigali, 2002, p. 13.

In addition, “culture did not recognize equality between man and woman; patri-lineal structures of the family gave power and wealth to men.”¹³⁷ The boy inherited the property of the family. His residence was situated not far from his parents so that he could assist them during old age.

Apart from these discriminative tendencies, culture conferred to a woman special respect which had to be protected by her family and husband. A woman was considered an agent of production of wealth and a tool to reproduce children. This gave her great respect. On her side, a woman owed respect and submissiveness to her husband. She was supposed to enlarge the family of her husband. The girl and boy played different roles. The boy played the role of family identity. The girl was, above all, wife and mother. This view must however be put in the context of every generation. Owing to the social economic role played by the wife, she was indeed respected in society. It was forbidden to kill one’s wife. Whenever this custom was transgressed, the family of the murderer would lose a relative when a woman of the same age as the murdered wife produced a baby. This was in compensation for the baby that was going to be produced by the murdered woman. A woman’s respect was seen in the names given to girls, for example: *Munganyinka*, (one who brings a cow for me), *Mukobwajana* (one whose dowry price was equal to one hundred cows), and *Nyampinga* (providence). In pre-colonial Rwanda therefore, the girl was the most protected person by society.

In traditional Rwandan society, the occupations of men and women complemented each other. The man did hard labor in the garden; he constructed huts, attended to livestock, hunted, and did garden work. The woman attended to all domestic duties and agricultural activities. She ensured cleanness in the homestead, fermented milk, cleaned vegetables and food grains, pounded sorghum, looked for firewood and water, prepared food and beer, lit fire, attended to children, cultivated land, and planted, weeded, and harvested.

As far as widowhood was concerned, economic solidarity ended with the death of the husband; “whether she had received cattle from her parents or from the husband, the widow never inherited

¹³⁷ Adriaenssens, J., *La parenté, le mariage et la famille*, Butare, 1964, p.148.

property of her husband.”¹³⁸ When the widow remained in the home of her late husband, she continued to take care of his property. In case of divorce, widowhood, and old age, the woman received a small patch of land.

The marriage gift for the bride was a fat cow (*inka ya Gashyimbo*). When she got married, she took this gift to her newly established home. In case of divorce, she returned to her home with this cow. This practice ended under King Yuhi Gahindiro’s reign because it is said that at this time, women who owned ‘*Inka ya gashyimbo*’ did not respect their husbands. They started to look down upon their husbands because of the property they had acquired. Henceforth, all gifts they received became part of their husband’s property.¹³⁹ In, succession and divorce were deeply unfair to the woman.

It should be noted that some women climbed to very high positions in political, administrative, and military hierarchies. In this respect, mention should be made of the Queen Mother whose title was ‘*Umugabekazi*’ (Woman head of army).¹⁴⁰ In the first military expedition of Rwabugiri against the Island of Ijwi, a Queen Mother known as *Nyirakigeri IV Murorunkwere* was commander of the military expedition. When they arrived in *Nyamirundi*, operations were directed by *Nzirumbanje*, son of Mitari, brother of *Nyirakigeri*.¹⁴¹

The services of women were also used in magical circles to annex foreign kingdoms. There were political marriages where some girls were proposed to foreign kings or princes for marriage. Children resulting from such marriages were expected to liberate Rwanda. This was the case for Nyirantobwa, daughter of Mibambwe Mutabazi, who was married by Mashira. She went with a black cow without horns to symbolize the future defeat of Mashira. Mibambwe Sekarongoro Mutabazi married Bwiza (the most beautiful girl); daughter of Mashira and Gahindiro (son of Mibambwe with ancestry title of Abenegahindiro) married Nyankeri who was Mashira’s daughter also.¹⁴² To end the

¹³⁸ Bourgeois, R., *Banyarwanda et Barundi. T2 : Coutumes*, Bruxelles, IRCB, 1954, p.367.

¹³⁹ Kagame A., 1954, op.cit, p.183.

¹⁴⁰ Nahimana F., *Rwanda. Emergence d’un Etat*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 1993, p.36.

¹⁴¹ *Minisiteri y’amashuri makuru n’ubushakashatsi mu by’ubuhanda, Ingoma ya Kigeli Rwabugiri na Nyarayuhi Kanjogera, Kigali, Ubuyobozi bukuru bw’ubugeni*, 1988, p.28.

¹⁴² Kagame A., 1972, op. cit., p.77.

confederation of Abenengwe clan found in the southwestern part of Rwanda, Yuhi III Gahima married Nyankaka, daughter of Magunguru and young sister of Benginzage (Nyagakecuru), wife of Samukendi, King of Bungwe. Nyankaka was sent to Bungwe and on her return, she conceived Binama, son of Samukende. Binama was of royal origin and became the liberator of Bungwe.¹⁴³

King Cyirima II Rujigira married Nyirantabwa. This helped him to conquer Ndirwa and Gahurira. He had two sons, Kamali and Mugozi. Kamali was destined to play an important role in the future wars against Ndorwa. He faked an allegiance in order to show that there was friendship with Biyoro, ruler of Mubari. King Kigeri III Ndabarasa proposed the hand of his daughter, Nyabugondo, to Biyoro. Biyoro accepted eagerly. A girl became a liberator. Kinyange was a court servant who preferred to be killed in the place of the Queen Mother. This was during a plot made by Prince Semugaza, who wanted to take over the throne. Nyiramuhanda, a woman working in the king's court, offered her baby instead of Gahindiro. This baby and Kiyange were killed as liberators. Knowledge of the esoteric code was handed over to Nyiramuhanda. This was a privilege originally prohibited for women, including queen mothers themselves.¹⁴⁴

From the political point of view, the Queen Mother occupied a privileged position in the country. She did not have specific duties, but she shared all responsibilities and prerogatives with the king. For example, whenever gifts were offered to the king, the Queen Mother also had to receive some.¹⁴⁵ The influence of the Queen Mother on the king depended on the character of the latter. In any case, the responsibility of managing the kingdom fell on the king, except when he was a minor. During such a period, the Queen Mother would assume power.¹⁴⁶

In principal, there were no female chiefs. But, a team of NUR researchers and those from the Major Seminary of Nyakibanda

¹⁴³ Ibid. p. 85.

¹⁴⁴ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit, p.148.

¹⁴⁵ Coupez, A., Kamanzi Th., *Récits historiques du Rwanda*, Tervuren, 1962, p.93.

¹⁴⁶ Mibamwe's wife called Shetsa of Abega clan was imposed on the throne. She forced the monarch to do whatever she wanted, she was sure that the future king was supposed to be her son Hondi. However, the future queen mother was supposed to be Umuha. To outwit her, the court secretly brought from Buha Mutama daughter of Bigega. See A. Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'histoire du Rwanda*, pp.81-82.

identified a list of female *Abatware* and *Ibisonga*¹⁴⁷ who played key political roles. In addition, the Rwandan tradition testifies to the presence of some female chiefs.

Nyirantebe provides such an example. She was the sister of King Yuhi Gahima and was charged with heading the Province of Nyakari. She governed this region with her husband and her children until she became very old.¹⁴⁸ She lived two generations before Yuhi Gahima. Nyirangabo was chief of the house of King Kigeri Rwabugiri in Ijwi Island and later in Bunyambilili. She protected the house of Rwabugiri against intruders. Gicunatiro administered the region of Kagina in Rukoma under Rwabugiri. *Nyirakimonyo* ruled Ndago (Nyaruguru) under King Rwabugiri and King Musinga.¹⁴⁹

In other areas of Rwanda, women had political responsibilities, such as in Bukunzi and Busozo. The queens (*abamikazi*) had real influence that sometimes counterbalanced that of kings. They controlled all court foreseers and priests, the majority of whom were women and who numbered dozens.¹⁵⁰ The circumstances which called for divine science were those which threatened the life of the king or the kingdom. These included: the king's movements abroad, the reception of foreign guests by the king, and the choice of the first lady for the king. The queens of Bukunzi or Busozo were informed in advance about the program of the king and prepared a timetable for him. Queens thus determined and regulated the daily activities of the court. In this respect, Queen *Mwalirugamba* is a prime example.¹⁵¹

From the protocol point of view, it seems that the queen and the king were equal. Queen *Mwalirugamba* went to Bujumbura in 1904 to plead for her son after the death of her husband, Nyundo, which occurred when a group of dynastic members wanted to take the royal drums away. The orders were given by Bujumbura in Shangi to reinstate Buhinga II to his kingdom under the regency of his mother.

¹⁴⁷ Uwamaliya E., 2004, op.cit., p.24

¹⁴⁸ Vansina, J., "History tales (*ibitekerezo*) and the history of Rwanda", in *History in Africa. A journal of methodology*, vol 27/2000,p.384.

¹⁴⁹ Uwamaliya, E., 2004, op.cit., p.24.

¹⁵⁰ Ntezimana, E., « Coutûmes et traditions des royaumes Hutus du Bukunzi et du Busozo », in *Etudes Rwandaises*, XIII, 2, 1980, pp. 24-25.

¹⁵¹ In May 1923, when Father Superior of Mibirizi visited King Buhinga II of Busozo, he was taken to Queen *Mwalirugamba* first.

From the judicial point of view, justice was in principle a man's affair. A woman did not have the right to speak in public for fear of being banished. Gacaca traditional courts were reserved for adult men. Women only expressed their opinions via their husbands. Family interests were defended by heads of families. Some exceptional cases existed where, owing to their knowledge, wisdom, and political influence, women participated in traditional justice.

According to the Ubwiru institution, the belts belonging to queen mothers who had died were honored by members of the lineage. A group of 'Abiru custodian of relics'¹⁵² kept these belts. Knowledge of the Ubwiru institution was kept secret. It is narrated that the wife of Mibambwe Mutabazi and her son perished for having wanted to probe the improbable. Similarly, Nyiramavugo Nyiramongi, mother of Mutara Rwogera, out of her curiosity, made Kigeri Rwabugiri put Inkoroko to death for having spread false information on the issue of Rwogera's succession.¹⁵³

The tombs of the queen mother of Mukobanya Nyirakigeri I Nyangige prove the political role of some Rwandan women. These tombs are found at Rubingo in the place called Ku Kabira (Shyorongi). The first queen mother whose cemetery is known lies in these tombs. The minor dynasty of Mugina residing in this area was charged with performing a special ritual for this queen mother under the management of the Abiru of Nyamweru. Under Ruganzu Ndori, the *Ubwiru* Institution stipulated that queen mothers were supposed to be buried in the same locality as their husbands. Hence, Nyiramavugo I Nyirakabogo was buried in Mutangampundu, a cemetery reserved for kings who had died violently.¹⁵⁴ Queen Mother Nyirakigeri II Ncendeli was also buried there owing to her misbehavior, including having become pregnant.

Under Mutara II Semugeshi, it was decided that during the celebration ceremony of the cows' drinking place, the king would identify the clan from which the queen mothers of Kigeli and Mibambwe were to be chosen. He also identified the family of the Abega Clan, from which the mother of Cyirima was to be chosen.

¹⁵² He was chief of the *Abakuna* lineage which was made of descendants of Mukuna. This privilege was withdrawn in 1945 during the introduction of *Abiru* to A. Kagame

¹⁵³ Nkulikiyimfura J.N., *Les sources de l'histoire du Rwanda*, Collection Cours universitaires, Ruhengeri, UNR, 1992.

¹⁵⁴ Kagame A., 1972, op.cit., p.74.

King Yuhi Mazimpaka decreed that his descendants would no longer marry women from the Abacyaba Clan. This was because King Nsoro III Nyabarega of Bugesera had questioned the beauty of the wives of the Rwandan monarch and due to a conspiracy between some of his wives, namely Kihunde and Kiranga.¹⁵⁵

B. Muzungu¹⁵⁶ and A. Kagame¹⁵⁷ identify some women who were important personalities in the history of Rwanda. There were Nyiragahira, a woman who lived in Mukingo, and Mwanabili, a woman mentioned in Rwandan tradition among the women who arranged the return of King Ruganzu Ndori. Under the latter's rule, Nyirarumaga from Abasinga clan distinguished herself by her artistic talents. She updated a new form of poem called '*Impakanizi*,' which is composed of several parts speaking about several kingdoms simultaneously. This differed from previous poems that never went beyond ten verses (*Ibinyeto*).

Poems also spoke of women. Under King Kigeri III Ndabarasa, a poet known as *Musare* noted in her poem that "*mbwire umwami uko abandi bami bantumye*" (let me tell the king the message transmitted by other kings). Thus, *Musare* informed kings and queen mothers of what the population wanted to say. The queen mother used to go to the poet Muganza for advice. Muganza's poem, entitled "*Mvulire Ubuhaka*" (I will succumb to slavery), managed to bring about reconciliation between the Queen Mother's two conflicting sons.¹⁵⁸

Under King Yuhi Gahindiro, Queen Mother Nyirayuhi Nyiratunga acted as regent until Gahindiro became mature. Mucuma lived under the reign of King Kigeri Rwabugiri and was known for her musical and poetic talents. She is the author of '*Uramutashye*' (send to him my greetings), '*Wibabara*' (don't be sad), and '*Inkuru nziza yabaye*' (the good news has come).

As far as social identity was concerned, some children identified themselves by using names of their mothers. For polygamous communities in the northern part of the country, basic family meetings were always held in the home of the first wife. Sometimes, children who were born by other wives refused to meet with their

¹⁵⁵ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit., p.127.

¹⁵⁶ Muzungu, B., *Histoire du Rwanda precolonial*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2003, pp.349-353.

¹⁵⁷ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit., pp.99-100.

¹⁵⁸ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit., pp.158, 164.

father in the home of the first wife. They preferred to meet in the houses of their respective mothers. When the father succumbed to these demands of his children, divisions in the family were provoked. The emergence of a sub-group of sons who identified themselves by women's names followed; sons produced by one woman met in one place and were under the direct influence of this woman.¹⁵⁹

It should be noted that the family of *Abatabaro* from Nyaruguru (current Southern Province) produced sons who took the name of their mother. This was the case of the *Abatambi*, who were descendants of *Nyirankwitambi*, and the *Abaremezo*, who were *Nyiraremezo's* descendants.¹⁶⁰ This name-identification with women was not only found in Ancient Rwanda. We can therefore speak of matri-lineal descendants. Matrilineal societies trace the line of descendency from mother to daughter. Children inherit not from their father, but from their maternal uncle. For the *Abatabaro*, however, children inherited from their father.¹⁶¹

A few Rwandan women are cited in Rwandan tradition with ancestry titles of Rwandan clans. Hence, some official and popular legendary traditions associate the *Abacyaba* Clan with the great hero Gihanga, whose mediation was achieved through his daughter Nyirarucyaba.¹⁶² The origins of the *Abasobe* clan are contradictory and confusing. One version associates them with a servant of Nzibira, *Nyirarusobe*, who revealed to King Ruganzu Ndori the trick to defeat Nzira. Clearly, some women have left an indelible mark on the history of Rwanda.¹⁶³

g. Beliefs and cults

The Rwandese believed in the existence of a Supreme Being called 'Imana.' Their belief dealt with the survival of ancestors after death. The latter were divided into two categories, namely the benevolent ancestors, called '*Ingabwa*,' and the evil ones.

¹⁵⁹ Nahimana, F., 1993, op.cit, p.47.

¹⁶⁰ Minani, O.G., *Evolution sociopolitique d'un lignage : Abatabaro dit Abahebyi dans le Nyaruguru (1850- 1935)* , Mémoire de Licence, Butare, 1981, p.5

¹⁶¹ Nahimana, F., 1993, op. cit., p.40.

¹⁶² Nyagahene, A., op. cit., p.454.

¹⁶³ Kanakuze, J.A., 2005, op.cit., p.32

- **The concept of *Imana***

For ancient Rwandans, the universe was totally dominated by *Imana* (God). Even if there were neither temples nor cults for worshipping *Imana*, the Rwandese made their supplications to him and thanked him. They gave names to their children that invoked God's attributes. There were some names that invoked the major qualities of God, such as *Iyakare* (the alpha), *Rurema* (the creator), *Ruhanga* (one who gives life to something that never existed before), *Rugira* (one who puts things into existence), and *Rugaba* (the giver).¹⁶⁴ Given this context, the two major themes of 'Rurema' and 'Rugira' dominate in Rwanda's literary genres. The secondary attributes of *Imana* are principally found in legends, proverbs, and anthroponomy and stress the themes of transcendence and immanence.

One etiological legend in Rwanda shows how *Imana* is very far from us:

“Once upon a time, it was believed that *Imana* lived near his people. He used to help them by following them and protecting them day and night. Indeed, *Imana* took care of all children. Then, one day, when a father in one homestead had gone hunting, and while a mother was working in the field, *Imana* started taking care of the children in that family. He caressed them and made fun for them. Suddenly, on return from his hunting expedition, the father of the children was surprised to see an unknown being among his children. He got shocked by and said, ‘What on earth is this amazing being?’ Without hesitation, he drew his arrow and directed it towards the strange being which, in a twinkle of an eye, escaped in the sky. This is why *Imana* is no longer seen among people today.”

The above legend and other Rwandan sayings show that although *Imana* is all knowledgeable and omnipotent, he is also omnipresent in our daily life. This is similar to Burundi and Buha legends in present Tanzania. Such legends give *Imana* an anthropomorphic form: he walks and works! However, he is also considered immaterial. *Imana* is very powerful; he knows, hears,

¹⁶⁴D'herfelfelt M., Trowborst, A., Scherer J.H., *Les anciens royaumes de la zone interlacustre meridionale Rwanda, Burundi, Buha*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1962.

and sees everything. He is also benevolent and offerings should be made to appease him. In the absence of such offerings to *Imana*, man resorts to the king who acts as *Imana*'s intermediary. The king is therefore considered a national priest who links the spirits of ancestors and the divine world.

However, there is an inferior but powerful force of evil, *Ruremankwaci*, which is the cause of man's problems.¹⁶⁵ The previously discussed concept of *Imana* is not the same as the one in Christianity. Ancient dynastic poems, anthroponomy, proverbs, wishes, and pleas constitute the principal sources of knowledge about the Supreme Being for Rwandans. Man and his cosmic environment are thus sacrosanct. *Imana* alone is the absolute master. Men are just managers and ministers of the divine power.¹⁶⁶ Here are some examples of proverbs and verses to illustrate the above point:

- *Umukama uyu akamirwa n'Imana, natwe akadukamira amata akadukwira* (the king who is present drinks milk which is milked by *Imana* and, in turn, the king milks it for us, hence the milk becomes abundant...). Ordinary work is considered fruitful because it is blessed and perfected and realized within *Imana*'s actions behind it.
- *UHINGIWE N'IMANA AGIRANGO AZI GUHINGA* (a person whose cultivation task is done by *Imana* may think that he is the one who knows how to cultivate, but....)
- *UWO IMANA IHAYE IROBE AGIRANGO ARUSHA ABANDI GUHINGA* (a person to whom *Imana* gives some little energy may think that he can cultivate better than others, but....)¹⁶⁷

- **Imana and imana**

Ancient Rwandans distinguished between the existence of '*imana*' and '*Imana Rurema*.' However, they also established a relationship between '*imana*' and '*Imana*.'¹⁶⁸ It should be noted

¹⁶⁵ Mbonimana, G., *Le culte des mandwa au Rwanda. Contribution à l'histoire des mentalités*, Mémoire de Licence, Université Catholique de Louvain, 1973- 1974, p.12

¹⁶⁶ Muzungu, B., "Religions traditionnelles rwandaises et le problème démographique", in *Dialogue*, no 104, 1984, pp.86-87.

¹⁶⁷ Schumacher, P., "Un cours de théologie dans la brousse Africaine", in *Grands Lacs*, 1935, no 5-6, pp.163-175.

¹⁶⁸ Nothomb, D., "Le Dieu de nos pères", in *Dialogue*, janvier- février 1974, No 49, p.39.

that from the historical and socio-religious points of view, God, Angels, and Demons – which leave the flesh after death – fall under the category of spirits.¹⁶⁹ The following things are also called *imana* (god): the king, chance, animals of divine science (bull calves, rams, chicks), talismans containing stuff obtained from sacred animals, diviners, the intermediary of *Ryangombe* in ceremonies of the *Imandwa* cult, the lineage protective spirit, sacred trees at the bottom of which sacrifices are offered, sycamore and erythrin trees which give sanctuary to spirits or places of cult for the ancestral founders of lineages, and places where objects of commemoration for religious functions are organized. Benevolent and generous persons are also, by metonymy, under the name of “*imana y’I Rwanda*,” or “god of Rwanda.”

In Rwanda, there were also *Imana*-related names¹⁷⁰ that served as a tool for analyzing the concept of God before 1900. Currently, Christian teaching has exerted a lot of influence on the *Imana*-invoking names used in Rwanda. Names that are God-invoking have been found in oral and official traditional sources. But, names like *Gihanga* and *Rumeza* make reference to divine power. It is important to stress that those God-bound names for many Rwandans were given between 1928 and 1994 when the Catholic religion was at its height. These names reflect the beliefs of the ancestors from which ancestral religion was born.

- **Guterekera or cult for ancestors**

The cult of ‘*Guterekera*’ was based on the belief in life after death and the relationship between the living and the dead. According to this belief, man and animals were made of a visible part, the body, and an invisible part, or “shadow.” At death, the body became a carcass and the shadow escaped from the body. In a mysterious way, the shadow was transformed into “spirits” or ‘*Umuzimu*.’ The dead could interfere with the living with both good and bad intentions, which is why spirits were sometimes feared and inspired cults.¹⁷¹ In addition, a vertical solidarity connected both the living and the benevolent people to the ancestor called *Ingabwa* (hence the name *Habingwaba*).

¹⁶⁹ Misago, A., « La croyance aux esprits au Rwanda et son impact sur la vie quotidienne d’aujourd’hui », in *Foi et Culture*, Séminaire du 26-31 Octobre 1987, p.8.

¹⁷⁰ Muzungu, B., « *Imana y’I Rwanda* : Dieu qui règne au Rwanda », in *Cum Paraclito*, 1965, p.12.

¹⁷¹ Heremans, R., *Introduction à l’Histoire du Rwanda*, Kigali, Editions Rwandaises, 1988, p.51.

The dead always demanded love and respect from their living relatives. They also demanded that the rights on the property of their heirs be respected. Every family used to construct small huts, '*Indaro*,' dedicated to the appeasement of the spirits of known ancestors. It should be noted that Rwandans believed in metaphysics. It was believed that the dead king was transformed into a leopard. This is why kings were called *Abambarangwe* (those who were dressed in leopard-skin). There was another belief that some mysterious beings manifested their evil power by acting in mysterious ways. They were given different names in different regions. Almost everywhere, and especially in the central and eastern regions of Rwanda, they were called '*Amahembe*.' In the central and southwest, they were called '*Ibitega*.' In the former province of Cyangugu, they were called '*Ibihume*,' and had other names like *ibigashanyi*.¹⁷² According to the legend above, the origin of '*Guterekera*' can be summarized as follows:

- The two brothers Basindi and Kibanda were great friends;
- The son of Basindi killed the son of Kibanda;
- This forced the family of Basindi into exile;
- The two brothers met after very many years in a foreign country;
- Kibanda refused to commit vendetta on the son of his brother;
- Kibanda married the sister-in-law of the murderer;
- Kibanda accepted an olive branch and accepted to be smeared with kaolin butter.¹⁷³

The use of the olive branch and 'kaolin' symbolized reconciliation and refusal of revenge in the family, despite the act of murder committed by an immediate cousin. The act of reconciliation prevented the dead from bringing misfortune to the living. In fact, this narrative was created to enable the *Ababanda* to live harmoniously with the *Abasindi* after the conquest of Nduga.

¹⁷² Misago, A., op. cit., 1987, p.10; *Ibihume* are spirits of the dead which families own or invoke. They appear in the form of ghosts and phantoms which live in woodlands, rivers and caves etc. Their actions manifest themselves through attacks similar to epilepsy and, hysteria or other queer diseases which are above ordinary therapy.

¹⁷³ Bigrumwami A., 1974,op.cit., p.270.

In the practice of *Guterekera*, the family chief woke up at dawn and went to the hut dedicated to his ancestor so as to appease him. He sat at the threshold of the hut and was smeared with *kaolin* brought on an *erythrin* leaf. The person who brought this leaf put his finger in the *kaolin* and made a sign on the forehead and chest of the family chief, wishing him happiness and power. The family chief splashed some water in the hut and brought millet grains and kaolin in a small basket. He lit a fire so that the spirit could get warmth and threw some grains that cracked as they came in contact with fire. The cracking of the grain symbolized laughter by the appeased spirits. This ritual was accompanied by other cultural rites so that the dead could be assured of good deeds done by the family. At the same time, the spirits gave mercy and protection to all.¹⁷⁴

For all intents and purposes, the ancient Rwandese consulted diviners.¹⁷⁵ The diviner knew how to interpret the signs of the visible world and God's willingness. Different types of divine science were used:

- Divination by bones, pumpkin-seeds, small pieces of wood, magic horn
- Divination by bull calf, ram, goat, chick
- Animal fat, dry flowers, butter, plants, grasshoppers, water
- Invoking *Imandwa* and *Nyabingi* spirit
- Intuition or prophecy

A. Bigirumwami identifies some causes of '*Guterekera*.' It was a way of protecting someone's heritage and his family, or it was an activity intended to appease a woman who had lost a child to murder by her co-wife (*mukeba*). Before the act of murder, the Rwandese believed that man was resurrected immediately after death. The cult prevented the spirit of a dead woman from exterminating all of humanity.¹⁷⁶ The practice of '*guterekera*' also aimed at getting a male heir and the transformation into an immortal being by the cult of the living.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. p.19

¹⁷⁵ There were other specialists for mysteries namely abacunyi or the healers who made charms, abahanyi or ritual purifiers.

¹⁷⁶ Bigirumwami, A., 1974, op.cit. p. 270.

➤ **Kubandwa**

We have described the ritual for Rwandese ancestors at family level. Nonetheless, there existed spirits which were consulted after death. The cult which praised them surpassed both family and clan levels. The cult of '*kubanda*' existed in all parts of the Great Lakes Region. This was the Mandwa or Ryangombe cult. While observing it, its followers sought *Ryangombe*'s protection. The *Imandwa* cult has a long history in Rwanda and has undergone transformations for years.¹⁷⁷

The word *Imandwa* refers to both the specialist and the medium of the cult. This word is interpreted in different forms in Bunyoro, Toro, Nkore, Kigezi (Uganda), Buhaya, Bujinja, Buha, Bukerewe (island in Lake Victoria), Rwanda, Burundi, and Kivu (DRC). Practicing *Ukubandawa* refers to participating in ceremonies that helped an individual become a member of society. The act of honoring the *Imandwa* was realized by imitating their ritual sounds and gestures. *Ukubandwa* is celebrated when one is a full and complete member. There is no unanimity on the origin of *Ryangombe* and *Imandwa* cults.¹⁷⁸ The existing literature on *Ryangombe*, like that of the *Bacwezi*, is characterized by the *Hamite*¹⁷⁹ hypothesis. Some people affirm that the *Imandwa* cult preceded that of *Ryangombe* and that it is of Hutu origin.¹⁸⁰

Others posit that the cult was imported into Rwanda and therefore came after the disappearance of the *Barenge* in the fifteenth century.¹⁸¹ Others claim that this cult is a relatively recent development and that *Ryangombe* was Tutsi, contrary to those who thought he was Twa or Hutu. The ruling class accepted *Ryangombe* as a tool to facilitate the domination of the people who were culturally assimilated.¹⁸²

The existing narratives do not determine the exact cause of '*Kubandwa*.' Some traditions affirm that the cult was imposed

¹⁷⁷ Arnoux A., « Le culte de la société secrète des Imandwas au Rwanda », in *Anthropos*, vol. VIII 1913 ; Schumacher P., « Les mystères des Mandwas sont d'origine hamite », in *Congo*, 1931, I, pp. 549-550.

¹⁷⁸ Kagame, A., 1976, *La philosophie bantoue-rwandaise*, p.24, 416.

¹⁷⁹ Berger, I., *Religion and resistance, East African Kingdoms in the pre-colonial period*, MRAC, 1981, p. 57. p. 59, op. cit. p. 312

¹⁸⁰ Arnoux, A. 1912, art. Cited p. 290

¹⁸¹ Ndagijimana, A., Personal notes, s.l.n.d. (manuscript copy in our archives)

¹⁸² Berger, I., 1981, op. cit p. 57

on the entire Rwandan population by King Mutara Semugeshi. For others, the imposition was done during the reign of King Ruganzu Ndori. Under King Yuhi Mazimpaka, the ‘*Imandwa*’ cult was well known. King Cyrima Rujugira put in place the first *Imandwa* Leader (*Umwami w’imandwa*). The King of *Imandwa* and the chief of the initiated were traditionally the *Abashambo*, from the lineage of *Abayumbu*. They rose to dignity under King Mibambwe Sentabyo’s rule¹⁸³. A herd of cattle called ‘*Impara*’ was associated with this group of warriors. It was among these people that King Rwabugiri brought up his son, *Sharangabo*.¹⁸⁴

The link between ‘*kubandwa*’ and ‘*guterekera*’ can be exemplified by the concept of virginity in the service of King Yuhi Mazimpaka in Kamonyi.¹⁸⁵ Some spirits were associated with specific cults :

- The king, but this was done in his residence;
- The woman who had produced many children;
- A woman who was married to put an end to a vendetta;
- Someone who had died far away from his or her relatives;
- A child who had died two or three days after birth;
- A young girl;
- A foreigner who had died in someone else’s home.¹⁸⁶

It should be remembered that while the myths of *Imandwa* and *Kubandwa* were taking place, another cult of two heroes was born: *Kibogo* and *Cyumweru*; they were supposedly the contemporaries of King Ruganzu Ndori. It is said that Kibogo was son of King Ndahiro Cyamatatare and was massacred with his family in a clan vendetta. According to A. Pagès, Kibogo was offered by his father to beg the spirits for good weather after a serious famine. His body was burned in a place called “*Mu kadasaya ka Ngoma*” in the present district of Kamonyi. It was sent to Heaven in the form of smoke. This took place during the reign of King Semugeshi and not during King Ndahiro’s rule. The rain-makers considered Kibogo their heavenly master. The *Imandawa* Cult offered him a crate of beer and some bananas for

¹⁸³ Rennie, K. J., Kingdom of Rwanda, p. 38, cited by I. Berger religion and resistance, p. 59, op. cit. p. 312.

¹⁸⁴ De Lacger, L., 1959, op. cit. p. 312.

¹⁸⁵ Buhigiro, J. L., op. cit. p. 19

¹⁸⁶ Bigirumwami, A., 1974, op. cit., pp. 278- 280.

his wife. Kibogo became *Imandwa*. He was honored by a special cult in the royal court until 1931, when King Yuri Musinga was dethroned and banished to Kamebe by the Belgian colonial administration¹⁸⁷.

Cyumweru is said to have lived in Ruhina in the present district of Muhanga. He protected Kibogo and even accompanied him to heaven. Given his honor, King Mutara Semugeshi exempted Cyumweru's wife from all forced labor and reduced the forced labor for other people by one day out of five in Rwanda's traditional week. The fifth day of rest was called *Akadogo*.

As far as the '*Ukubandwa*,' or feast for initiated members was concerned, this ritual was organized in solemn and public ceremonies. It was accompanied by gestures, speeches, and chants in honor of the "king of spirits" — *Ryangombe*. Its membership was generally restricted to those who were already initiated and those who applied to become candidates for initiation. The non-initiated members were called '*Inzingo*.' After death, the '*Inzingo*' were taken to *Nyiragongo*, an active volcano, while the '*Imandwa*' were compensated after death. They joined *Ryangombe* in paradise where a volcano had gone extinct in *Muhabura*, *Karisimbi*.

Before the ceremonies of this cult took place, the diviners were consulted in order to avoid all misfortune during the ceremony. Every candidate who attended the initiation ceremony had a godfather for men and a godmother for women. The godfather and godmother had also passed through the same process. Their choice and the choice of place where the initiation ceremony took place were determined by a diviner. Participation in the *Ryangombe* cult consisted of two steps: '*kwatura*' initiation and '*gusubira kuntebe*' confirmation. It should be noted that all ceremonies akin to *Kubandwa* ended by a sacrifice-giving festivity called '*gutonora*,' or sharing the fraternal feasts.

The initiation ceremony of '*Kwatura*' was a ceremony through which a person was sacrificed to *Ryangombe*. The latter therefore became the parent and protector of his son. The recipient and his godfather put on a cloth made of skin. The first one put on his head a piece of empty sorghum trunk (*urugori*) and some kind of shoes around one of her/his toes. The first step consisted

¹⁸⁷ Pagès, A., 1933, op. cit. pp. 127-132, 236- 238.

of going to the erythrin tree, which was considered a protective tree. The initiated woman begged *Ryangombe* to protect her sons. The recipient underwent some exams on sexual taboos, accompanied by the ringing of bells and serving beer. After that, the candidate was stripped naked and smeared with mud. This stage consisted of transmitting the secrets of the *Imandwa* cult, which were neither supposed to be disclosed to his father nor his mother if they were not initiated. Then, when he returned home, the candidate slept for some time with his godfather or godmother. He received the name of *Ruzingo* (the wretched) and attended ceremonies without sitting before proceeding to the next stage. Normally, the initiated member sat on sheep skin. Regarding the confirmation phase (*gusubizaho imandwa*), the initiated member was given a seat and was worshiped as *Ryangombe*. He received an initiation name. This was followed by drinking and dancing. The godfather received a cow, sheep, or a hoe. This ceremony generally ended at dawn with a holy ritual, after which the *Imandwa* disappeared in neighboring families while begging for or taking possession of anything he came across.

During these rites, there was a feast known as '*kubagirwa imandwa or gutonora*.' This consisted of a meal the participants ate. They ate a bull calf together, which had been sacrificed during the ceremony. Every initiated person and their assistants received a piece of meat to eat. The meal was accompanied by chants and dances specific to the ceremony. This stage was optional because it had to be imposed by the diviner.

Besides the *Ryangombe* cult, there was another cult known as *Nyabingi*. It was widespread in some parts of the county. The name *Nyabingi* referred to a wealthy person, and '*Nyabingi Nyiramubyeyi*' meant mother. In some areas, she was called *Biheko* or *Nyabiheko*. Some legends consider *Nyabingi* to be a woman who was not married and living in *Ndorwa* or *Karagwe*. It is also said that '*Imana*' transformed her into an immortal creature. The *Nyabingi* cult was very widespread in the north and northwest of Rwanda up to *Mutara*. It extended to *Bwishya*, *Bufunbira*, and *Kigezi*.¹⁸⁸

During King *Rwabugiri*'s expedition to *Nkore* he attacked King *Ntare*. When he returned victoriously to Rwanda, *Rwabugiri*

¹⁸⁸ D'hertefeldt, M., Trouwborst A. A., Scherer J. H., 1962, op. cit., p. 85.

brought herds of cattle and several hostages, one of whom was a young girl called *Nyiramubyeyi Nyabingi*. The latter became famous because she played a very important role in the legendary history of this expedition. In compensation, she was given authority to command some parts of Northern Rwanda such as Mulera and Ndorwa, where she later ended her career.

Traditions that associate historic events to Ndori also associate the Nyabingi cult with this king. Nyabingi was a daughter of Ndahiro, wife of Nyanka, and sister of the sons of Ndahiro, who was king of Rwanda: Ndori, Kinywi, and Kibigo. The narratives that speak of these last two kings originate from pure mythology. But in reality, the *Nyabingi* cult is more recent than the *Mandwa* cult, which only came to northern Rwanda in the mid-nineteenth century.

After her death, Nyabingi was not forgotten. Her cult spread in the regions cited above. Her cult was different from that of *Ryangombe* since it was characterized by the absence of initiation ceremonies. Nyabingi had her own priests and priestesses, also called *Nyabingi*. There was also a woman who was known to be the intermediary between *Nyabingi* and her followers. *Nyabingi's* priests played the roles of prophets and healers. Although it is said that in theory Nyabingi's priests ascended to priesthood through inspiration, in practice a son or daughter replaced the father or mother and a widow replaced her late husband, etc.

Nyabingi's help and protection were sought by men who had been hit by misfortune and calamity in life. Through the power of the spirit communicated by priests and priestesses, Nyabingi's intervention was invoked and she made her appearance in a special hut constructed in the man's compound. It was then that Nyabingi asked for offerings in terms of foodstuffs or small-sized livestock. Nyabingi's priests were reputed for being greedy for property.¹⁸⁹ The Nyabingi cult later took a political dimension at the end of the nineteenth century. The cult was associated with an insurrection that aimed at overthrowing King Yuhi Musinga.

In short, nobody knows for certain the identity of *Ryangombe* or that of *Nyabingi*. Some circles often confuse the latter with *Muhumuza*. Research should be conducted to discover the nature of other spirits worshiped in different parts of the country

¹⁸⁹ D'hertefeldt M., Trouwborst A.A., Scherer J. H., 1962, op. cit., p. 85.

and to find out their impact on the daily lives of Rwandans before 1900. The 'Ukubandwa' practice or 'Ryangombe' cult is a cult of genius, a cult of initiation, a cult of ancestry, a cult of heroes, and a feast that had anthropological, sociological, and psychological implications.

Throughout the present analysis of the history of Ancient Rwanda, we have presented the history of pre-colonial Rwanda under multiple facets. The salient points of the formation of Rwanda as a kingdom have been examined. The points raised stress the formation of Rwanda from its nucleus of Gasabo, its territorial expansion, its socio-political organization, and its relations with neighbouring lands.

The chronology of the formation of the Kingdom of Rwanda is disputed. Some authors date it to the thirteenth century, while others date it to earlier than that. The *Nyinginya* dynasty was established near the beginning of the sixteenth century. This dynasty gradually brought more than 50 small kingdoms under its authority, each of which was ruled by a king called "Umuhinza" or "Umwami."

The political formation emerged with King Ruganzu Ndori towards the middle of the sixteenth century. He was supported, like all other kingdoms in the Great Lakes, by two basic factors: religion and war. The political system in place at the time combined a system of centralized government at the royal court, subdivided into several royal residences, with an army network hinged on controlling big livestock and pastures. The entire system was united by a system of servants' contracts called *Ubuhake*. During the eighteenth century, the introduction of new crops led to improvements in agriculture and consequently to the reduction of food shortages. Population also increased, leading to territorial expansion and land ownership problems, a combination of which led to the creation of pastoral land reserves called 'Ibikingi.'

The political and social history of Rwanda is best understood from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this period, documents provide information about Rwanda's history. This history was characterized by an increasingly centralized system, especially during the reign of King Cyirima Rujugira. He erected military camps at the country's borders. He encouraged the presence of principal chiefs at the royal court and introduced

many royal rituals, *exploiting the country's traditions to the benefit of the dynasty.*

During the nineteenth century, the Nyingnya dynasty endeavored to expand and consolidate its conquests from central Rwanda. The expansion was facilitated by the genius of military science, agro-pastoral techniques, and by commercial ties within and outside the country. This expansionist movement continued up to the end of the reign of King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri, the last independent king of Rwanda. Having entirely resisted the coming of Arab slave traders, Rwanda became one of the last African countries ushered into the European colonial system at the end of the nineteenth century, in 1897.

Rwanda's kings extended their powers to their subjects, but such powers were heavily limited by three key factors: a strong rise of some aristocratic families, the role of manipulators, and the interpreters of *Ubwiru esoteric code* and diviners. The system of centralization was not based on a uniform and integrated system of territorial administration but instead followed a trial-and-error method. The realization of the ideology of conquering neighboring countries was undermined, among other things, by the ambition and intrigue of political and military elites.

By the time Europeans set foot in Rwanda in 1892, the political situation of the kingdom differed significantly from one region to another. The mystic pre-eminence of the king was recognized in many parts of Rwanda. Political authority was exercised in a very inequitable manner. In the northern region, recognition of political authority was not as strong as elsewhere because people were organized according to a clan system. The fiscal administration aimed at collecting taxes and paying of royal tribute (*ikoro*). This practice was entrenched in the central and southern region.

Senior chiefs who hailed from dynastic lineages and lineages that produced queen mothers commanded armies in some territories. Intrigues aimed at controlling power were frequent among the aristocracy. There were endless wars principally directed against Burundi and Bushi kingdoms, as well as other regions in the north and southwest.

The population, which experienced tumultuous daily lives, sought to improve its standard of living by establishing a strong system of values. Belonging by paternal affiliation to either Hutu or Tutsi lineage was determined by genealogy. However, this never prevented intermarriage or economic exchange from taking place harmoniously. The Tutsi and Hutu lineages belonged to common clans. These groups participated together in dynastic rituals of initiation (*kubandwa*) and were integrated in the same armies.

Hutu-Tutsi dualism did not exist in the form that it took in the twentieth century. Neither the Hutu nor the Tutsi formed a distinct ethnic group. They all spoke the same language, had the same religious beliefs, and lived together. The relationship between them was not a source of confrontation. History testifies that frequent hostilities at that time were between competing families, but not between Hutus and Tutsis. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when key members of the aristocracy got engaged in tragic conflicts, they became easy prey for the colonialists. The colonialists and Christian missionaries coveted the idea of eventually bringing Rwanda under their colonial yoke. This is how the *Nyinginya* kingdom lost its sovereignty.



IV

RWANDA UNDER GERMAN AND BELGIAN COLONIZATION

By Paul RUTAYISIRE Phd.

European colonial imperialism in Rwanda, which started at the end of the nineteenth century, was unprecedented in Rwanda and disrupted all aspects of Rwandan identity within a period of only 60 years. It began with German colonialism and was later followed by Belgian colonialism, both of which were subscribed to ideologies of “divide and rule” and “rule for exploitation.” It should be borne in mind that these ideologies characterized the foundation for and action of the colonial administration. The colonized people were not aware of these manipulations; the intention of the colonialists was to create a country that was dependent on the outside world.

4.1. Rwanda during German colonization

Germany discovered a country that had enjoyed a certain degree of organization. It was to this country that a protectorate regime was imposed. This was done in collaboration with missionaries who confronted a series of resistances and conflicts from the Rwandese. The protectorate regime also confronted a tense international situation culminating in the First World War. This war ended German imperial rule in Rwanda.

4.1.1. Period of explorers

Before the coming of the Europeans and Arab merchants, Rwanda was a region enveloped in legends. From 1894 to 1920, a number of important documents were written about the country. These

documents described a society that was still virgin from external influence. Rwanda was interesting as it was “impenetrable for a long time.” It was only belatedly subjected to the colonial regime. Rwanda was previously a “*terra incognita*;¹ it remained inaccessible for a long time to the Arabs who wanted to penetrate it. A great Arab businessman, Hamed Ibrahim, was stationed in Karagwe and made several attempts to establish commercial ties with “the empress of Rwanda, but he always failed.”²

The first explorers were attracted to discovering the source of the Nile River – an obsession that dated to antiquity.³ They wanted to penetrate the mysteries of Mountain M’Foumbiro, or the “Mountains of the Moon in Western Rwanda.” They also wanted to exploit opportunities in Rwanda for commerce and evangelization.⁴

The London Geographical Society organized the voyages of the first explorers seeking to discover “the source of the Nile” in 1856. The first group of explorers interested in Rwanda was composed of Burton, Speke, and Grant – all army officers in India. They were unsuccessful. They reached Lake Victoria and Tanganyika around November 1861. John Hannington Speke, who was stationed in Karagwe, was attracted by the “high cone-like mountain-tops located in Rouanda.” He reports in his notes stories originating from myth about the inhabitants of Rwanda, according to which Rwanda was a dangerous and mysterious country where foreigners were not welcome.

In 1857, H.M. Morton Stanley became the second European to speak of Rwanda. He was informed of Rwanda by the ivory and slave Arab merchants. Hitherto, these merchants had not been able to establish trade links with Rwanda. H.M. Stanley wanted to shatter the myth of the unknown country – a powerful kingdom inhabited by people of unknown origins who were hostile to foreign intrusion. He tried to enter the country from the eastern border through Lake Ihema. He was welcomed by flying arrows which forced him to change his course. In his book, he states that the country could only be penetrated with care and caution. It was Stanley who baptized Akagera with the name “Nile Alexanda.”

¹ Lugan, B., “ Sources écrites pouvant servir à l’histoire (1863- 1919)”, in *Etudes Rwandaises*, vol, XI, 1980, p.209.

² Stanley, H.M., *A travers le continent mystérieux*, T.I., Paris, 1879, p.436.

³ Map of Ptolemy, in antiquity, located the sources of the Nile in the Great Lakes near “the mountains of the moon”.

⁴ Baker, S.W., *Le Lac Albert. Nouveau voyage aux sources du Nil*, Paris, 1879, p.48

In March 1891, the expeditions launched by E. Schinitzer (alias Emin Pasha) and Franz Stuhlmann arrived in Karagwe. On the orders of Wissmann, the Commissioner of the German empire, these explorers were to explore the German zone, located between Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika. They also wanted to establish friendly relations with local kings. These were the first Europeans whose objective was to try to establish relations with Rwanda. The two explorers requested to be received in the king's court but got no response and changed their itinerary.

Oscar Baumann (1864-1899), a philosopher and PhD holder in geography from the University of Leipzig, was employed in 1891 to serve on the "German committee against slavery." Sent from the country of the Massai, he went to Burundi to explore the source of the River Nile. From the 11th to the 14th of September 1892, he passed through the southern part of Rwanda but did not cross the country. As he tried to leave Rwanda, he was attacked by a population armed with spears and arrows, to which he answered with gun powder. He left the country, leaving several dead bodies behind him.⁵

In 1894, Count Gustave Adolf Von Gotzen (1866- 1910) embarked on an expedition with the aim of identifying the region.⁶ On the 3rd of May, his caravan finally arrived in Rwanda. In Rwamagana, Count Von Gotzen was received by Shyarangabo, the king's son, who was to lead the visitor to King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri in Kageyo, a hill located in present day District of Nyabihu (Western Province). Contrary to what previous reports had disseminated regarding the sentiments of the royal court, Count Von Gotzen and his companions, Von Prittwitz and Kersting, received an amicable reception. This is corroborated in Rwandan myths.

The greetings and the exchange of gifts were performed according to Von Götzen. From the perspective of the royal court of King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri, his was a surprise visit met by the king's astonishment and indignation. This indignation was due to sudden awareness of Rwanda's military inferiority. Von Götzen was impressed by the personality of the king. The caravan crossed the remaining part of the country, climbing Kageyo up to Lake Kivu (present town of Gisenyi), and penetrated the

⁵ He put down his observation on Rwanda in his book entitled *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle*, Berlin, 1894.

⁶ Von Götzen, G.A., *Durch Afrika von Ost nach West*, Zweite Auflage, Berlin, 1899.

Congo Free State (EIC). Von Götzen's expedition marked the first official contact between the colonial power and the Rwandese. There were other military expeditions in Rwanda, notably those by Wilhelm Langheld (August 1894), Lothar Von Trotha (1896), Hans Ramsay (1897), and Henrich Bethe (1898), all of which are recorded in the notes of the missionaries. Ramsay and the king established "links of blood friendship" by tying long threads of cloth (belts) around their waists and by exchanging handshakes. On this occasion, the king received a letter of protection and the German flag. Ramsay and his successor did not know that they had been received by a false king.

In 1898, Richard Kandt arrived in Rwanda to study the local culture and to find a definite answer to the question of the source of the Nile. He lived in Rwanda until the eve of the First World War. He became the first European to meet 18-year-old King Yuhi IV Musinga in October 1900. Mpambara had been serving as regent for the young king until he reached this age. By meeting the regent, the royal court wanted to protect the young king from visitors whose intentions were still unclear. Up to the end of the German colonialism, no European managed to see the Queen Mother (Kanjogera) or King Musinga's wives, except Madam Schloiferen in 1901.

It was Kandt, among others, who was able to specify the source of the Nile by stating that the source of River Rukarara was the source of River Akagera and that of White Nile. In so doing, he contradicted the vision given by Baumann, who stated that the source of the Nile River was River Ruvubu, sourced in Burundi and powering waters in the Akagera in the southeastern part of Rwanda. Kandt instead followed the most important branch of the river towards the source.⁷ Later, the Belgian Trusteeship arbitrarily decided that the southern part of Burundi was the southern-most source of the Nile, building at Rutovu a small pyramid symbol.

In February of 1900, Bishop Hirth of the African Missionary Society, or the White Fathers Society, became the first Apostolic Vicar of Southern Nyanza to arrive in the King's court. He headed a delegation of three missionaries and other foreign visitors.⁸ He came following the call made by R. Kandt to establish a mission in Kinyaga, a

⁷ Kandt, R., *Caput Nili, Eine empfindsame Reise zu denquellen des Nil*, Berlin, 1921.

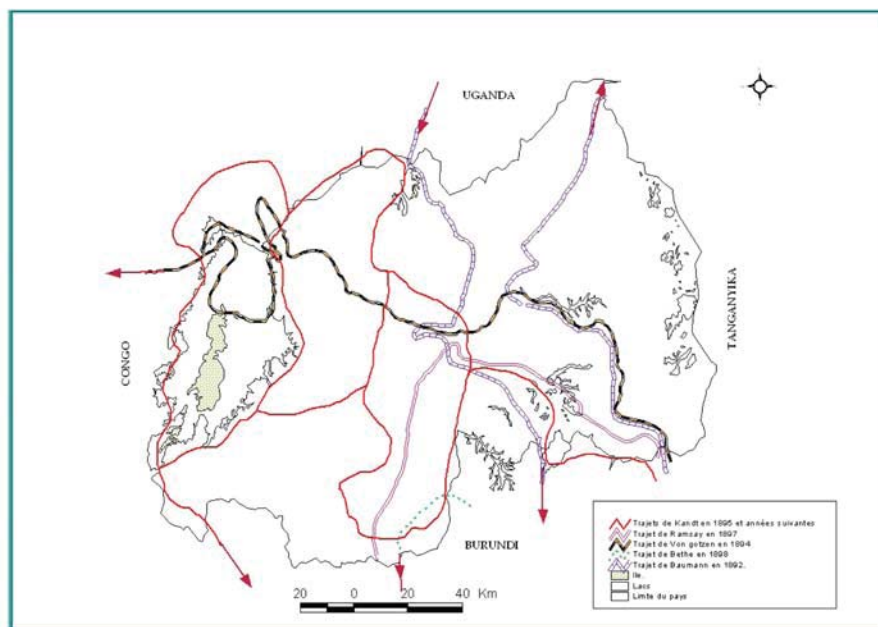
⁸ Minnaert, S., *Premier voyage de Mgr Herth au Rwanda*, Editions rwandaïses, Kigali, 2006.

region which Protestant pastors had explored. He encouraged the Catholic Missionaries to come and establish themselves first, before the Protestants. Mgr Hirth changed his plans after discussing with Captain Bethe and Kandt at Shangi because the colonial status of Kinyaga region was still contested by colonial powers.

Mgr. Hirth was authorized by the royal court to establish himself wherever he wanted in Bwanamikari. The royal court did not impose his stay in *Mara*. The ease with which he obtained this area should be put in the perspective of the good relations that existed between the royal court and the Germans. Mgr Hirth did not explicitly tell the court why he wanted to establish a mission.

In 1907, Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenberg led an expedition across Rwanda. It was a big expedition in terms of men and material, consisting of nearly 600 people, and included three doctors and an ethnographer known as Jan Czekanowski. Czekanowski published a scientific paper on the culture and society of Rwanda. (See Map 8 below)

Map 8: The first European explorers



Source: Lugan B., *Histoire du Rwanda: De la préhistoire à nos jours*, Paris, Bartillat, 1997, p. 248.

On examining the narratives of these expeditions, it seems that

the explorers did not make personal contacts with the local population beyond the meetings held with the king and his representatives. The only contact the local population and the explorers had was summed up by delivery of food, employing porters and guides, paying for services and exchanging gifts, and solving conflicts between indigenous people and caravan traders. This was due to lack of linguistic knowledge and the feeling of cultural and military superiority on the part of the Germans. It was R. Kandt who became the first German permanent resident in Rwanda. The missionaries who made deeper contacts with the population learnt the local language and managed to communicate with locals.

Knowledge of Rwanda by Europeans followed a chronological progression. The oldest reports on Rwanda were compiled by explorers and travelers who made reports about what they saw in the context of expeditions. Officers and colonial civil servants who lived in Rwanda then filed reports, rendering services to the German colonial administration. Lastly, missionaries were established in the country from the beginning of the 20th Century.

The first explorers and travelers described Rwanda and its culture in a positive way and with a certain degree of respect and admiration. They were surprised by a kingdom that was well-organized with livestock of a special race, depicting signs of being looked after well. They reported gardens that were well cultivated and handsome men and beautiful women. They attributed a lot of power to the king of Rwanda, despite the fact he did not have this same power in reality. They also insisted on a centralized system of government, a conception that did not correspond to reality, but which had a considerable influence on the German colonial system. Count Von Gotzen was the first explorer to give a more detailed account on Rwanda. To him, the country appeared strange and completely different from what he had observed elsewhere. Speaking about his voyage, Dr. Kandt reported:

Contrary to other parts of the colony, he found here a dense population of Bantu Negroes who numbered in thousands. They called themselves *Wahutu*. This population depended subserviently on the *Watutsi*, a noble cast of *Semite* or *Hamite* foreigners whose ancestors originated from the *Galla* country, south of *Abyssinia*.

These had subjugated the entire inter-lacustrine region. Goetzen found the country divided into provinces and districts administered and exploited by the *Watutsi* who were giants of 2 metres tall, something that reminded him of the world of tales and legends. At the top, was a king who would always be on an endless trajectory crossing his country and establishing his residences sometimes in one place and sometimes shifting them to another. They also told him about the tribe of dwarfs, the *Batwa* who lived in caves of volcanic mountains in the northern part of the country. These were hunters of animals in the virgin forest.⁹

The works of R. Kandt and J. Czekanowski are exceptional in terms of their in-depth study of Rwanda. R. Kandt lived in the country for 11 years. J. Czekanowski was an amateur in ethnography, but nonetheless collected a lot of information within a short time. He principally worked with missionaries who knew the country. This helped him to extract information of interest. Other people who had longer experiences in the country also gave information to newcomers. This facilitated the spread of false ideas by Europeans who lived in Rwanda, and later by the Rwandan elite.

There existed the belief that whatever was observed to be good in Rwanda by Europeans was thought to be associated with the north, notably Egypt or Ethiopia. This idea came from Speke, who during his expedition to Karagwe and Uganda discovered things he did not expect in the heart of Africa. This included centralized political organization and an indigenous people who, according to him, resembled Ethiopians more than his conception of black Africans. Instead of revising his preconception based on what he discovered, he developed a theory to match his preconceptions. This theory assumed that a group of people from the north could have moved southwards beyond the Sahara and brought with them a higher culture of value and civilization. These theoretical people who carried this great civilization from the north to the south were called *Hamites*. This theory had a profound influence on the European view of Rwanda.

From 1892 to 1900, the first reports of explorers insisted on the existence of different ethnic groups in Rwanda. They claimed

⁹ Lugan, B. 1980, op. cit., p.27.

these groups physically differed from one another but formed a common society in which each ethnic group played a different role. The Tutsi most attracted the attention of explorers. The Tutsi were thought to be a “noble class that seized the country probably some hundreds of years ago and who continued to retain power up to today and who have reduced to servitude all the rural people.”¹⁰ Bethe believed “the Batutsi operate[ed] an arbitrary rule under their command. They exert[ed] a despotic and oppressive rule and influence over the *Wahutu*”. Bethe proposed that “this domination of Watutsi still continue[ed]” because “European influence cannot penetrate in the country without the dominant class which obeys unconditionally to its chief.”¹¹

The Tutsi were sometimes thought to be members of a royal family which “descended from some race in the North and who were probably associated with an Arab origin.”¹² The Tutsi were thought to be the ones who “owned cows in the country.” Their superiority was thought to be based on the assumption that they were “brothers of the Gallas or even the Abyssinians,” with colonizers stating:

This race which is a conquering race is found everywhere on high mountains that separate the Great Lakes of the Equator. They consider themselves as people who came from the North hardly some centuries ago. The purest race of these people is found along the line which descends from Lake Albert up to North Tanganyika.

O. Baumann was thrown into ecstasy by the physical beauty of the Batusi, called “*Wahuma* or *Wahima*”. “Everywhere there were,” he says, “the Watussi who were astonishing by their slenderness and their quasi-resemblance of Europeans. Some were hardly brown and were probably the origin of the legend of White Negros.”¹³ He continued, “the Batutsi are considered as immigrants from the North. They are Ethiopian-related, Hamites or Semites: They have faces that are perfectly Abyssinian [and are] people who strongly resemble Semites in many respects.”¹⁴ The explorers expressed admiration of both the physical

¹⁰ Lukan B., 1980, op. cit., p. 27.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 59.

¹² Hamed, I., quoted by Stanley H.M. 1879, op. cit., p. 436.

¹³ Honke, G., *Au plus profond de l’Afrique*, Wuppertal, 1990, p. 100

¹⁴ Ibid.

tributes and behavior of the Tutsi nobility. They claimed that Tutsi behavior was comparable to the model of classical antiquity. Regarding Tutsi physicality, they claimed they were “ (...) a people extremely distinguished by their physical traits not only by the Negroes but also by Europeans. They are slender, tall in height, have fine hands, with well-shaped feet. The Muhima combines all the characteristics of a natural being that resemble the canons of classical beauty of the Statue of Praxitele.”¹⁵

The explorers were fascinated by the senior chiefs at the royal court, such as *Ruhinankiko* and *Rwidegemya*:

Those people who surrounded the Sultan were particularly interesting. They had faces that resembled those described in the Bible, with an expressive character and a confident mood. They depicted a noble character that made us to believe that we were not among Negroes.¹⁶

Mgr. Hirth described the king he saw as someone beyond normal kings who belonged to a “high class” in the country. He reported that he was “very tall with looks that resembled those of an Abyssinian or an Arab, with a beautiful nose which distinguished him from the uncouth Negroes.”¹⁷ According to Hirth, the king was not only the tallest, but also “the most intelligent among the Tutsi.”¹⁸

According to the first explorers, the Tutsi constituted one to two percent of the population, but had managed to rule over the others due to their intelligence:

They are not Negroes like the Hutu but are Hamites and are characterized by their beautiful shape, beautiful facial features measuring a height of two meters and above. They do not only surpass the Hutu in size but they even beat them in intelligence. This explains why they managed to succeed, despite their small numbers, in becoming absolute masters and in instituting a feudal state which looked like a Communist State of sorts.¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Honke, G., *Au plus profond de l’Afrique*, Wuppertal, 1990, p. 100.

¹⁷ Lugan, B., 1980, op.cit., p.78, 215.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 229.

¹⁹ Ibid.

On the other hand, the physical characteristics of the Bahutu almost attracted no attention. Explorers stated, “contrary to the Tutsi who resembled Europeans, the Bahutu were genuine Negroes with thick lips and a flat nose.”²⁰ The Bahutu were described as “a poor people and serfs and of a lower class; a race of the Aborigines, ancient inhabitants of the country who (...) took the status of slaves.”²¹ Kandt painted a negative picture of the Hutu in the central part of Rwanda who never dared to confront their Tutsi masters. He had this to say:

(...) the Bahutu have a strange behavior. Before their masters, they are serious and avoid questions but when we are alone with them they tell us almost everything that we want to know and even what we don't want to know because I cannot solve their request and difficulties, since they complain about the oppression from which they are suffering and their total deprivation of all rights. On several occasions, I tell them to struggle on their own; I even make fun of them by telling them that since they are a hundred times more populated than the Watussi, they only know how to complain like women (...) ²²

The Batwa also received some remarks, always in connection with their height:

(...) a short and stout people. They occupy a low status in the Rwandan society. The Batwa or dwarfs constitute a race of their own kind (...) which seems to be the oldest in the country than that of the Bahutu: they are almost dwarfs, short people who don't feel cold, robust.²³ In the Rwandan society, the Batwa are not considered as human beings because they resemble monkeys (...) ²⁴

Some notes of explorers deal with Rwandese in general. According to Hamed Ibrahim, the Rwandese were a people characterized by “cunningness” practiced at the royal court.²⁵ The Rwandese were “not cowards,” given their capture of Gisaka, Mubari, and Mpororo. Rwandese are described as “a great people,” but this

²⁰ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., pp.78, 229.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Lugan, B., 1980, op.cit. p. 27.

²³ Ibid. p.79.

²⁴ Ibid., p.227

²⁵ Stanley, H.M. 1879, op.cit., p. 436.

admiration is sometimes paired with antipathy. Hamed claimed that the Rwandese were “greedy, wicked, deceitful and traitors,” given that “they never allowed any Arab to do trade with them.”²⁶ They are further described as “The *Vouanya-rounda* and also very naughty” for not wanting “any strangers in their country,” and as “unique people and genuinely full of tricks.”²⁷

As he was navigating around Lake Ihema, Stanley stated that he was prevented from landing by the natives:

(...) We tried to land; the indigenous people opened their teeth with dog-anger manifesting a lot of aggressiveness pointing their arrows to us in a menacing way, this (...) forced us to go way and leave these people to their ferocious exclusion (...)²⁸

Mgr. Hirth, having been disappointed by his porters, concluded that “the Rwandese people are reputed for being great thieves.”²⁹ Bethe claimed that “the Wanyaruanda are a beautiful and a strong race. They are war-like and aggressive and doubted by their neighbors.”³⁰

As can be seen from the above accounts, explorers painted a picture of Banyarwanda that was full of contradictions, prejudices, and stereotypes. Despite their inaccuracy, many of these stereotypes have been maintained. The explorers were interested in the masters or rulers of the country. Von Goetzen reported that the “Watussi chiefs” were a dominant class, while the Bahutu, who earn their living on agriculture, are a mass of rural folk. The explorers interchangeably used the expressions “race,” “cast,” and “social class.”

According to Langheld, Rwanda was an absolute monarchy with strong and partial nobility. The Bahutu were “a working class people” living on agriculture while the Tutsi were preoccupied with looking after herds of cattle. However, not all Batutsi were born to occupy high positions. Political power seems to have been reserved for members of some families.

During his first trip, Mgr Hirth was struck by the social inequalities

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Stanley, H.M. 1879, op. cit., P.444.

²⁹ Lugan, B. , 1980 , op. cit. 75.

³⁰ Lugan, B. , 1980 , op. cit. 57.

that manifested as a ruling class that exploited the short people. “There is no country in the world, during our time, where the poor people are exploited by their masters as in this country of Rwanda; it is therefore high time that missionaries entered this region.”³¹ Mgr Hirth viewed missionaries as “liberators” of the short people.

Ethnic divisions in the political field went hand in hand with economic divisions. In Rwandan society, all sectors were viewed as divided according to ethnic criteria; the Batutsi were pastoralists and the Bahutu were agriculturists. This view did not always conform to reality:

In Rwanda itself, the masters and subjects were almost totally assimilated by their customs and culture. As far as their arms and dress were concerned, most of the time the Muhuma could not be distinguished from the cultivators. There are signs of arbitrary acts “of despotic oppression towards the Wahutu.”³²

Further, all ethnic groups belonged to the same linguistic bracket.

According to Bethe, in the North and especially at the border with Mpororo, the Bahutu occupied positions of chiefs. Bethe even met a Mutwa chief. Kandt is more explicit on the situation in the North, which was more autonomous. The kingdom was not as administratively homogeneous as some works by the first travelers have portrayed.

The ethnic divide seems to have had a solid social and economic bearing. The determination of the social status was not only an issue of birth. In his book published in 1917,³³ J. Czekanowski distinguished between four social classes in Rwanda. The first class was made of the privileged king’s agents, namely the king’s *abagaragu*, their sub-chiefs, and court dignitaries. These were exclusively Batutsi. The second class was composed of warriors, or the “*ingabo*,” who were under the command of a chief. They settled on their own land, which had been cultivated by their ancestors. They paid normal taxes and were always ready to

³¹ *ibid.* p. 37.

³² An opinion by Von Goetzen

³³ Czekanowski, J., *Forschungen in Nil-Kongo-Zwischengebiet*, Leipzig, 1917.

defend the country in periods of war. They lived in big numbers along border areas. The third class of Rwandese was formed by the "*Biletwa*," i.e. the free peasants without rights over land ownership. They worked on the land of the king and did two to three days of forced labor every week for the chief. They had an obligation of paying taxes. The fourth class was formed by the Batwa hunters and pot-makers.³⁴ Czekanowski concluded by saying that the situation of indigenous people worsened because, despite the humanitarian phraseology of the missionaries and colonizers, the new juridical system introduced by Europeans gave them less protection than the old norms on which the organization of the state was founded.

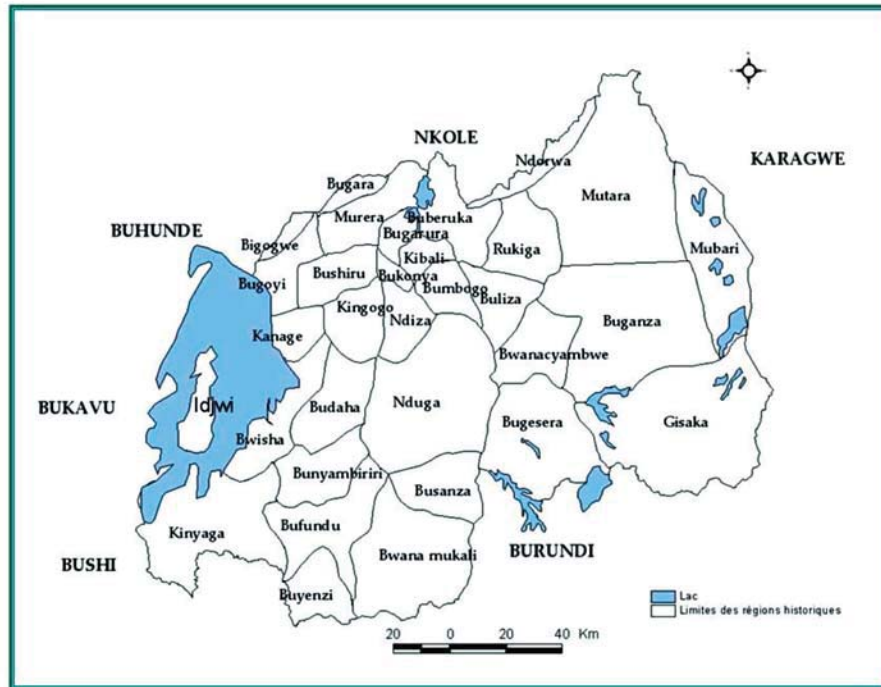
According to J. Czekanowski, "the determination of ethnic belonging was closely linked to the social and political ranks" and this belonging was "not determined once for all among a specific ethnic group after birth."³⁵ According to him, "social accession and its modification pegged to ethnical belonging was one of the major reasons for the apparition of the Hutu lineage names among the Batutsi." There was "an ethnic adaptation to social change" by many families before the arrival of Europeans. J. Czekanowski was the first author to criticize the strict division of the population along ethnic lines in all domains. However, his observations had no effect since the colonial administration and missionaries made the ethnic divide a cornerstone of their programs.

Examples abound on the perpetration of the ethnic divide in Rwandan society during colonialism. In the myths, proverbs, and oral tradition, the version of the royal court and nobility were changed by the Europeans to suit their view of the Rwandan society: a civilization composed of three ethnic groups of which the Tutsi were masters. Some informers who knew that Europeans admired the Tutsi manipulated information to conform to what the Europeans wanted to hear. This explains why they insisted on the centrality of the concept of ethnicity promoted by Europeans while ethnicity was neither found in Rwanda's traditional religions nor found in official and family rites. If carefully studied, these sources of Rwandan history would lead to a more nuanced description of a society that could be understood without any centrality of ethnicity.

³⁴ Lugan, B., 1980, op.cit. pp.174-175.

³⁵ Honke, G., 1990. op.cit., p.108.

Map 9: Territorial organization and arrival of Germans



Source: Lugan and Mutombo, *Africa-Tervuren*, XXIX, 1989, 1-2

The provinces were divided into many territorial entities given to those who lived in the royal court. Some peasants did forced labor in return for land they were given to occupy. The chief deducted a portion of the taxes given to the king. The king's clients managed their property with the help of sub-chiefs (*Ibisonga*) who were supported by village chiefs. There were many Hutu among them, especially in the areas of Mulera, Bwishya, and Bugoya. It was King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri who centralized the state and redistributed the property of chiefs owing to the separatist tendencies manifested by senior chiefs. This led to conflicts among powerful families, culminating in the Rucunshu coup d'état.

At the turn of the 19th Century, the country experienced a chaotic situation resulting from the Rucunshu incident. Lieutenant Von Parish reports that many people were killed because they were "suspected of giving asylum to King Kigeri's son who had escaped. The fear for the reappearance of this candidate to the throne was one of the causes of bitterness which stained the happiness of King Musinga. It is said that Kigeri designated Bilegeya as his

successor, who later escaped without leaving any trace. He acted quickly to avoid giving his enemies a chance to assassinate him. Everybody lived in a state of permanent fear to see him reappear on the scene (...). Today, the 'Bilegeya affair' is sometimes used by the Batutsi as a means of defaming another Mututsi (sic) before King Musinga, i.e. sacrificing him to be killed."³⁶

When the Germans arrived, they found that, in comparison with the neighboring kingdom of Burundi, the Kingdom of Rwanda was highly disciplined and peaceful "thanks to the king's authority." According to Bethe, "Kigeri (sic) was an absolute ruler whose orders were obeyed in all parts of the country, including Kisaka. His influence considerably facilitated economic development in collaboration with the Germans."³⁷ However, toward the North and stretching from the Western coast of Lake Kivu, Kandt observed that there were "some Batutsi who were not ruling the country but who were living in isolated villages alongside the agricultural people and were accomplishing their work as herdsmen, working equally as hard as the Bahutu."

Beyond River Mukungwa, Kandt observed that local populations also were, in principle, under the domination of the King, "but [with] pockets of rebellious people." In Bugoyi, the king enjoyed only "a semblance of authority;" the Chief of Bushaku Province did not dare continue his rule there. This also applied to sub-chiefs who, although belonging to the nobility, gradually withdrew toward the interior of the kingdom. Those who remained behind never dared to impose their authority.³⁸ This situation worsened as the European presence started to be felt, especially with the emergence of new exploitative rules. H. Meyer encountered this situation when he went to the North to visit the volcanic mountains. There he found a "hostile" population and rebellious elements opposed to the King of Rwanda and the German government. Murders and the settlement of scores between clans and lineages were frequent.³⁹

In Rukiga region towards Mpororo, Bethe observed the opposite: "It is not only the Watussi who assume the function of chiefs but there are also the Wahutu who are appointed by King Kigeri

³⁶ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 115.

³⁷ Ibid, p.59.

³⁸ Ibid, 46.

³⁹ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 209.

(sic).” Bethe intervened to solve some conflicts “result[ing] from ethnic clans because the chief of the dwarf Batwa did not want to bow before the tall Watutis.”⁴⁰ In Ndorwa, the clans were independent, complicating the situation for the king’s envoys.⁴¹ In Mulera, the clans were submissive to the king and paid taxes. The Tutsi had chased the natives from some villages to enable members of the dissolved clans to settle there. These people were supposed to do forced labor in return for protection from their masters. Some members of old clans (e.g. Bishingwe) associated them with the conquerors. In Nduga, the village residents were mixed; a large part of the area belonged to a class of landowners, while there were also peasant warriors free from an obligation of forced labor (*Uburetwa*).⁴²

To put an end to the anarchy prevailing in the North, R. Kandt proffered solutions to those who wanted to become residents. He stated: “it is in the interest of our colonial policy to have the king on our side and to maintain the rule of the Watussi, with total subjugation of the masses.”⁴³ He noted that the integration process of the “autonomous” areas in the central region had not yet reached its final stage. In northern Rwanda, it was at the initial stage.

J. Czekanowski also analyzed the taxation system used in the country.⁴⁴ The taxes levied on the peasants were divided into several categories collected by different chiefs. The latter acted as intermediaries, but a big fraction of these taxes remained in their hands. The taxes paid by peasants included: food items, beer, cultivating gardens, rearing livestock, and other forms of physical work. Some regions were exempted from food-related taxes to the court. The taxes in the form of food items were collected during the harvest season and differed from one region to the next.⁴⁵ J. Czekanowski distinguished several categories of taxes which were not proportionately distributed.⁴⁶ The most important tax was “*Uburetwa*”, or working physically in the fields of the chiefs for two or three days of the traditional week. This work was performed as a means of compensation for peasants

⁴⁰ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., pp. 55-57.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 177.

⁴² Ibid. p. 177.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 46.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 229.

⁴⁵ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 180.

⁴⁶ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 181.

who had no land of their own. This forced labor was not performed by the free peasants (*ingabo*) who had settlements on their own land. The oldest tax (*butaka*) was principally made of food items, tobacco, hoes, and bringing offers for the chief (*kugemurira umutware*) who often lived at the royal court. King Rwabugiri added a war tax called *umuheto*. King Musinga introduced food taxes for European travelers (*irari*).⁴⁷ The “*Ubutaka*” and “*Umuheto*” taxes were theoretically paid all over the country. The collection of the “*Umuheto*” tax was performed by the chief who looked after the king’s livestock in the district. He had the right to graze his cattle on the peasants’ land. The “*irari*” tax was collected by special officers who monitored all Europeans travelling in the country. There was also a tax collected from the chiefs called “*Umusogongerero*.” It was levied on “*ubutaka*” and “*umuheto*,” but did not apply to “*irari*” tax. In addition, there were taxes paid by specific lineages, such as a salt tax (extracted from the marshland grasses), craft items made from grass (*ubutega*), snake-skin, skins of wild cats, cow-skin, clothes made of tree barks (*impuzu*), and arms. The lineages charged with performing these tasks were partly exempted from paying taxes. It was in Mulera region where big quantities of ‘*Ubutega*’ were produced, while the Bihenyi lineage specialized in the construction of royal huts.

In Mulera, the payment of tax was a clan affair. Taxes were paid via the oldest member of the clan, and the tax levying process was an internal affair. All members worked in solidarity to pay taxes. The “*ingabo*” paid taxes in the form of honey and, every year, they gave the twentieth cow to the king. There was also a tax imposed on businessmen (*indamu*) and collected by chiefs. In Bugoyi, it consisted of 10-15% of the value of the items sold in Nyundo.⁴⁸

King Rwabugiri introduced another new tax to entertain his newly appointed chiefs. The complexity of Rwanda’s traditional fiscal system resulted from its specific characteristics and its inclusive nature. The fiscal system combined numerous local factors, all of which changed as time went on.

⁴⁷ Hence, the northern provinces were governed as follows : Bugoyi Bushaku concurrently assumed the functions of “ku muheto” and “ku butaka”; Kinunu, Rwindegembya concurrently held the two functions; In Bwishaza, Bushahu was “kubutaka” and Rwidegembya “ku muheto”; In Kinyaga, Rwabilinda assumed the function of “kubutaka” and Rwidegembya “ku muheto” (Lugan, op. cit., 1980, p. 183

⁴⁸ Lugan, B., op. cit., 1980, p. 183.

4.1.3. The Protectorate regime (1897)

As a result of the partition of Africa during the Berlin conference (1884-1885), the process of power devolution saw Rwanda diplomatically annexed to the German sphere of influence. In 1890, the German sphere of influence in East Africa officially assumed the title of 'German East African Protectorate' (*Das deutsch-ostafrikanische Schutzgebiet*). Two stages characterized the period of German rule: a period of military administration and the protectorate and the period of indirect rule.

a. From Nominal Rule to Military Administration (1897-1906)

In general, German rule was unique in the way it was implemented. Effectively, in the beginning, Germany practiced a policy of "wait and see." On March 22, 1897, Captain Hans Ramsay, Chief of "Udjidji Station," peacefully established political relations with the Rwandan royal court. He presented himself to the royal court in Rwanda with 112 soldiers, 129 porters, and an escort of Europeans. They were received with "fear and suspicion."⁴⁹ Captain Ramsay managed to form a 'pact of friendship' with Mpamarugamba, King Yuhi Musinga's cousin. Ramsay gave him a letter of protection and a German flag, only then to take possession of Rwanda and usher it under the 'German sphere of influence.' The 'blood pact' ceremony conducted between Captain Ramsay and the representative of the King of Rwanda is described as follows:

(...) I was supposed to attach a thread on him and he himself rolled me with the same threads and together we shook hands very strongly and the 'blood pact' between the king and I was concluded (...)⁵⁰

While Rwanda was placed under German rule, King Yuhi Musinga, represented by Mpamarugamba, made protests against Rwanda's invasion by the army of the Congo Free State (EIC). He did so by referring to the Shangi affair/Cyangugu where the Rwandan army had been defeated. The royal court hoped to obtain some support against those who had occupied Western Rwanda and against any other internal opposition.

⁴⁹ Honke, G., 1990, op. cit., p. 115.

⁵⁰ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 189

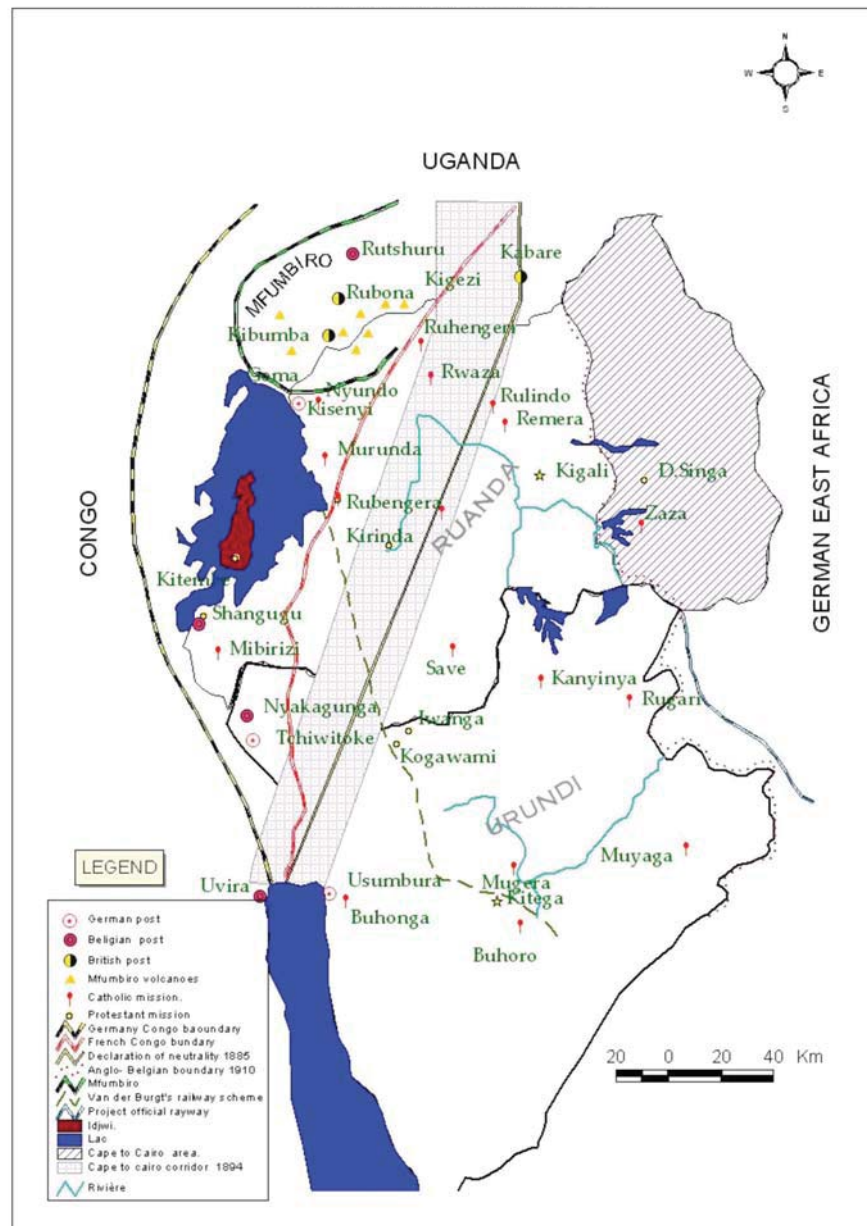
A year later, Captain Hinerich and Bethe visited Rwanda. The latter was nicknamed 'Gahiza' because of his military headgear. Bethe's visit ended at Gitwiko Royal Court near Kamonyi from the 3rd to the 6th of March, 1898. This visit was conducted in the company of Lt. Von Grawertn, Dr, Hoesemann, Pfeuffer, a nurse, 45 askaris, and 145 porters. The chief of the delegation also spoke of "friendly relations" to Mpamarugamba.⁵¹ Meanwhile, in 1897, Usumbura station was founded. Up to 1907, it was an administrative post for Burudi and Rwanda.⁵² In the same year, following quarrels between the Germans and the army of the Congo Free State on the issue of the Eastern Congolese border, the Germans established other military stations (*Regierungussitze*). In November 1898, Shangi Military Station was established, followed by the Kisenyi Military Station in August 1898. From the 3rd to the 6th of March 1898, while visiting the Rwandan court, Captain Bethe confirmed his definitive recognition of the sovereignty of the Rwandan Royal Court. In return, the king received assurance and support from Usumbura Military Station.

For more than ten years, the border issue with the EIC constituted a point of discord between Germany and Belgium. In unclear accords signed regarding Congo, King Leopold II espoused that, from 1885, the border between his colony and the future German East Africa was indicated by a right angle from the geographic point located at 30° longitude east and 20° latitude south, up to the northern point of Lake Tanganyika. The region located west of the imaginary line joining Gatuna-Gitarama-Gikongoro-Nshili went to the Belgians. (See Map 10 below)

⁵¹ Honke, G., 1990, op cit., p. 117

⁵² Bindseil, R., *Le Rwanda et l'Allemagne depuis le temps de Richard Kandt*, Berlin, 1988, p. 1.

Map 10: Ruanda-Urundi (1884-1919)



Source: Louis R., *Ruanda-Urundi 1884-1919*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963

The German government, however, thought that Lake Kivu provided a common border. They justified this by referring to the Anglo-German Treaty (Heligoland Treaty-Zanzibar) of July

1,1890, which had demarcated the spheres of influence for these two countries in East Africa. According to this treaty, German East Africa extended from the coast of the Indian Ocean to the Great Lakes.⁵³

At that time, the Congo Free State (EIC) did not have military power to impose its position; beginning in 1896, it had been weakened by several military mutinies. The German government charged Captain Bethe, who was stationed in Ujiji, to occupy the Eastern bank of Rusizi and Lake Kivu, considered to belong to the German empire. It was in this context that Shangi became a military post. A provisional accord that maintained the status quo on the banks of the lakes was concluded on November 23, 1898, between Capt. Heqc and Capt. Bethe. When Msg. Hirth crossed Kinyaga at the beginning of 1900, the border question was still unclear. The Belgians arrived first in the valley of Rusizi and Lake Kivu but were chased by their own revolting troops. The Germans took advantage of this to establish military posts along River Rusizi and Lake Kivu to protect themselves from the rebellious armies.

The task of the commission charged with border demarcation began in 1906. The sketch maps drawn by Kandt helped to correct the erroneous data provided by Speke, Stanley, and Stuhlman and Were useful to the commission. Kandt favored drawing borders based on the criteria of “ethnic and natural physical features,” namely the Rusizi-Kivu boundary, and he was ready to release Idjwi Island, which physically demarcated areas that belonged to different cultures. For him, any other demarcation would have had negative consequences. Balkanization of the county into small units would instead solve many endless administrative problems and endless conflicts. Having failed to solve this border question, Kandt concluded that he would “give up Rwanda entirely.” In order to put pressure on the Belgians, he occupied Shangi, which was claimed by Congo.

The accord of May 14, 1910, confirmed the provisional situation obtained at that time. Belgium ended up accepting the borderline of the volcanoes along the Karisimbi-Sabyinyo-Muhabura Mountains. Rwanda lost Bufumbira, Bwishya, Gishari, and Idjwi Island. In 1911, the German Residence created a military post at Tshangugu after removing Shangi, which was of no military

⁵³ Loius, W.M.R., *Ruanda-Urundi 1994-1919*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1963.

interest to them. King Musinga was not at all satisfied with these demarcations and was deeply concerned by the loss of his territories, although his relations with the Germans remained unchanged. The Germans continued to recognize some of his remaining rights.

b. Implementation of the Protectorate or Indirect rule (1906-1916)

Between 1904 and 1905, the Maji Maji rebellion⁵⁴ broke out in the German East African sphere of influence. It was suppressed with heavy losses. The revolt discredited the German colonization in the civilized world. It had repercussions on the German colonial system and forced the government in Berlin to proceed with the re-organization of the administration of her colonies. In addition, the military command of different districts was replaced by civilian rule. Dernburg, the Director General of colonies under the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led the creation of a ministry in charge of colonies.

According to Kandt, Rwanda and Burundi were the most beautiful and populated possessions of the German East Africa sphere of influence. Lt. Von Perish (1902) described Rwanda as “one of the most interesting areas of German East Africa and in the region. It is the last despotic state of the colony.”⁵⁵ The interest in Rwanda was hinged on the following factors: it was the most interesting country in German East Africa, one of the last negroid kingdoms which, despite still being under “total autocracy,” had a king who owed allegiance to Germany. It was a country where agriculture and cattle keeping were flourishing, and was a densely populated country with a good climate and very beautiful landscapes. It was a region that presented a bright future for white colonialists .⁵⁶

On June 10, 1906, a protectorate was declared on Rwanda, thus separating it from Burundi. On November 15, 1907, Dr. Richard Kandt⁵⁷ (alias Kanayoge) established his station at Shangi

⁵⁴ In Swahili, the word « Maji-Maji » means a magical portion (of water) which the natives of some tribes in Deutsch- Ostafrika drank to protect themselves from the bullets of the German guns.

⁵⁵ Lugan, B., 1980., op. cit., p. 106

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 126.

⁵⁷ Bindseil, R. stressed that R. Kandt claimed to have a doctorate but had not written a thesis to deserve this title as required by the regulations in Germany at that time.

(nicknamed Bergfrieden), and later at Gakira in Nyantago. He was a German of Jewish origin who had surveyed the country from 1898 and had studied natural sciences (e.g. botany and geology). He was appointed as a civil servant and the “Imperial Resident to Rwanda”. Beginning in 1905, Kandt received a salary almost equivalent to that of a commander. As an explorer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he permanently handled administrative files sent to him by Governor Eral Von Gtzen. The inauguration of the Resident’s office was performed in Kigali (Nyarugenge) in 1908. This location was chosen by Kandt himself as the administrative centre of the “Imperial Residence.”

Prior to 1870, there was practically no European administrative structure. There were two military posts in the entire country. They were located in Shangì (*Ischangì*) and Gisenyi (*Kissenjì*). Thereafter, others were established in Kigali (1907), Ruhengeri (1909), and Gatsibo (1914). These centers attracted very few Rwandan citizens compared to the ones in Kigali and Gisenyi. This lacking administrative structure continued even during the Belgian colonial period and was associated with the problem of Rwanda’s under-urbanization.

The choice of establishing a European capital in 1907 in an area near the point of intersection for the entire the country was motivated by the wish to keep a distance from the royal court. The choice of Nyarugenge, opposite Mountain Kigali, was agreed upon. Up to September 1908, Nyarugenege was the official capital used in all official documents before it was replaced by Kigali.⁵⁸ In making this choice, the Germans were motivated by political, administrative, and economic considerations.

The policy of indirect rule adopted by the Germans consisted of administering the colony by relying on local authorities, the *King*, and the chiefs. Indirect rule was appropriate in areas where indigenous local structures existed such as Bukoba, Rwanda, and Burundi. Von Gotzen introduced the institution of the Resident; the Resident was supposed to confirm native chiefs in their functions and duties. He assisted the King as an adviser while assuming the role of representative of the Governor. Local customs were supposed to be respected and high taxes were not supposed to be levied and collected except with the king’s

⁵⁸ See Kandt’s justification in Bindseil R., op. cit., p. 108.

permission. In Rwanda, therefore, 'indirect rule' was understood to mean:

1. The support and enhancement of the power of the *King* by protecting him against any form of attack. The king was appointed according to cultural norms and was confirmed by the Imperial government;
2. The support of the authority of *King* Yuhi Musinga by exercising permanent control and pressure on him and by benefiting from his authority. The support and extension of power of Tutsi chiefs and the creation of a government school for Tutsi children in 1910;
3. The maintenance of traditional socio-political institutions. The instruction that followed was that of non-interference in the daily native matters as long as they did not undermine European administration.

The king was the principal spokesman of the Residence. He was the guarantor of justice, though with some restrictions imposed by the Resident. This point provoked friction with the Catholic missionaries who did not want to recognize the judgment pronounced by the Rwandan authorities whenever this judgment was to the disadvantage of Christians. The Christians thus never hesitated to make their own judgments. The Germans had the right to interfere in the public life of Rwandese. For example, in 1903, Capt. Von Beringe imposed on King Musinga a fine of 40 cows and blamed him publically for having been absent when Muhumbika, Mutware of Gisaka, was to be set free. In 1905, Lt. Von Nordeck authorized missionaries to establish their mission in the central plateau of Kabgayi and Muranga in the centre of the kingdom's locality. King Musinga opposed this decision.

Nonetheless, the unconditional support for the royal authority was not supposed to last indefinitely. In a letter sent to Dar es Salaam, M. Wintgens, who succeeded Kandt as the German Resident, reported that there was "deep bitterness against Watutsi rule (...) in the entire country." He reported that this would constitute danger for the Germans and the best way of confronting this danger was not to put their guns in support of the Watutsi, but to replace gradually the arbitrary rule of the Watutsi by introducing the rule of law."⁵⁹ The interests of

⁵⁹ Bindseil, R., 1988, op. cit.

the Germans were not permanently protected through this unconditional support of the Watutsi because the German Resident risked unpopularity by supporting a “minority cast” which ruled a population of 97%. Wintgen’s letter did not receive follow-up because of the First World War. However, it demonstrated that some civil servants were against the policy pursued by Kandt. M. Wintgens envisioned introducing reforms by imposing uniform taxes and by subjecting the Tutsi leaders to another judicial system favorable to the Hutu.

Despite all this, King Musinga benefitted from the presence of Kandt’s policy. Effectively, the German authorities organized punitive expeditions in the country against those who opposed the king, such as the *Gisaka Rebellion* and the *Ndungutse Uprising* of 1912. The German authority neutralized several rebellions and brought them again under the royal authority. They quelled rebellions that aimed at avenging the death of missionaries, such as the repression of the people of Murera after the assassination of Father Superior Loupias of Rwaza mission in 1910. In effect, the relations between the German authorities and the court complemented each other.

c. Economic policy

German administrative officials assessed how to best exploit Rwanda’s wealth. While the country was not rich in minerals, Rwanda was rich in livestock. Further, it served as a linking conduit for Congo’s trade items, which would help to export products towards trading posts towards the East. Lt. Von Perish anticipated the possibility of establishing a Whiteman’s settlement in Bwanamukali, Nduga, and Kabagali in 1903 given the high altitude of the region and its favorable climate to the whites. He asserted, “We should remove the Batutsi from power or at least reduce their influence. To achieve this objective, we should support the Hutu and leave the Batutsi to rely entirely on the support of the Batwa,”⁶⁰ a position that was later dismissed.

The budget for the German Residence was modest because the country was considered to be less developed. As a result, no taxes were imposed. The biggest resources came from the government of Dar-es-salaam in the form of grants. In 1912, the effective budget of the German Residence, 42,000 DM, was subsidized

⁶⁰ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 113.

up to 80%. The income of the Resident's office in Rwanda rose to a modest figure of 9, 512 DM, coming from taxes on property and custom duties. 50% of this budget was used to pay salaries of civil servants.

In order to increase income and to obtain money from businessmen and Europeans, the German Residence introduced a compulsory tax by implementing the central government's decision of introducing a capitation tax of one rupee per year for every male native capable of working. The Residence did not want to speed up the process of levying this tax. In 1911, Kandt explained to the King that his country was supposed to pay this tax. The king was displeased, fearing that the population would use this as a pretext to evade the existing traditional taxes.⁶¹

But for Witengs, the new tax with geographical delimitations was not supposed to replace traditional taxes. The first collection of this tax took place in 1914 in areas considered to be more developed, namely Kigali, Gisenyi, Shangi, and Bugarama. A tax of one rupee was paid by a male person of working age, and the residence was able to collect 34,681 Rupees without any difficulty. The Residence hoped to cover a big part of administrative costs with income from such taxes. Generally, it can be said that the German's role in the economic domain was insignificant. There were unachieved projects in the fields of agriculture, livestock and manpower. The only sound development project conceived by the Germans, which almost succeeded, was the railway. This was supposed to link Tabora to Rusumo and was conceived to solve the problem of Rwanda's landlocked geographical features. The project would have helped to overcome the geographical constraints and hence would encourage the development of an export economy in agriculture.

The work on the construction of the railway from Tanganyika started in 1905, two years after the Uganda railway. The railway line reached Tabora in 1912. The most difficult stretch from Tabora to Lake Tanganyika, Kigoma, was finished in 1914. Before this railway started operating, the idea was tabled to extend it towards Rwanda and Burundi.

The official project was estimated to cover a distance of 450 kilometers with a diversion at Tabora, ending at the border of

⁶¹ Bindseil, R., 1988, op. cit., p. 120.

Rwanda and Burundi where Rubavu meets Kagera. This project was supported by Governor Schnee, who visited Ruanda-Burundi with an expert to study its implementation. It was approved by the government in Berlin. This line was supposed to join Nyabarongo and Akagera rivers. The Germans wanted to find out if these two rivers were navigable. After exploratory studies, Lt. Gudovius came up with a positive conclusion about the project in July 1808. His argument was that the railway line had a technical advantage of avoiding crossing mountainous regions, avoiding expensive technology.

Father Van der Burgt, a missionary in Burundi, proposed another route: a railway line that would cross Burundi and Rwanda leading to Lake Kivu. This consisted of a distance of 200 kilometers more than the Tabora-Akagera line. Father Van der Burgt thought that River Akanyaru and River Ruvubu were not navigable and that the Tabora-Akagera stretch was useless in so far as the railway line would cross arid areas which were less populated. Thanks to the terminal on Lake Kivu, he asserted that Rwanda and Burundi could transport products from Belgian Congo to the east. The official circles did not favor this proposal because they feared the high costs involved due to the topographic constraints, of constructing a railway line of 200 km via a mountainous region and crossing the Congo-Nile Crater.

The last proposal intended to compete with the British railway line (the Uganda Railway) was to connect the Tanga-Moshi railway line with Arusha from the eastern bank of Lake Victoria. A link by ship was envisaged on the lake, and the railway line was to be extended from Bukoba to Kigali via Karagwe. However, even this proposal was dropped owing to the financial and technical constraints involved; the proposed railway line was supposed to cross sharp craters, many rivers, and a big area of the Akagera Park. As for government officials, competition with the British colonies would have succeeded by constructing a parallel railway line to that of Uganda

The official project entered its implementation phase on the eve of the First World War. In 1915, when German troops were fighting at the border of German East Africa, an engineer sent by the central government was stationed at Gisaka with his team. He spent four more months there to make a survey of the

project.⁶² The German Parliament (*Reichtag*) in Berlin voted for an imperial budgetary law during the fiscal year of 1914 of 50 million DM for the construction of the railway line from Tabora to Rusumo. However, this project did not take off because of the First World War.

d. Development of trade

Prior to the 19th Century, Rwanda was excluded from the caravan trade network that crossed the entire German sphere of influence in East Africa. She only joined this network at the end of the century. Many believed in the theory that Rwanda's pre-colonial economy closed. They argued that the only movement of goods was associated with feudal constraints in the form of grants and royalties.⁶³ They further argued that political minorities drained the entire surplus of production from the peasant masses, preventing the emergence of trade exchange.⁶⁴ Hence, in their view, institutional structures in Rwanda did not encourage trade. Peasants concentrated on subsistence farming without leaving their immediate environment except during periods of famine. They concluded that the work on farms was based on family structures that were organized and restricted to households.⁶⁵

In spite of the above feudal royalties,⁶⁶ there is considerable evidence that trade of food items existed in pre-colonial Rwanda. The royalties were less burdensome than what was imagined. The food tax was levied once a year at the time of harvests, but not all products were taxable. Taxes were only imposed on beans and sorghum. Feudal services and forced labor did not prevent traders from getting profit needed to purchase items needed by each household. Further, food trade was not reduced by the imposition of taxes.⁶⁷

⁶² Zaza's diary of 13th December 1915

⁶³ Leurquin P. H., *Le niveau de vie des populations rurales du Ruanda-Urundi*, Louvain, Institut de recherche économique, 1960, p. 30-36.

⁶⁴ Vidal, C., « Economie de la société féodale rwandaise », in *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, XIV, 53, 1973, p.53.

⁶⁵ Ruzindana, E., *L'évolution du commerce au Rwanda (du dernier quart du XIX siècle à 1950)*, Université catholique de Louvain, 1974.

⁶⁶ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit p. 103.

⁶⁷ Lugan, B., *L'économie de l'échange au Rwanda de 1850 à 1914*, Thèse, Université de Province, 1976, p. 106.

Pre-colonial Rwanda operated two types of trade: internal and peripheral trade. Rwanda was open to East African influences but also had commercial contacts with the West. According to Van Noten's notes,⁶⁸ at the end of the 18th century, Rwanda received products from the Indian Ocean coast such as glass pearls from Europe and stone pearls from India. The first products to appear on the market from Asia and Europe date back to the reign of King Yuhi Mazimpaka.⁶⁹ The use of cloth started under King Rwogera.

Products from the east became numerous under King Rwanbugiri. The latter even appointed a treasurer at the royal court charged with stocking indigenous products (*umunya byuma*) and another charged with keeping imported products (*urwunguko*). The Arab brokers were stationed at Akagera. From there, they continued sending gifts to the king of Rwanda. The royal family monopolized this trade. Its official intermediary was the chief of border trade between the Gihunya and Gisaka regions.

Rwanda was also involved in peripheral trade with Western Kivu. Kinyanga Province was a commercial area connecting the transport network of goods from Bunyabungo.⁷⁰ The areas located south of Lake Edward (*Rwicanzige*) exported important quantities of salt and cowries to the royal court from the banks of this lake. Cowries were used for decorating royal residences. Rwanda thus participated in inter-lacustrine trade, implying the absence of an autocratic system.

Internal trade was organized on a regular basis between regions and according to agricultural seasons. This trade was based on an exchange of products within the country (artisan products, livestock products, and food crops) and consisted of barter trade between producers and consumers. The mobility of traditional traders in markets located in different climatic zones was facilitated by natural conditions. The products produced depended on physical climatic conditions such as altitude. This diversity led to both complex and complimentary trade in the region.⁷¹ The exchange of food crops consisted of transactions based on the principal of 'inter-regional compensation,' or the

⁶⁸ *Les tombes du roi Cyirima Rujugira et e la reine mère Nyirayuhi*, INRS, Butare 1972, pp. 34 : 55-56

⁶⁹ Kagame, A., « Premiers contacts du Rwanda et de l'Occident », in *Grands Lacs*, 35, 1950, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Czekanowski, J., 1917, op. cit., pp. 162-169.

⁷¹ Lugan, B., 1976 op., cit., p. 99

exchange of both seasonal and regular products. It was not trade organized by professional businessmen, but trade was based on the idea of profit maximization.

Pre-colonial Rwanda had many markets where barter trade was conducted. This fact is confirmed by oral traditions and written accounts made by the first Europeans.⁷² By 1916, 40 regular barter-markets existed. Of these, 28 existed before the arrival of the Germans.⁷³ For the most part, all of these markets were located along border regions sharing a distinct climate. The areas where the markets were concentrated included the central part of the country, namely Kibali, Kingogo, Buliza, and Nduga. In total, there were 9 markets. Near the Nile-Congo crater which formed the climatic and ecological barrier in the North, there were 11 markets: Mulera, Bushiru, Buberuka, and Bugoyi. In the southern part of Lake Kivu in Kinyaga⁷⁴ and in the entire eastern part of the country, there were no markets at all. During periods of food scarcity, the inhabitants of this region had to go to other provinces to get supplies of foods and hoes. Generally, some markets were organized regularly while others were periodical. There were also some places where people frequently met to discuss pertinent issues, especially during famine and periods of food scarcity. Markets in Kivu region flourished under the influence of the Bashi, Buhunde, and Bukanvu. This, coupled with the existence of market places in the central parts of the kingdom, proves that pre-colonial Rwanda was deeply involved in trade.

⁷² Kandt, R., *Caput Nil*, pp. 294-307. He refers to the market organized regularly in Mulera in the valley of Mukungwa and to the important commercial role of Kivu region as well as the existence of peripheral trade conducted around Bugoyi. Czekanowski J., *op. cit.*, pp. 159-169, revisits the ideas of Kandt and completes them; he is the first person to speak about of markets in the central part of Rwanda (Nduga). The dairies of the Catholic missionaries sometimes note the existence of such and such a market and provide some information which confirm oral traditions; the dairy of Rwanza (1903-1907, 26th August 1903) speaks of a market near the mission; the dairy of Mibirizi mentions several occasions that this market was held (example Mibirizi's dairy 1903-1912, 13th July 1907); Save dairy (25th August 1912) confirms the existence of a pre-colonial market called Rwanza, and others at Kinyaga and in the northern part of the country.

⁷³ Lugan, B., *op. cit.*, p. 19

⁷⁴ The known markets in the North (11 were recorded) were as follows: in Bugoyi there was Mushwiza, Rwabizege (Rwerere), Kibali; these were peripheral markets dominated by agricultural products and food crops. In Mulera: Teru, mahenge, Kiryi, Rwankeli, Agasakuza; in Buberuka: Base (Mugobore), Miyove; the specialization of the area was manufacturing hoes of best quality compared to those of the Bushi; in Bushiru: Vunga (Supply centre of consumption perishable goods in Kingogo and Nduga. The markets in the central part (9 counted in Northern Nduga) : they were: in Kingogo: Milinzi, Kizirabageni (Magorogonza); In Kibali: Mubuga; in Buliza: Mburamazi; In Nduga: Nyabitare (near Mushiohiro), The markets in the south were: in Kinyangayinga, Mururu, Nyagahinga, Bitare; in Bwanamukali: Rwanza (near Save)

In an attempt to explain the localization and centralization of markets in some provinces, some authors have established a link between markets and political institutions, arguing that “feudal institutions imposed by the minority Tutsi prevented or slowed down the organization of trade.”⁷⁵ The point to note is that, for a long time, markets were non-existent in regions attached to the central authority. The volume of markets was higher in provinces belatedly subjected to royal authority or in regions that were autonomous *vis-à-vis* the central power, especially the east. A big part of the central and southern region did not participate in trade.

In attempts to explain the localization of internal trade, both institutional and political reasons should be avoided, especially the “Tutsi factor.” Integrated regions such as Nduga and Buliza also operated markets. The aristocracy resorted to markets to get supplies of items they needed, such as hoes and bracelets. By subduing small principalities, the royal power imposed security and created a favorable environment for the development of trade. Explanations that put geographical factors at the forefront (relief, soils and rainfall) are thus more plausible explanations for the existence of internal trade.

Thus, trade was partly the result of natural conditions. Markets existed in regions like Kinyaga and Bugoyi, which produced or imported artisan products or food items. They also existed in contact regions, or areas that produced complementary products; these areas were located near one another, especially in the central plateau. Markets also existed in regions where there were highway routes, especially in Mukungwa valley and in regions that connected areas that produced complementary items, including those that were located far from one another such as Mulera and Nduga.

Famine complicated the phenomena of social mobility and movement of goods. However, inter-regional trade in food items took place even after periods of food shortage.⁷⁶ Buganza, Gisaka, Bwanacyambwe, and Nduga supplied cattle to the provinces in the north, including Rukiga, Buberuka, Mulera, and Bugoyi. This trade involved the exchange of artisan products like hoes

⁷⁵ Czekanowski, J., op., cit., p. 164.

⁷⁶ The food shortages and famine which hit Rwanda since 1897 up to the eve of the First World War was caused by the invasion of locusts of 1897.

and bracelets. In regions where livestock was kept, the latter was bartered for food items. Every year, Nduga and the regions of central Rwanda resorted to Bugoyi, Bushiru, and Mulera for food during times of shortage.

The Belgian administration closed many old markets to control commercial activities. However, in 1922, the Belgian administration⁷⁷ encouraged the development of markets in both urban and administrative centers. The colonial authority felt that native markets were deeply important given how often they were frequented.⁷⁸

- **Reversal of traditional trade circuits**

In the last decade of the 19th Century, just before the arrival of the Europeans, Rwanda moved out of isolation and gradually opened up its eastern borders for trade. King Rwabugiri authorized some businessmen originating from the southern part of Lake Victoria to import cloth materials. The first foreign businessmen came from Karagwe and belonged to the Bahaya and Bajinja ethnic groups. They crossed the country selling cloth in return for animal skin and cattle. Others specialized in slave trade. The Bahaya and Bajinja acted as middlemen for Arabs. Around 1895, several commercial relations were established from Akagera. It was not until German colonization that the trade route to the east was opened completely. The major reason for this reversal was the influence of the first Europeans who came from the east. Further, the German administration facilitated access to the *Deutsche Ostafrika* sphere of influence as an advanced stage of the colonial administration. This also encouraged the settlement of Muslim merchants, who had close relations with Tabora and Bukoba. Missionaries also played an important role in opening trade routes towards the east.

The role of traders in Rwanda became increasingly important. They connected commercial routes that had originally acted independently. The route along Lake Kivu and the inter-lacustrine region provides a clear example. Rwanda also connected to the eastern part of Belgian Congo and the Bukoba Trading post. The Arabs exploited rubber and ivory from eastern Congo in

⁷⁷ Annual report on Belgian administration, 1921, p.83

⁷⁸ In local language, a market was called “iguliro/ amaguliro”; the Belgian imposed a term of Swahili origin “*isoko sing./ amasoko (plur.)*”

exchange for cloth and beads. Complete annexation of Rwanda was achieved in 1905. At this time, Rwanda specialized in producing and exporting goat and cow skins towards the Indian Ocean via Bukoba and Lake Victoria.

At the beginning of the century, the development of animal trypanosomiasis (tsetse fly disease) around Lake Victoria reduced the production of animal skin. However, Muslim merchants were convinced that Rwanda provided a permanent source for the trade of skins because it was a country full of livestock. In 1903, the cost of skins increased and traders started looking for them throughout the entire East African region. As a result, Bukoba, a mere administrative cum military center, experienced a trade boom following the settlement of Arabs, Asians, and European traders in 1902 and 1903. By virtue of its geographical location, Rwanda became a conduit for trade items from the Congo such as copper, ivory, and rubber.

The first settlements by Arab commercial traders were established in Nyanza in 1901. They later spread to Shangi and Gisenyi. These foreign traders were fearful of the northern region where the king's authority was contested. The establishment of Kigali as a new trading center in 1907 gave a new impetus to business and trade. Located at the junction of natural routes in the center of the country, Kigali became a trading post where skins were collected and exported to Bukoba. Indian and Arab traders built "*dukas*" in most key areas.⁷⁹ In general, Muslim businessmen controlled the trade of skins. Europeans traded in ivory and livestock. Muslim traders established permanent settlements while Europeans crossed the country and returned to their headquarters located on the East African coast.

In 1916, there were six European firms in Rwanda: the Max Klein firm from Marseille, the '*International Handelsgesellschaft*' from Hamburg, the East Africa trading company, the '*Societa Italiana Coloniale*,' and the Greek firms '*Papazoglakis*' and '*Angelopoulos*.' The most important of these firms was the '*International Handelsgesellschaft*'. These firms imported cloth materials, trade items, and various European products while exporting animal skin.

⁷⁹ Mgr Hirth mentions a "true network of traders which was established in Rwanda" (Mgr Hirth speaking to his brother in March 1905).

In 1910, there were 63 Indians, Baluchistans, and Arabs residing and operating commercial activities in Rwanda. They all belonged to Arab or Asian firms in East Africa. The most important one was 'Abdalla Kimji' in Bukoba, followed by 'Juma Osman' from Bukoba. These firms dealt in cloth and skin trade. Contrary to European firms, they established contacts with local populations in rural areas. Asian and European firms were different in the manner that they organized and conceived their businesses: "the European firms depended on Indian firms for the supply of skins because Indians preferred to deal directly with the natives using hawkers (...); on the other hand, wholesale trade went to European firms." The independent small businessmen were Rwandan native hawkers, peddlers, and distributors of trade items supplied by the import-export firms based in Kigali. They crisscrossed hilltops and sold cloth, pearls, and copper wires in exchange for skins. Another category of independent small-scale businessmen was made of Swahili and Rwandese businessmen who had converted to Islam.

Native middlemen sometimes made long journeys into villages to look for trade items that satisfied specific needs and sold them through barter trade. Sorghum was exchanged with beans, and food items with livestock. The natives acted as middlemen sent by rich businessmen and chiefs. The professional businessmen were stationed at the periphery of the kingdom or in the center of the kingdom within the provinces. The hawkers and peddlers (*abacuruzi*) sold items in remote rural areas in exchange for livestock, which they returned to big businessmen.

In the major markets of the country, hoes, bracelets, and goats were used as mediums of exchange. Trade was conducted along accepted standards and principles that varied from one province to another. No standard measure existed throughout the country before the arrival of the Germans and Muslims. Pearls were a recent introduction and were used for decorative purposes. A cow was generally exchanged in Kinyaga for 4,000 bracelets. In Nduga and Buganza, a cow was valued at 1,500 and 2,000 bracelets. The profits obtained by professional businessmen could sometimes double their costs.

The quantity of ivory gradually diminished while the quantity of rubber increased by the eve of the First World War. In 1909, between 4 and 500 kg of ivory were exported. European, Indian, and Swahili businessmen dealt in items from the Congo that were obtained from trading centers such as Shangi, Bugarama, and Gisenyi. Trade in animal skin dominated the list of exports. In 1908, exports from Rwanda were valued at 235,917 Rupees (78%). This percentage gradually rose. In 1911, 75% of the cow-skins loaded in Bukoba came from Rwanda alone. Rwanda remained a small producer of goat skins.

Cloth was used to pay for skins on a barter-trade basis. Trade in animal skin introduced a new unit of exchange in the country - the Rupee. Cotton cloth materials, or "*doti*," were usually white in color (*amerikani*) and two arms long. It was divided into two pieces (*upande*) of one arm-length (*upande*). 1,000 to 1,200 beads were equivalent to 1 *doti*. Prices at that time were subject to considerable fluctuations in the country. Rwandans were not attracted to clothes with complicated or dark colors. "*Kaniga*," of black and white, was the most liked garment. A pair of beads of blue, white, or pink color, were the most attractive ornaments. Unlike in Burundi and Congo where beads served as ornaments, in Rwanda Catholic missionaries used them to pay workers. Threads of copper and brass wire were imported into Rwanda in considerable quantities. They were also used as body ornaments (bracelets).

Slave trade gradually slowed down and eventually disappeared. Arab slave dealers and their '*Bajinja*' brokers were monitored by missionaries everywhere they went. They were generally detested by the Germans. The Arabs did not wish to compromise their trading chances in the country, so they transitioned to the illicit trade of ivory and rubber from the Congo. They also traded in cow and goat skins. In 1903, Von Beringe told the traders he met on his northward journey that "slave trafficking was forbidden and was severely punished by law."⁸⁰

➤ **Consequences of trade contacts**

There were several consequences of this trade. The new commercial networks organized between Kigali and Bukoba opened Rwanda to the outside world. Kigali played the role of a warehouse for

⁸⁰ Jahresbericht, A.K.R. 1911/ 1912, p.23

products from Rwanda and a distribution centre for trade items from the East. It also acted as a transit point for goods such as hides and skins from Burundi and products from the Congo pending export to Mombasa, via Bukoba. Kigali thus became a hub for regional trade between the Congo, Burundi, and Bukoba.

An affinity for new needs started developing among the Rwandese. Articles that were hitherto regarded as luxurious became affordable to everybody. Father Classe refers to this as “the advantages of trade.”⁸¹ More and more individuals participated in commerce and trade. A trader who grew rich employed others and recruited porters. These jobs enriched people faster than the traditional system given the time it took to obtain a cow under *Ubuhake*. In 1913, 20,000 porters travelled between Bukoba and Kigali and 25,241 travelled from Kigali to Bukoba. From the Congo and Burundi, 23,521 porters transported goods to Kigali. Some traders were involved in clandestine trade from Rukiga with goods that did not pass through official regulations in Kigali.

Another consequence of trade was the reversal of the commercial traffic given that Rwanda was open to the East. This opening linked two routes that were autonomous during the pre-colonial era: the route from Lake Kivu to the West and the route from Karagwe to the East. Rwanda was newly empowered in two ways. This linkage provided an intermediary link with the Congo, which produced ivory and rubber. Further, a new link was created between the Congo and Bukoba, a loading port.

Unfortunately, the economic boom created came with the appearance of new diseases such as malaria. Although malaria had existed before, it had been less harmful given the certain degree of immunity that people had developed. The natives lacked immunity to new strains of malaria. Confronted with the new trade, traditional rulers reacted by buying new clothes. They tolerated Muslim traders, who resided at the royal court, and accepted their gifts. As time went on, the court complained about cattle raids by foreigners and the acts of violence they perpetrated. Nonetheless, the Arabs were not officially prevented from doing business by the royal court; instead, it was the missionaries and Germans who prevented them from doing so.

⁸¹ Classe, P., Letter to Father Superior of 30th Januray 1910.

The ordinance of May 10, 1905, was published in response to claims by the royal court and by missionaries of the abuses associated with trade. It prohibited foreign traders from entering the country with the exception of those who were authorized by district officials. This almost undermined the development of trade. On March 7, 1906, another ordinance was published that instructed Arabs and Indians to carry written authorization before entering the country. This became difficult to implement, and Kandt dropped it and invited traders of Asian origin to Rwanda. In June 1913, the government passed a decree that Ruanda-Urundi was henceforth open to foreign trade. By recognizing the need for Rwanda's economic development, which depended on trade, the German authorities imposed control on the activities of the foreigners.

Catholic and Protestant missionaries believed that trade had negative implications because it was in the hands of Muslims. As far as the missionaries were concerned, there was a risk of Islamizing the country.⁸² The White Fathers considered Rwanda to be their "personal property," where they could conduct their own religious and moral experiments. They resented any stranger who would corrupt their territory, and it was therefore necessary to avoid any foreign competing doctrine. Thus, the Catholic missionaries embarked on a protest of the "mercantile mentality," hoping to undermine Muslim penetration in order to safeguard their interests.⁸³

The Protestant missionaries tried to beat Muslims at their own game. They opened shops in Nyanza, Kigali, and Cyangugu, where they bought and sold products from the Christian natives.⁸⁴ They opened new Christian-run trading centers and conducted barter trade by exchanging skins with cloth and beads. This helps to explain why the *Handels-Mission* became a failure. Rwandans preferred goods sold by Muslim traders, and family heads needed rupees to pay the taxes imposed on the eve of the

⁸² Rutayisire, P., *La christianisation du Rwanda (1900-1945). Méthodes missionnaires et politiques selon Mgr Léon Classe*, Fribourg, 1987

⁸³ See the exaggerated proposals made by the White Fathers in connection with the religious competition, which was in reality non-existent and the numerous complaints against the acts of violence of traders *visa-à-vis* the Germans by surpassing their own abuses

⁸⁴ Lacger, L. (de)., *Ruanda*, Kabgayi, 1961, p. 382.

First World War. These factors undermined the impact of the German presence in Rwanda. The objective of the Residence was to encourage Rwandans to participate in economic development and administration; to this effect, they partly succeeded.

4.1.4. Presence of missionaries

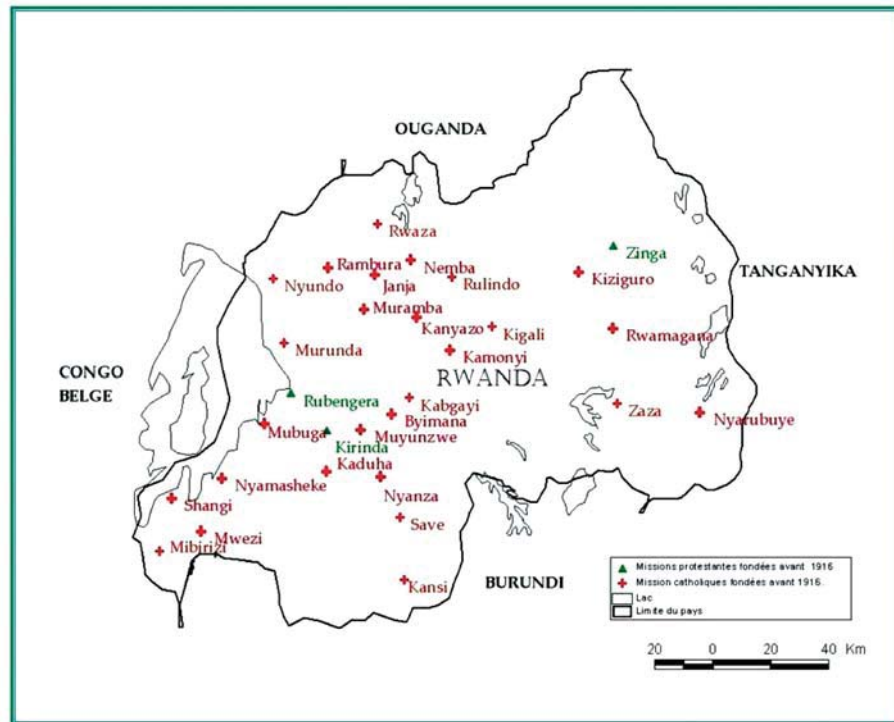
The first Catholic and Protestant missionaries came to Rwanda with the spirit of conquest and domination. This was discernable from the occupation strategies they adopted, their contempt of the dominated people, their use of force, and the priority they gave to the interests of the colonizers.

Founded in 1868, the White Fathers of Cardinal Lavigerie arrived in Rwanda in February 1900. Under Mgr J. Hirth, they established the first Catholic Mission in Rwanda at Bwanamukari, which undertook the task of evangelization that complemented the colonial enterprise. He wanted to establish his mission before the arrival of Protestants and Muslims.⁸⁵ The Apostolic Vicar was aware of what explorers, slave dealers, soldiers, and colonial civil servants had written of Rwanda, and of Rwanda's capacity to attract world attention.

Up to the eve of the First World War, priests had founded missions in several regions in the country, including: Save and Zaza (1900), Nyundo (1903), Rwanza (1903), Kabgayi (1905), Rulindo (1908), Rambura (1910), Kigali (1912), Muramba, and Kansi. (See map 11 below)

⁸⁵ The book of Father Minnaet Stefaan, already cited is devoted to the first journey made by Mgr Hirth to establish the first mission in Rwanda. See also two articles by the same author: "Un regard neuf sur la première fondation des missionnaires d'Afrique au Rwanda en février 1900", in *Histoire et Missions Chrétiennes*, no 8, 2008, pp. 39-66; "« Les pères Blancs et la société durant l'époque coloniale allemande (1900-1916): une rencontre entre culture religion", in Rutayisire, P. et al., *Les religions au Rwanda: défis, convergences et compétitions*, Ed. De l'UNR, septembre, 2009, pp.53-101.

Map 11: Establishment of Catholic and Protestant



Source: Annual reports of the missionaries of Africa

As far as the Catholic Missionaries were concerned, the strategy of occupation achieved many of their goals. Primarily, they wanted to occupy the most populated areas before Protestants could do so. Secondly, they wanted to win over those personalities they considered to be politically and economically important. Further, they wanted to recruit those who facilitated communication between the Rwanda missions and the seat of the Apostolic Vicar located along Lake Victoria. Lastly, they wanted to respond to the request from missionaries who wanted to make new geographical boundary demarcations. Contrary to what many Rwandese thought, no area was given to the missionaries by the royal court or by colonial authorities. All missions were founded on the initiative of the missionaries themselves after making careful preparations and surveys of the area. Many areas were occupied without prior agreement by existing Rwandan authorities, while colonial authorities were in collaboration.

The missionaries of the Bethel German Society under Pastor Ernet Johanssen, accompanied by Recius, arrived in Rwanda in 1907. They settled in Zinga, in the east, and in Kirinda, in the central west. By 1909, they had settled in Rubengera, Kiteme, and Ijwi Island. They also settled in Remera Rukoma in 1912. By the time of their retirement in 1916, most Germans, including military officers, administrative civil servants, and Lutheran missionaries, had left Rwanda after having established three strong missions in Kilinda, Rubengera, and Remera-Rukoma.

a. Methods of evangelization

The methods used by missionaries to convert Rwandans were closely linked to their negative preconceptions. Father Brard (nicknamed *Telebura*) claimed that “black people” were never “morally upright.” According to him and his counterparts, Rwandans were “naïve,” possessing only “crude intelligence,” which was a sign of “original sin.”⁸⁶ They were strongly and “excessively attached to their tradition and were therefore superstitious rather than historic.” In addition, Rwandans were described as “lazy by nature.” He referred to the religion of the Rwandans as “naïve,” saying that it was characterized by “materialism” and “spiritualism,” with evil spirits existing everywhere. Rwandans were “all childish, naïve, simple” and “dominated by fear.”⁸⁷ In short, the missionaries did not expect anything good from the Rwandan people. For this reason, the missionaries did everything possible to establish “a clean-slate mentality” with Rwandan practices and beliefs, attempting to replace them with a new religious identity.

This was a racist-religious model espoused by the missionary theological doctrine and reflected in a Biblical story that explains the origins of the curse for the black people. Some missionaries explained the fate of Africans by the sin committed by Cain, son of Noah who became guilty as a result of seeing the nudity of his father (Genesis 9, 18-28). A curse was thus put on all the descendants of Cain. The idea of black inferiority was thus religiously and culturally motivated.

⁸⁶ Brard, P., Notes, 1902, pp.26-27; P. Classe, “A travers l’Afrique équatoriale”, in *Les missions catholiques*, 1902, pp.437-438.

⁸⁷ Brard, P., Notes, p.23.

Anthropological studies conducted by colonialists and missionaries established cultural and racial differences to describe fundamental inequalities. The majority of missionaries used the theory of ‘inherited inequality’ between races to study Rwandan society. They claimed that all Rwandese were foreigners in their country; Bahutu came from Chad while Batutsi came from the northeastern part of Africa. The Batwa were considered to be natives without any justification. Rwandan elites internalized and disseminated this view of Rwandan history.⁸⁸ This pseudo-scientific claim continued to be the basis on which Rwandan history was understood by missionaries. The ‘Bantu-Hamitic theory’ developed by the missionaries served the interests and objectives of the colonizers and missionaries, who needed a dominant and historically legitimate group to govern and convert the native population. They used the same myth to justify their change of allegiance in the 1950s. Needless to say, this myth has been fervently disproved by scientific study.

a. The use of force and duress

Missionary action was characterized by the use of violence. Missionaries claimed that it was their right to obtain services from Rwandans, including requisitions for foodstuffs, hoes, small livestock, and construction materials. Forced labor was imposed on the local population “*ubunetsi*,” especially for the construction of churches in Bugoyi. In Zaza, the issue of wood was very problematic; missionaries claimed monopoly rights on wood in Gisaka (1907-1912). Together with their foreign supporters and recruits, the missionaries committed many abuses.

The burden of forced labor was by far the most difficult thing for Rwandans to support, especially when compared to the work done for traditional authorities. The chief in Nyaruguru resented the unpopular forced labor. The same situation was reported in Gisaka. The missionaries justified their forced labor by its urgency and necessity. According to the Diaries of Save, forced labor was a disastrous system of which no mission was innocent.⁸⁹ The missionaries argued that given their meager resources, they had no option but to resort to forced labor by the natives. The system of paid labor was rarely used by the missionaries, and salaries were very modest. In the early days,

⁸⁸ For example, read Bushayija, S., in *La Revue Nouvelle*, XXVIII, 12, 1958

⁸⁹ Diary of Save, 7 July 1905.

they used beads and cloth to pay for the services of transporting bricks and wood. Such practices continued up to 1910.

The Christian missionaries had absolute power and refused to compromise with Rwanda's traditional beliefs. Christian converts were supposed to renounce their cultural identity. The missionaries fanatically wanted to put an end to all signs of "paganism." In achieving this objective, even the most unjust and humiliating means were used. They wanted Rwandan civilization to be wiped to a "clean slate" – totally overhauled and replaced. They launched a campaign to witch-hunt sorcerers and traditional warriors. They destroyed talismans and anything that had a relationship with the rituals of the dead, including *kuragura*, *guterekera*, and *kubandwa*. The catechists, the *Bakuru b'inama*, and the Christian Batware supported this campaign.

The term "*Imana*" was judged inappropriate in designating the Biblical God because of the numerous meanings associated with it. The term *Imana* meant several things to the Banyarwanda, including: chance (*kugira Imana*), a divine animal (sheep, calf, lamb, etc.), a tree, and a person with an upright moral character (*ni Imana y'u Rwanda*). The Catholic missionaries imposed a Swahili word that they considered less polluted: "*Mungu*" (in some original text "*Mulungu*"). Nonetheless, Rwandans and Burundians continued to use the term '*Imana*' to designate the Supreme Being, using it in religious texts.

Apart from their religious goal, the missionaries became partners in furthering the colonial enterprise. The White Fathers of Cardinal Lavigerie Association and the Germans lived in continuous suspicion of one another. The White Fathers considered the Germans to be Protestants. Further, the majority of the first missionaries were French. Missionaries held different political opinions than those held by the colonial administration authorities. Despite these differences, the Germans and the White Fathers managed to solve, for sixteen years, their internal conflicts and establish the basic infrastructure for exploiting Rwanda. In this endeavor, the Catholic missionaries considered the Belgians to be their natural allies because they came from a Catholic country. They therefore joined hands with them to exploit the country. Entire sectors such as education and health were totally or partially ceded to missionaries even the weaknesses of the colonial administrative system.

The missionaries used a discourse that favored and supported the West and the colonial government. They did not only support colonization, but they also felt that it represented an overall colonization program established by the metropolitan powers in the name of civilization. Missionary action was one of the pillars that supported the colonial system. The process of evangelization did not put an end to national aspirations.

b. Islam: an obstacle to evangelization

In Rwanda, Islam was linked to the advent of trade in the country. Arab slave traders moved around Rwanda during the reign of King Rwabugiri without managing to penetrate it. Slave dealers such as Hamed Ibrahim, Said-Saif, and Said of Muscat used their messengers to send gifts to the royal court, but the king refused these gifts. According to Rumaliza, Mohammed bin Khalfan asked for permission to establish relations with the King of Rwanda. He also sent him gifts of beads, cloth, and wires, but all this was without success. When he was chased from Burundi, he forced his way to Rwanda where he encountered stiff resistance and resentment.

It was as a result of German rule that Islam was entrenched in Rwanda. From the beginning, the German administration not only encouraged the arrival of Muslim traders, but Muslims were also allowed to make settlements in the country. The Germans recruited some Arabs among their ranks. They served as soldiers, clerks, interpreters, porters, and maids. As a result of establishing settlements, the Arabs founded administrative centers like Shangi, Kigali, Gisenyi and Bugarama. They built shops and stocked them with trade items from Tabora and Bukoba. Lastly, the Arabs introduced Swahili as a language of administration.

From 1901, the Arabs, Indians, Europeans and Swahili became the first traders in Nyanza to look for animal hides and skins. Following numerous acts of violence which they committed against the native population, the natives started resenting them. They attempted to kill the traders in 1904 and many of them died. According to the ordinance of March 7, 1906, the German administration was forced to restrict the coming of foreigners to Rwanda, at least for some time.

The Catholic and Protestant missionaries saw in Islam formidable competition which was supposed to be fought at all costs. Contrary to the Protestants, Catholics got involved in trade. The cash economy that was created made people very mobile. The missionaries considered Muslims to be symbols of moral decadence. They considered their religion to be satanic since it was associated with slavery. The White Fathers hesitated to settle in Kigali because it was considered a place of moral decadence owing to its Arab presence. However, the office of the Resident forced them to settle there.⁹⁰

The missionaries considered Islam and trade – two things closely linked – to be major obstacles to their work of evangelization and converting the Rwandese. Given the limited number of Muslims and the discrimination to which they were subjected, especially during Belgian rule, it became clear that this discrimination was done out of sheer propaganda and fanaticism. The Muslim traders who remained in the country restricted themselves to urban centers. Islam became an urban religion for the most part. Under the Mandate and Belgium Trusteeship, Swahili was undermined, which pleased the Catholic missionaries. The Belgians argued that Kiswahili was not a native language. Consequently, Muslims were marginalized in Rwanda for a long time.

4.1.5. Resistance movements and opposition

In analyzing the reactions of the colonized people *vis-à-vis* the European intrusion, attention has always been put on the activities of the Europeans and the changes they brought with apparent facility. Those who attach importance to the colonized people insist on the colonial conquest and the armed revolt, thus downplaying that a society which has not experienced armed revolts or armed popular resistance movements is a society which succumbs easily to foreign occupation. Father Arnoux places Rwandan society in this context, arguing that the arrival of Europeans did not provoke any resistance.⁹¹

It is true that armed resistance was suppressed at a very early stage, especially during the Shangi incident. However, the resistance of the colonized people can no longer be categorized

⁹⁰ Rutayisire, P., 2009, op.cit., p.24.

⁹¹ Arnoux, A., *Les Pères Blancs aux sources du Nil*, Paris, 1953, p.54.

as armed confrontation alone because this was not the only way of opposing newcomers. A series of behaviors and reactions by the Rwandan natives aimed at expressing categorical refusal not only towards foreign occupation and exploitation, but also towards local authority.

In an attempt to appreciate the resistance of the colonized people, it is necessary to consider the process that links events such as European occupation with conflicts which existed before. The way Rwandans behaved towards foreigners was informed by internal situations into which they dragged Europeans.⁹²

a. The crisis of legitimacy

King Kigeri Rwabugiri was responsible for the legitimacy crisis in which the Rwandan royal court was entangled during King Musinga's rule. King Rwabugiri was a conqueror king and a great organizer, but his methods were characterized by the use of excessive terror, the manipulation of rivalries between nobility family members, the deposition of powerful members of the nobility who were seen as potential threats, and an increase of the *Ibikingi* system for his supporters.

Near the end of his rule, King Rwabugiri was preoccupied with safeguarding his immense achievements. He groomed his son Rutarindwa to succeed him. With his son close by, King Rwabugiri ruled from 1889, beginning when he was 20 years old. When Rutarindwa's mother was killed, King Rwabugiri appointed Kanjogera as Queen Mother. However, according to tradition, all adopted Queen Mothers were supposed to come from the same clan as the real mother and were not supposed to have children eligible for the throne. There was another more recent prohibition that prevented the appointment of a queen mother from the *Abega* clan, or from the line of *Abakagara*, because some of its members were *Abiru* and therefore knew the secrets of the royal court. Rutarindwa's mother was from *Abakono* clan. Kanjogera was *Umwakagara* and had a son, Musinga, who was a possible candidate to the throne. King Rwabugiri was blinded by the love of his wife and therefore overlooked this prohibition.

⁹² Conference proceedings: Kigali, 1985. About Rwanda, read the contributions of Ntezimana E., pp.59-94; Mbonimana, B., 111-124 et Rumiya J., p.463, Des Forges A, *Defeat is the only bad news; Rwanda under Musinga, 1896-1932*, Yale University, Ph.D, 1972

Others argue that King Rwabugiri wanted to bring the *Abega* clan closer to power.

King Rwabugiri died in 1895 during a military campaign against the Bashi. The accession to power by Rutarindwa and Kanjogera was easy because it was planned for a long time. Some months after the official enthronement, the royal court was confronted with a challenge whose consequences were crucial in determining the relations between the royal court and the Europeans. A Belgian Lieutenant who was pursuing soldiers that had staged a mutiny in the Congo Free State (EIC) managed to occupy Shangi with many Congolese soldiers. The royal court sent its best warriors under the command of Bisangwa and Muhigirwa to ward off the intruders from the Rwandan territory. Unfortunately, the Rwandan army was defeated humiliateingly because of the European military's superior fire power. The Rwandan army used spears against the guns used by the enemy. Many warriors lost their lives including Bisangwa himself. The royal court wanted to ward off invaders but did not succeed. The myth of the invincibility of Rwanda was shattered (*U Rwanda ruratera ntiruterwa*). The Shangi disaster demonstrated the inability of the royal court of Rwanda to confront a European army. Consequently, the royal court was supposed to collaborate with the Europeans if it wanted to retain power. Lastly, the weakness of the court and its army motivated the brothers of Kanjogera, Kabare and Ruhinankiko, to conclude their plot against Rutarindwa.

One afternoon in December 1896, when the court was proceeding with Kabare's enthronement in Rucunshu, a signal was made to attack. The plotters defeated Rutarindwa and his relatives, who committed suicide, because the power relations were not in their favor. Musinga and Kanjogera were officially enthroned in February 1896 by the Abiru, who agreed to legitimize the coup. Those who refused to recognize them were killed.

Some days after the Rucunshu coup d'état, the first revolts took place in the southern part of the country. The revolts were planned by Muhigirwa, son of Rwabugiri. He had withdrawn his troops from the court just before the coup broke out. After recognizing the new king, the chief revisited his decision because the people from the court convinced him that he was going to be killed. The inner-circle in power killed many people they took

to be enemies. Muhigirwa feared this fate and declared himself king so as to have more supporters to confront the plotters. He had the best warriors in the kingdom and the royal court never dared to confront him directly. The court handled the crisis politically by making material promises to influential people in Muhigirwa's entourage. When it was thought the revolting prince was sufficiently weakened by this ingenious tactic, an attack was launched against him. Muhigirwa was defeated and he committed suicide.

The Muhigirwa revolt was immediately followed by another uprising in the northern part of the kingdom. A close confidant of Muhigirwa, Mutwe w'ingabo, surrounded himself with sympathizers who persecuted Musinga's supporters. The royalists did not attain support as expected. The two sons of Rwabugiri, Baryinyonza and Burabyo, became victims of the repression that followed the uprising. But Mutwewingabo got support of the members of the Abateke lineage who were scattered in Buganza, Rukiga, and Buyaga. According to tradition, the Abateke are said to have saved Rwabugiri's wife, Muserekande, and her son, Biregeya. Rwabugiri's wife originated from Buha and lived in Bwanacyambwe. The royal court thought that the Abateke wanted to enthrone Biregeya.

At the same time, Rutarindwa's confidant, Sebakara, who had escaped to the northeast in Bugoyi, incited the local population to rise against Musinga by prophesizing that Biregeya was going to be enthroned. This prophecy did not gain ground. In reaction to this revolt, the royal court sent its army to punish the Abateke. The lineage was almost totally exterminated. The troops went to the North to look for Muserekande and Biregeya. They continued their reprisals towards the west in Muberuka, Mulera, Bugarura, Bushiru, Buhoma, Cyingogo, and Bugoyi. Under the pretext of re-establishing royal authority, they killed, looted, and plundered houses on their way without distinguishing between those considered to be rebels or not. The region suffered from famine soon after. Despite all this, the legitimist movement in support of Biregeya did not stop to be a concern for the royal court during the rule of King Musinga. Such scenarios portended a serious crisis of a big scale in the years that followed.

The relationship between Biregeya and Muserekande is surrounded by a number of legends. Although Muserekande

was a historic figure, there are many unanswered questions surrounding his personality. Did he really give birth to a son? If so, was this son still alive at the time of Rwabugiri's death? If so, why did nobody in the royal court remember if the gifts and thanksgiving to the king were done at the time of the birth of a child of this name? Why was there no trace of Biregeya at the royal court? Some people believe that Biregeya and his mother were saved by the Abateke. Others believe they were killed during the war. Others argue that they sought asylum in Nkore.

The existence of Biregeya is not important. What the myth of Biregeya and Muserekande transmits to us is that he is the symbol of the group of Abega in power and a sign of hope for others. The people in the north were less interested in the coming of Biregeya than refusing to let the court be controlled by the regions. Their revolt was followed by other uprisings in this part of the country, which King Rwabugiri had wanted to put under strict control of the royal court. Very localized and short, these uprisings led by lineage chiefs had the aim of removing court representatives who were benefiting from the royal tax called *ikoro*.

Even after their victory, Kanjogera and his brothers had reason to worry about losing their power. There were many serious and permanent threats, which were issued to convince the people that King Musinga had ruled in a legitimate manner, especially by analyzing Rwabugiri's contradiction to show that it was him who was the true heir. But nobody was fooled. Rwabugiri appointed a co-ruler and Kanjogera acted as Queen Mother of Rutarindwa. King Musinga took the title of Yuhi, which implied that before him, there was Mibambwe, who was a successor of King Kigeri as prescribed by cultural norms.

To confront the threats, the major planners of the Rucunshu coup d'état used terror to impose themselves. Many people were killed while others escaped. This reign of terror is at the root of Kanjogera's reputation as a cruel woman. After exterminating the Abashakamba militia, commanded by Sebuharara and Cyaka, two Nyiginya nobles on Rwata hill in 1904, the repression reduced in intensity. The royal court could not have everything, and it was supposed to appease the Europeans on whom it counted for support from time to time.

The suppression of the Muhigirwa revolt and other revolts from the north forced nobles and others to desist from protesting publicly against the legitimacy of Rucunshu coup d'état. But many Rwandans remained secretly faithful to the legitimists for several reasons: they appreciated King Rwabugiri's achievements, they suffered from the injustice of the central government, and they wanted to regain their lost independence like the people of Gisaka.

a. The Gisaka revolt

Gisaka was a former kingdom conquered in the middle of the 19th century. When the dynasty came to an end, the royal court left it for the local aristocracy to govern. Later, when King Rwabugiri wished to replace the local nobles by his favorite supporters, who came from the inner circle of his kingdom, the Banyagisaka refused to accept the king's changes.

When Von Goetzen crossed Gisaka in 1894, he was received with a lot of enthusiasm by the local population, who expected him to help them defeat the powerful Kingdom of Rwanda. In 1897, Ramsay had the same experience. After crossing the region in October 1900, Mgr Hirth noted the general unhappiness expressed by the local population of Gisaka who, according to him, were suffering from the exploitation by Rwandan aristocracy: "The Gisaka elders clamored for their independence which has been lost for a long time because they had been denied their rights (...) with many difficulties."⁹³ These observations reveal a certain degree of reality that the Banyagisaka experienced by trying to serve the Europeans and regain the independence of their country. The first chief who originated from Gisaka, and who wished to benefit from the presence of Europeans, was Rukura. He wanted to rally the discontented people behind his cause. He introduced himself as a descendant of King Kimenyi IV Getura, the last king of Gisaka. This pretence did not have any foundation, but the people of Gihunya accepted him as King. Rukura was supported by Chief Murundi Cyoya, who organized raids in Bugesera. Rukura was also supported by an American businessman called Spears. The latter conducted illegal business in the region because he was not authorized by the court. Spears hoped that if Gisaka was autonomous, it would give him more liberty to transact his business. In the end, Rukura convinced

⁹³ Lugan, B., 1980, op. cit., p. 86.

the German officer in 1897 of the legitimacy of his rule. The latter gave him an authorization letter to become chief but under King Musinga's authority.

Fearing that Rukura would not get the support of the Germans, the royal court called upon Kandt and asked him to secure support. Kandt believed that Rukura should prevent Gisaka from breaking away. He advised the court to make an appeal to the missionaries of Save. In September 1900, Ruhinankinko and Rwidagembya met at Save to request the collaboration of the royal court. The former was more concerned because Gihunya was under his leadership. Following the looting expedition of the missionary caravan in Gisaka, the priests declined any commitment in favor of the royal court, whom they suspected. This attitude provoked anger at the royal court and was an embarrassment to Kandt.

At the end of 1900, the Gisaka revolt reduced in intensity, but it later broke out again in March 1901. Rukura was helped by hundreds of sympathizers. Many of these were Baganda, who pushed the Banyagisaka into open rebellion against the kingdom of Rwanda. The members of the Abarasa militia, who were natives of Gihunya, supported Rukura's rebellious acts. Rukura also solicited support from Zaza missionaries by showing them a letter from a German officer that appointed him Chief of Gisaka. Rukura claimed the letter authorized him to create an independent region without being King Musinga's subordinate. The Father Superior of the mission refused to recognize this letter and advised Rukura to leave the area before he was attacked by the court army.

Discouraged by this refusal and doubtful of royal court reprisals, Rukura sought refuge in Bushumbi. Many Abarasa warriors sought asylum in Burundi with their cows. In May, Von Grawert demonstrated his strength in the region; he crossed the region by telling all people to obey the royal court of Rwanda. A punitive expedition was organized against Cyoya, who was forced to give up more than one thousand cows. He gave a third of these cows to the government and gave the remaining two thirds to King Musinga.

The royal court was satisfied with the behavior of Zaza missionaries, contrary to its Save colleagues who had refused

to support the royal court in September. The Zaza missionaries were given support in March. The royal court was satisfied with this policy and the German commitment.

Another aristocrat called Muhumbika, a descendant of Gisaka who frequently visited the mission, managed to get sympathy from Zaza priests. He was involved in a previous revolt and had many sympathizers in the province of Mirenge. Rwandan chiefs feared his strength. Ruhinankiko saw him as a potential danger for the royal court. In March 1902, the royal court executed many people and looted the property of those who were suspect of being on his side. During this tension, the royal court asked Muhumbika to present himself. The latter refused to do so believing he would be killed. The priests of Zaza gave him protection. They wrote a letter to the royal court to plead on his behalf. The court rejected the request of the priests and considered Muhumbika to be a rebel. The royal court issued an order to the local population to boycott the mission. The situation became tense to the extent that Father Superior of Zaza wrote to the District Chief and to Mgr Hirth asking them for assistance.

A new Superior was appointed but once he was in office, he found it impossible to rescind the decision of his predecessor regarding the affair of Muhumbika. He pleaded before the court for the chief to maintain his command and continued to receive complaints from Banyagisaka. Father Superior of Zaza sent Muhumbika to present his case to the district Chief, Von Beringe, in Bujumbura. The chief returned with a letter addressed to the court in which he opposed the dismissal of Muhumbika from his command. Von Beringe came back to Rwanda in 1902. His stated intention was to get better information on the complaints at the royal court and the position of the White Fathers. In reality, he came to implement the order of his masters. He had received instructions from the Governor to collaborate fully with the king; he was supposed to consider the king the supreme head of the country and to intervene in the internal affairs of the country only when the king had asked him to do so.

Von Beringe was a reputed friend of the missionaries. He supported the request of the royal court regarding the question of Muhumbika. Muhumbika was supposed to report to the royal court as dictated by customs. Von Beringe sent three soldiers to look for the notable. Upon arrival at the royal court,

Muhumbika's 14 aides-de-camp were assassinated on the orders of Ruhinankiko and the aristocrat was sent to prison. In November, Von Beringe launched a reprisal campaign against the notables who originated from Gisaka. Many people were killed, livestock looted, and cultural symbols destroyed. In reaction, the priests expressed more concern about the fate of Mubumbika's people than the consequences of the reprisals. Von Beringe ordered Lt. Von Parish, who was on duty in Shangi, to inquire about these executions. In January 1903, under the influence of the events of Save priests, the inquiry concluded that the royal court was guilty. A fine was imposed on the king of 40 cows. The king pleaded innocent by claiming that he was not aware of the executions. Muhumbika pleaded in favor of the King and requested that the fine be waived. But the sub-officer maintained his position and the king paid the fine for his subordinate, Ruhinankiko. It was under these circumstances that Ruhinkiko gave up his position, in the presence of the Queen Mother, until the court was adjourned. This was in March 1903.

The royal court tried to take advantage of the Europeans to solve internal problems. The Shangi event showed that the King was no longer militarily capable of opposing powerful foreigners. The Muhumbika affair stressed the dependence of the King of Rwanda, who no longer had the power to govern the country as he wished; above him was a superior authority who would intervene in the internal affairs of his kingdom. These new authorities did as they pleased.

b. Witch-hunting of foreigners

In 1903, as soon as Kabare was in control, the royal court embarked on a xenophobic campaign against foreign traders of European, Arab, Indian, and African origins. All this took place while the missionaries were looking on.

Traders entered the country *en masse* soon after the arrival of the Germans and operated in the national territory without permission from the royal court and without regulation. In 1804, more than 100 traders present in the country used intimidation to get whatever they wanted. The Christian East African traders used their link with missionaries to obtain hides and skins of big and small-sized livestock, food crops, and porters. As a result of the dissatisfaction of the royal court with the behavior of

foreigners, an attack was made by the royalists on their caravans and all their goods were looted in May 1904. By September, almost 2,000 traders lost their lives. At first, Von Grawert disapproved of these attacks but later, he rallied behind the position of the royal court. This scenario gave birth to numerous rumors. Some believed Von Grawert had become King Musinga's *mugaragu* while others believed the court had killed him.

Von Grawert was not careful when it came to the responsibilities of the court as far as witch-hunting foreign traders was concerned. He imposed on the king a fine of 500 cows to compensate for traders who had lost their goods. He did not wish to go to war with the king because this would weaken his position. He tried to avoid getting trapped in the frequent internecine wars at the royal court.

When the attack took place in May, the priests of Rwaza Parish started experiencing problems with their Balera neighbors. The missionaries found themselves confronted with two options: to align with the local clans or to support the royal court and its representatives. Mgr. Hirth collaborated with the latter and alienated himself from local leaders. The Balera were disappointed because Catholic priests had taken clan land for themselves in many places by chasing people who had the right to stay there. The missionaries proved to be as demanding as the representatives of the court. They imposed forced labor on natives and demanded local leaders provide between 800 and 1,000 men per day. Those who did not listen to the notables were subjected to forced labor. Under duress to work for foreigners whom they feared and hated, the local population expressed their discontent on several occasions by refusing to go for work and by threatening to kill those who were employed by the mission. To quell this resistance, the priests responded by punitive reprisals supported by the army. In July 1904, priests launched a raid to avenge their workers who had been attacked while harvesting wood in the forest. They killed many people and torched several houses. Sometimes, these reprisals were based on false information by the mission employees as a way of covering up their acts of violence.

In the same month, the local population mobilized itself against the missionaries. For two weeks, they besieged the mission and prevented the armed forces and the Catholic priest from moving out. It was rumored that Von Grawert had been killed.

The missionaries of Rwaza contacted Nyundo missionaries, who organized a rescue mission of 200 men under the command of a Belgian officer. Thanks to this intervention, the resistance was quelled. The priests of Rwaza organized a punitive expedition and plundered the houses of and took many herds of the natives. Some animals remained in Rwaza Parish as compensation and the rest were given to Nyundo missionaries. This was one of the darkest events in the history of the Catholic Church in Rwanda, in which Father Classe was directly involved.⁹⁴

The Rwaza priests put the responsibility of the attack on the representatives of the royal court given the mistrust between them. However, Von Grawert claimed the attack on Rwaza Mission was planned and coordinated by local clan leaders who were provoked by missionaries.

The Rwaza scenario demonstrated that the Europeans could be kicked out of the country within a short time. Many sacrifices were organized in the royal palace during the month of August to celebrate this achievement. But the Europeans did not give in to such harassments, threats, or rumors. The campaign against foreigners left Rwanda without any foreign trader apart from an Australian called Schindelar and a Boer known as Pretorius. Boer was expelled by the Germans. Royal court members and notables looted the traders' caravans of goods.

c. Ambivalent resistances in the north

Before losing part of its territorial possessions, the Rwandan royal court wanted to extend its grip over the central authority by appointing representatives in peripheral regions. Many notables of the Banyinginya clan were demoted by Kabare and replaced with his favorite supporters. This meant that regions were to be administered directly in an intensive manner compared to the previous nominal control of the royal court. This extension of authority went hand in hand with the increase of customary taxes; *Uburetwa* was introduced in regions in which it was originally absent, such as Bumbogo, Buberuka, and Bukunya. It is in this context that we should understand the revolts that took place in the northeastern and northwestern parts of Rwanda up to the advent of the First World War.

⁹⁴ Concerning the events in Rwaza and the role of Father Superior, Father Classe, read S. Minnaert's article already cited.

In the northeast, the royal court was worried about the growing popularity of a woman from Mpororo who claimed to be King Rwabugiri's wife and therefore the mother of the legitimate heir to the throne. The supporters of this woman referred to her as *Muhumuza*, while Rwandans knew her as *Nyiragahumuza*. She was also identified with Muserekande, mother of Biregeya, who had escaped death during the Abatete Revolt of 1897-1898. Others referred to her as *Nyakayoga*, the former wife of Nyakarutarindwa, who had produced a son for him. According to another version, while returning from the Bujinja expedition, he took Muserekande as wife and gave Nyakayoga to Rutarindwa. This explains the confusion between Muhumuza, King Rwabugiri's wife, and Rutarindwa. It was argued that *Muhumuza* was different from Muserekande.

From 1903, *Muhumuza* was associated with the *Nyabingi* movement. This got him very many sympathizers. At the beginning of 1905, *Muhumuza* mobilized her sympathizers to attack the central kingdom and install her throne. The royal court took her claim seriously and asked the Germans to silence her. Initially, the Germans refused to do so for reasons which were not clear. While waiting for a solution, some soldiers and Rwandan armies under the command of Nturo, who was the chief of Ndorwa and Rwatangabo, chief of Mutara, were sent to Mpororo to capture *Muhumuza*. The two armies accomplished their mission in July 1905 and brought the leader of the revolt to Kigali where Kandt kept her in custody for some time. Many Rwandans believed that the end of Abega rule was approaching. To stop these rumors and to calm the royal court, Kandt sent *Muhumuza* to custody in Bukoba.

When the Muhumuza movement was at its height in 1905, the regions surrounding Mpororo lived in a state of terror organized by Basebya and his troops of the Abatwa. Basebya's mother was called Nyirantwari and his father was unknown. In his career, Basebya became first of all Rutarindwa's and later Cyaka's *Umugaragu*. He was killed in 1904. He detested the Bega who had killed his masters. Basebya and his group of the Batwa established their place of residence in Rugezi marshland. They earned their living by looting, hunting, and receiving gifts from neighboring terrorized populations. The royal court feared Basebya not only because of the destruction he had caused but also because of his alliance with *Muhumuza*.

In 1905, the army of the royal court commanded by Ruhararamanzi attacked Basebya's positions without success. The Batwa withdrew in their marshland and eluded attack. After this failure, Basebya's popularity extended beyond Rugezi to include Buberuka, Bumbogo, and Ndorwa. Some notables abstained from publicly participating in the movement, but they sent gifts to the rebels and recognized their suzerainty. Basebya had no intention of pursuing his conquest up to the center of the country. He wanted to rule over the area located north of Nyabarongo and leave the southern part under King Musinga's rule.

King Musinga looked for support from the Germans to fight Basebya. Kandt decided to attack in February 1909, but as a result of the border dispute between the Belgians and British, he postponed this attack. The Germans wanted to show competing colonial powers that the entire northern part of Rwanda belonged to King Musinga. The war against Basebya jeopardized the facts on the ground.

When the international commission charged with demarcating borders ended its work in 1911, *Muhumuza* reappeared at the top of another anti-European movement. She escaped from prison in Bukoba and returned to Mpororo. She regained power with the help of Basebya and Ndungutse. Her sympathizers directed their attacks at the Europeans and their supporters, especially the Germans and missionaries. Many people escaped to Uganda to seek refuge.

Kandt wanted to capture *Muhumuza* again, but this became an exercise in futility. During a joint operation led by British and German officers of the International Commission for Boundary Demarcation, she was captured in December 1910 and more than 40 of her sympathizers were killed.

In January 1912, the north received another leader, *Ndungutse*. He promised to liberate the local population from the yoke of royal court representatives. He also promised to remove *Uburetwa*, imposed by the royal court, and to chase away the notables who had unjustly taken clan land. It is said that *Ndungutse* fought alongside *Muhumuza's* movement. He survived with Basebya when the Basebya's combatants were captured. *Ndungutse* and Basebya established their headquarters in Rugezi. The northern

population regarded *Ndungutse* as a foreigner because his origins were traced to Mpororo.

Ndungutse based his authority on *Muhumuza*, who was sometimes considered King Rwabugiri's wife. She was also sometimes considered Nyakayoga, wife of Mutarindwa. As for Ndungutse, he claimed to be Rwabugiri's son. Many people accepted Ndungutse's royal claims, and he behaved like a king with a crown symbol of a drum. His revolt was not directed against the monarchy, but against King Musinga who had come to power illegitimately. Ndungutse had many sympathizers even in places where the monarchy was deeply entrenched for generations. The areas where he enjoyed support included Buberuka, Bumbogo, Busigi, and Buriza. In the northwest of Bukonya, Buhoma, and Bushiru, those who supported Ndungutse did not believe his royal claims. Rukara, Chief of Abarashi, sided with those who supported Ndungutse's legitimacy to the throne because he had had problems with the court and was suspected of having killed Father Loupias, a crime he denied. Rukara publicly declared Ndungutse to be a liar for saying that he was son of King Rwabugiri. The clan leaders from the north saw in his movement an opportunity to come together and oust the Tutsi notables who were imposing new heavy taxes on them. The emergence of Ndungutse as a single leader put an end to the rivalry between clan chiefs. He managed to meet their expectations and took possession of Nyabingi magical powers.⁹⁵

Muhumuza's revolt was directed against the Europeans. Without losing sight of this objective, Ndungutse wanted to undo this anti-European image. On several occasions, he sent gifts to the priests of Rwaza and Rulindo. He even appointed representatives to keep in permanent touch with the mission. He gave a directive to his sympathizers not to mistreat those who frequented the mission. The priests who were suspicious of his legitimacy refused his gifts and asked their followers not to support his movement; this refusal was motivated by Ndungutse's collaboration with Rukara.

Ndungutse also looked for ways of coming in contact with the Germans through donations of cows for cooperation. Everybody doubted Ndungutse's intentions. He used a number of tactics.

⁹⁵ The myth shows her ability to exterminate the enemy through diseases, returning the enemy's arrows and transforming bullets into water.

First, he wanted to use Europeans to outwit King Musinga. Once his authority was established over the entire kingdom, he wanted to deal with the problem of the Europeans. Ndungutse cooperated with Muhumuza, Rukara, and Basebya, and this made him very popular. Those who suffered from the ill-treatment of forced labor saw in Ndungutse a savior and symbol of resistance to the Europeans. The Batwa from Bugoyi saw in him a perpetrator of the Muhumuza movement.

In April 1912, Ndungutse's influence extended to territories located between Lake Burera-Ruhondo and Rugezi. It even went further south to cover the Kigali-Ruhengeri highway. The populations of Busigi, Buriza, Bumbogo, Kibali, Bukonya, Buhoma, and Bushiru accepted his leadership. In other regions, they regarded him with sympathy because he gave gifts to people everywhere he set foot. He did not use force to get what he wanted. Violence was only directed against the Bega notables and their Batsobe allies, two major clans that played a key role in the Rucunshu coup d'état. They were responsible for the expansion of the royal court's influence northwards. Many Tutsi notables decided to escape towards the south.

Some influential notables understood the rationale behind the Ndungutse revolt. Two notables of the Abanyiginya clan, Kanuma and Bandora, sent him gifts and declared their readiness to recognize his suzerainty. Fearful of treason by the Banyiginya, King Musinga looked again for the support of the Bega whom he had wanted to avoid.

The king charged the *Indengabaganizi* warriors with quelling the rebellion. He also asked the Germans for troops to support his warriors. It was Gudovius who, during Kandt's absence, solved the crisis. He confronted the popularity of Ndungutse and his contradictions regarding Europeans. Ndungutse sometimes claimed to be a descendant of Muhumuza and sometimes sought European support. Gudovius's decision derailed the royal court. He refused Ndungutse's gifts. He rejected the request of the court to attack him immediately and prevented the royal army from moving into action. For unknown reasons, he adopted a wait-and-see attitude by establishing four military camps at the periphery of Ndungutse's territory. Did Gudovius want to support Ndungutse against Musinga? Was he waiting for orders? The king was very fearful because he believed that Gudovius wanted to deprive him of his power.

At the beginning of 1912, Gudovius decided to crush the rebellion at last. Upon seeing that the attack was imminent and with the intention of getting rid of a dangerous ally, Ndungutse handed Rukara to the Germans on the 6th or 7th of April. But Gudovius did not change his plan. On April 9, he entered Ndungutse's territory and attacked his residence with a contingent of soldiers and 3,000 militias from the royal court. Almost 50 of Ndungutse's warriors were killed. The rebel leader himself is said to have lost his life, though some claim was able to escape towards Uganda. Dead or alive, this did not worry King Musinga because he had accomplished the attack successfully.

Gudovius demonstrated his force by punishing those who had supported Ndungutse. The soldiers and the army left Buberuka and advanced towards Bushiru. They then returned towards the east across Bukonya and Kibali. On May 5, 1912, Gudovius wrote to the Father of Rwaza informing him that the country had been pacified. In reality, these regions were completely devastated by soldiers and the royal army on their way back. While the troops were mounting operations in the north, a spy from the royal court revealed the hiding place of Basebya to the Germans. Chief Rwubusisi proposed to meet the rebels to give them gifts from the court. He was accompanied by four disguised soldiers who had captured Basebya and who was killed on the orders of Gudovius.

Rukara was the last rebel in the north. He was brought to judgment on April 18 in Ruhengeri, when he was found guilty of killing Father Loupias and sentenced to death. Before being shot, he managed to kill a soldier who was guarding him. His body was exposed for a day to show the local population that the justice of the Europeans was uncompromising. However, the population viewed Rukara as a hero who had managed to kill an enemy before his death.⁹⁶

After the attack, the notables who had escaped regained their ranks and brought with them clients they administered directly. The king sent representatives to regions where they never existed before, Bumbogo and Bukonya. Lastly, the rebellion which aimed at checking the expansion of royal authority ended up encouraging it. Clan chiefs realized that open resistance was

⁹⁶ Chrétien, J.P., "La révolte de Ndungutse (1912)", in *Revue française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, LIX, no 217, 172, pp.647-680

very costly in terms of men, goods, power, and began looking for ways to compromise with European and Tutsi notables.

4.1.6. The First World War

The military hostilities started on September 24, 1914, when Ijwi Island was overrun and occupied by Wintgens's soldiers (*Tembasi*). The attack was based on information given by Pastor Roehl, the founder of Rubengera Mission in 1909.⁹⁷ As a result, the Germans took control of Lake Kivu and the border between Rwanda and the Congo.

Germany had less men and equipment. The table below shows the numbers of German troops in Ruanda-Urundi:

Table 4: German troops in Ruanda-Urundi during WWI

REGION	EUROPEANS	SOLDIERS
Kisenyi	5	47
Tschiwitoke	1	25
Usumbura	18	152
Total	24	224

Despite their small numbers, Germans gave the impression of having a big, well-disciplined force. At the beginning, they adopted a *smash-grab-and-attack* strategy that brought no definitive results. On October 4, 1914, the Goma garrison wanted to carry out revenge on Gisenyi, but Captain Wintgens was opposed to large-scale resistance. On October 27, the Belgians made an attempt to overrun Ruhengeri post without success. The year 1915 was characterized by operations of harassment. The enemies constructed ditches and fortifications. Finally the Germans left Gisenyi and fell back to Nyundo, where they unleashed frequent raids in the areas controlled by Belgians, who managed to penetrate the region of Ruhengeri. All these operations had disastrous effects on the people who were on the run. The year 1915 turned out to be advantageous for the Belgians because the frontline had shifted to the German zone.

King Musinga did everything possible to bring necessary assistance to the Germans by putting at their disposal warriors armed with guns (*Indugaruga*). He provided them with supplies

⁹⁷ Roehl, K. "Ruanda-Erinnerungen (zum Gedächtnis an Major Wintgens)", in *Koloniale Rundschau*, 1925, 9, pp. 290-298.

in terms of foodstuffs and human porters. In the meantime, behind the Belgian lines, there was intensive activity ready to launch serious offensives. Great Britain and Belgium managed to conclude an accord in October 1914 during the conference of Kibati. The accord stipulated that Belgian troops would assist British forces in the case of a campaign carried out in the German sphere of influence. By virtue of this accord, their troops in the Congo would attack Rwanda and Burundi⁹⁸ in April 1916. The Belgian Congo waited for so long to launch a full-scale aggression of this magnitude because they lacked the competitive spirit of the British. The British had enough troops in Uganda, Kenya, and Rhodesia, but they preferred to buy time. The military operations were triggered on April 21, 1916 along two major axes:

- The southern axis: the Olsen Brigade was supposed to overrun Nyanza and then head towards Gitega and Usumbura;
- The northern axis: the Molitor Brigade aimed at taking over Kigali and advancing towards the east.

The Molitor Brigade took over Gatsibo in an operation guided by some *Indugaruga* of Nturo and Rwabusisi. In Kigali, the troops were divided into two groups. One group took the direction of Bugesera and another went to the central region with the intention of crossing River Akanyaru on May 6th. Father Lecoindre was accompanied by local chiefs and led the Belgian troops to witness their surrender. On May 9th, Colonel Molitor arrived in Kigali with two battalions and celebrated victory there. The last German soldiers left Kigali on May 5, 1916. Fearing that they would be surrounded, Wintgens led his troops to withdraw on May 11th and 12th 1916 towards Kigali, Save, and Burundi.⁹⁹ The Olsen Brigade overran Shangugu and crossed Nyungwe forest in the direction of Nyanza, which was taken by Major Muller. King Musinga regretted the destruction caused by the war and promised to establish cordial relations with the new occupants. The king wanted to protect the most essential things

⁹⁸ Ministère de la défense nationale, *Les campagnes coloniales belges 1914-1918*, Bruxelles, 3 tomes, 1927-1932 ; Louwers, O., *La campagne africaine de la Belgique et ses résultats politiques*, Bruxelles, Weissensbruch, 1921.

⁹⁹ Lettow Verbeck (von) P., *La guerre de brousse dans l'Est africain (1914-1918)*, Paris 1933 ; Dellicour M.F., « La conquête du Ruanda-Urundi », in *Bulletin de l'Institut Royal Colonial Belge*, 1935, 6,1 pp., 142-166.

– his people and their property.¹⁰⁰ But with troops on the move, the destruction of goods and vandalism increased under the pretext of making requisitions for food and porters. Soldiers took people and property as booty.

After occupying Tabora on July 19, 1916, Belgium won a territory of more than 200,000 km². Before the offensive was launched, Belgium had declared her intentions to use the territorial possessions in East Africa as collateral during the peace talks that were to be held after the victory of the allies.¹⁰¹ The occupation therefore was supposed to be provisional. Following the victory of the Belgian troops, German colonization came to an end abruptly, leaving behind many unaccomplished projects.

Up to 1916, the Germans were committed to changing indigenous institutions; this was their declared intention. However, a big political change took place when Rwanda lost its sovereignty to Emperor Wilhelm. During the scientific expedition conducted by the Duke of Mecklenberg in 1907, King Musinga thought he was going to be replaced by the Duke and lose his throne.

At the time when the Germans were leaving the country, they were still generally liked by the population. King Musinga himself felt very nostalgic about his German friends until his last days.

The Germans did not have time to accomplish their numerous projects, especially in the field of communication where they had expressed a desire to solve the problem of Rwanda's land-lockedness. But during their reign, a number of serious changes took place:

- The opening up of Rwanda to the east; the Arabs managed to penetrate the country, establish trade networks towards Bukoba, and Tabora, and take control of the inter-lacustrine trade in which they admitted Rwanda.
- From 1905, Rwanda became a centre of export for hides and skins to Bukoba. Kigali became an important transit warehouse for this trade. The traditional trade organized along western Kivu did not come to an end. On the contrary, it increased and the opening up of this trade

¹⁰⁰ Rumiya, J, *Le Rwanda sous le régime du mandat Belge (1916 1931)*, L'Harmattan, Paris 1992, p.29

¹⁰¹ Letter written by Renkin, J., Minister of colonies for General Tombeur 27th March 1916

route towards the east enabled two trade networks to come together.

- The royal power was strengthened by 22 years of German rule.

42. Belgian colonization (1916 - 1962)

When the Belgians took over from the Germans, they did not make Rwanda a protectorate, but rather a sort of province for neighboring Belgian Congo that was operated under the Belgian mandate of the League of Nations. Later, Rwanda became a Belgian Trusteeship under the supervision of the United Nations.

4.2.1. Regime of occupation 1916 - 1926

a. Diplomatic challenges

Among the commitments of the Belgian troops in East Africa, there was a qualitative need to improve the Congolese territory which was handicapped by its lack of access to the sea. This problem was supposed to be solved by the acquisition of the Kabinda enclave and some Portuguese territories situated on the left banks of the river. Through negotiations, Portugal would accept this arrangement in compensation for some territories in southwest Africa or German East Africa. Renkin, the Belgian Minister of colonies responsible for conducting operations in Africa, preferred to obtain access to the Atlantic Ocean and not Lake Victoria, which he considered less important. Help from England was necessary in convincing Portugal to achieve this objective; otherwise, other alternatives were needed to compensate for the services rendered by Belgium.

Belgium was interested in making Rwanda war booty for the highest bidder and had intentions of dropping her conquests if she was paid an attractive indemnity. The African Colonial Authority agreed with the Minister of Colonies, who was not interested in expanding Belgian colonial possessions due to lack of resources and men. As far as Belgium was concerned, the Congo colony was enough in itself. But in order to annex the area badly desired in the west, it was necessary to take possession of the territory that the Belgian troops had conquered from German East Africa. But was England ready to accept this deal? For Belgium, it was necessary to determine the optimal collateral

to avoid a very expensive war. What instructions were given to the military hierarchy after taking over Ruanda and Burundi? Would they restrict themselves to these two territories coveted by Belgian Congo or pursue further military campaigns? The English had not yet agreed on the value of the collateral. Besides, giving orders to a victorious army to stop war could lead to frustration among the military ranks.

On the ground, events followed one another quickly. On June 9, 1916, Birahamuri was overrun by Tombeur and brigades were sent to Tabora and Ujiji. In some colonial areas, it was thought that there was nothing to gain by going to Tabora, which was located far from the Congolese border in areas where England had a lot of stake. They thought if Tabora was conquered, it would be offered to the English. On the Belgian side, military action had to be accompanied by serious diplomatic activity with England. The apprehension of the Belgians was justified; England considered herself, from the beginning of war, to be the sole heir of German territory in East Africa.

The Belgian press happily covered the news of the success of the Belgian Congolese army. These reports attracted a lot of interest for the new territories. The articles published in Rwanda exaggerated the advantages of its occupation. It was reported that Rwanda had a lot of livestock, an abundant population that would provide manpower to the Congo, and a “feudal” structure with the potential of becoming an indigenous cadre for the European administration. In short, Rwanda was seen as necessary to preserve.

b. Rumanura famine (1916 - 1918)

The Belgians arrived when a big part of the country was hit by a famine known as *Rumanura*. This famine broke out in Bugoyi in 1916 and lasted until 1918. It extended across the entire country and resulted in many deaths.

Bugoyi at the time was a densely populated region and even a “reserve region” whose excess food production was exchanged with Nduga, which was renowned for its blacksmith industry. Bugoyi was also a trade hub that brought together traders from Central Rwanda; it was rich in livestock and the northwestern part of Kivu lacked meat but produced artisan products and bracelets coveted in Nduga. The cause of this famine was that the people of Bugoyi were

cut off from their sources of supply from the Congo with whom they exchanged food stuffs due to the 1914 hostilities between the Belgians and Germans. During these hostilities, people who came under crossfire were forced to migrate towards Nduga, Kingogo, Bushiru, Murera, and Kanage. Huts were torched and forces destroyed many banana plantations as they were digging ditches and trenches. This situation lasted from 1915 to 1916.¹⁰²

As the German troops retreated, they took all the food that remained behind and even many porters. The Belgians did the same before stopping for requisitions. It was important to feed their troops and ensure enough supplies for the colony of troops on the march. In order to escape from meeting such requisitions, men escaped and hid in the forest. The Belgian authorities realized that the situation had reached catastrophic proportions and they stopped making requisitions.

After the war, when people started returning to their homes, an extraordinary rain fell. It spoiled the seeds and washed fertile soils away. Local traditional authorities like Rwakadigi introduced chiefs in Nduga when he returned to Bugoyi. These chiefs imposed forced labor aimed at reconstructing residences and supplying food stuffs.

The Diary of the White Sisters of Nyundo of May 1915 to December 1917 reports many deaths that were caused by this famine. Many people were referred to as “walking skeletons.” In November 1915, only 50 Christians attended mass. Before the war, mass-goers numbered almost 8,000. 400 children attended school before the war, but during famine, there were around 20. According to Father Classe,¹⁰³ the number of deaths surpassed three quarters of the population; missionaries reported a total figure of 25,000 people who died of hunger.¹⁰⁴

The Royal Commissar, informed by Major Declerk, disseminated Father Classe’s letter on the calamity that had hit Bugoyi. He wrote to his Minister informing him of the situation and reported the measures they had taken.¹⁰⁵ In his letter, he claimed that

¹⁰² P.Soubielle, “Quarterly report by Nyundo Mission during the years 1916-1917”, in *Société des missionnaires d’Afrique*, T.13 p. 300.

¹⁰³ Classe also gave some information on the famine which swept the people of Bugoyi.

¹⁰⁴ Philippin, « Report on famine in Bugoyi (1917) », in Lugan B. , *Etudes Rwandaises*, op.cit. p.247.

¹⁰⁵ Letter to the Honorable Minister of 29th June 1917.

the local administration was responsible for the calamity and blamed Captain Van Aerde in particular, who was the chief of the western zone.¹⁰⁶ The letter also accused Mr. Lignon, the administrator of the territory, for having done nothing to help the population when the two officers had several options to help.¹⁰⁷ The Commissar appointed Morteihan as a new leader to manage the territory.

The commissar pointed out again that some foodstuffs were brought from Walikale and Masisi to rescue the hungry people of Bugoyi. Lastly, he stopped recruiting porters because the population was in a state of insecurity and anxiety.

The missions and the Belgian authorities organized rescue missions for the starving people by distributing foodstuffs bought from regions less affected by famine. They also treated the sick, who were hit by epidemics such as dysentery and smallpox. Morteihan regrettably said that missionaries took advantage of the famine to extend their influence in the country: “the biggest part of food supplies at their disposal was only distributed to a small fraction of their people, namely the native Christians.” The non-Christians living near the Mission were obliged to go to Gisenyi to fend for themselves.

In a letter written by Morteihan to the Resident, the following criticisms were leveled:

(...) the agricultural work done under the supervision of the Catholic priests was not well thought out. Instead of establishing big plantations, a big part of the manpower was used to pay state subsidies, solely for clearing banana plantations whose owners were dead or had migrated. They used their people to clear these banana plantations hoping that the latter would take ownership rights in case former owners did not turn up. This contradicted the custom of the

¹⁰⁶ “In the letter written by Steven addressed to the royal Commissar in his reports of December 1916, January and February 1917, the Commander of the army said nothing on the food situation in Bugoyi though he was living in Gisenyi. Therefore, this was an inexcusable in difference by Steven. It is therefore clear that if Mr Van Aede had informed me in good time about the situation of Bugoyi, I would have done every thing possible to respond to the request made to solve the problem.” (Steven addresses the letter to the royal Commissar)

¹⁰⁷ According to Morteihan, Mr Lignon “would have given to the Nyundo mission credit, food stuffs, seeds and part of the equipment at his disposal” He asked himself what could have happened to Morteihan’s letter addressed to the Resident on 18 September 1917.

land.¹⁰⁸

The famine of 1916-1918 was therefore caused by the foreign factor in Rwanda. It was worsened by an imbalance in the rain season and by the negligence of a hesitant colonial administration, coupled with traditional constraints and abuses.

a. Military administration in 1916

Belgium did not intend to impose its sovereignty on the occupied territory in the East African German sphere of influence. She wanted to administer the country after the war had ended. The occupied territory was supposed to serve as collateral during the peace talks opened after war.

Immediately after the conquest of Rwanda in May 1916, Belgian combat troops were replaced by an army of occupation. The High Belgian military command of German East Africa (Ruanda-Urundi and part of Tanganyika) was under a top Royal Commissar appointed by the Belgian King residing in Kigoma. His name was J.P Malfeyt. He became the first officer to assume this responsibility. He dealt directly with the Minister of Colonies in Brussels without having to pass through the Governor General in Belgian Congo. The mission of the Royal Commissar was to maintain law, order, and public security throughout the territory and to administer the territory through the end of the war and the signing of a peace treaty.

In light of the negotiations, the Metropolis gave instructions that General Tombeur was to be obeyed faithfully by the natives, who were newly subdued, and he was even supposed to “provoke the natives”. As far as the supplies for the troops were concerned, Rwanda was divided in two autonomous zones: the Western zone headquartered in Gisenyi and the Eastern zone with headquarters in Kigali. These two zones were under a military command based at Gitega. These zones were divided in two military posts that were called upon to sensitize the population on political matters by using village chiefs or senior chief representatives.

The Belgian officers and sub-officers charged with administrative duties opted for a type of management that sidelined King

¹⁰⁸ Letter by Mortehan to the Resident written on 18th September 1917.

Musinga. His royal court was considered to be an obstacle that had to be avoided and removed. Nyanza was located in the western zone.¹⁰⁹ The first administrative report of the western zone was dated December 1916. After the victory, a report outlined the situation of different posts: Kissignies (i.e. the chieftaincies of Rwakadigi and Rwanuma), Rubengera, Nyanza, Shangugu, and Ruhengeri. A close examination of the report shows that the end of 1916 was relatively calm. The only worrying situations reported were in Ruhengeri, where the population had never supported foreign domination. Elsewhere, everything was fine, including in Bugoyi where the *Rumanura* famine had been rampant. No reference was made to this calamity and the general tone of the report was satisfactory.

The case of Nyanza illustrates the confusion that characterized the first days of the military occupation. In his first report of 1916, the head of Nyanza post expressed total satisfaction. King Musinga gave him little attention. However, in the report that followed, his tone changed. In the February 1917 report from the Western Zone, the natives were said to be devoted and active in carrying out tasks while King Musinga was accused of sabotaging the work of the occupation force.

On May 19, 1916, King Musinga expressed his opposition to the new masters. After taking over Nyanza, the surveillance posts wanted to be relieved of the *Indugaruga*, who, after denouncing the son of the notable Bashuku, were received and hidden by King Musinga. However, the *Indugaruga* buried their arms a few kilometers from Nyanza to join the masses.¹¹⁰

While the search for firearms was taking place, another incident occurred between King Musinga and Captain Philippin, the chief of Nyanza Post and commander of the Western Zone. The two officers subjected King Musinga to harassment. The commander suspected him of harboring the firearms and wanted to neutralize him; he was asked to give up all the guns he had. King Musinga surrendered 30 guns. Phillipin refused them and asked for more. The commander of the Eastern zone circulated rumors that King Musinga had sent 25 guns to Kashushuro, the king of Karagwe. As

¹⁰⁹ Note the absence of Save Post in the archives. May be, it was destroyed by De Clerck as a result of the Father Huntzinger affair, an example of blatant interference of the Church member into civilian affairs.

¹¹⁰ Kagame, A., *Un abrégé de l'histoire du Rwanda de 1853 à 1975*, Editions universitaires rwandaises, Butare 1973, p 173.

proof, he cited the good relations that existed between the two. Chief Gisazi of Cyangugu was also suspected of having 40 guns, which were reduced to 4. There was nothing to prove that King Musinga had received any arms from the Germans or from anywhere else. There was also no proof that he was heavily armed as was alleged.

Despite this uncertainty, the chief of the post and the commander were convinced of the existence of a plot. The tone grew sharper between them and the king. The court of Nyanza was accused of being sympathetic towards the Germans. Many rumors were circulated and minor issues were blown out of proportion. The Belgian Officers were convinced that Musinga was heavily armed and wanted to get rid of him. They were advised by the Catholic Missionaries, who especially hated King Musinga, and Father Huntzinger who lived in Save. King Musinga was also accused of stealing food supplies from the stores of the Belgians.

In February 1917, Captain Philippin exaggerated the *Yenga Yenga* affair – a name given to a suspected spy under the service of the Germans. He pretended that a letter had been intercepted which contained a list two hundred people who were supposedly assassinated by the occupation troops. In order to set his father, Rwidembya, free, Rwagatalaka affirmed that the list had been forged by Musinga's secretary. According to the *King*, it was Father Huntzinger who had invented this story. The affair was suspended for further investigation.

In March 1917, tension broke out again. King Musinga was accused of wishing to poison the Europeans living in Kigali by supplying their foodstuffs. Some chiefs were arrested. Gashamura was a case in point; it was once again Father Superior of Save Mission who was the source of this information. He was convinced that the intrigue involved a house boy who was working at the Residence. Determined to put an end to King Musinga, Van Aede, the commander of the western zone, asked the king to face judgment. His proposed to his masters making the king appear before a War Council, during which time a military plan was hatched to counteract any eventual popular rising, including any chances of intervention from Karagwe. The military authorities of Rwanda waited for authorization from the Commander in Chief of the occupation army, who was stationed in Gitega. Instead, Brussels opted for a political solution and not a military one. On the basis of ordinance number 2/5 of 6th April

1917, the Royal Commissar re-established the former German arrangement and restored the kingdom.

The Belgian soldiers believed that King Musinga made fun of the administration and treated their orders with contempt. There was no coordination of activities between the zonal chiefs and the king. The king was confronted with some of his chiefs' desire for independence. This led to anarchy in some parts of the country.

a. Establishment of the Belgian Residence in Rwanda

On April 6, 1917, Major Declerck (nicknamed *Majoro*) was appointed as Resident of Rwanda. He arrived in Kigali on May 30, 1917, with a mission of appeasing King Musinga and restoring his authority. From the take-over of Kigali up to the arrival of Major Declerck, the responsibility of managing the country, originally conducted by soldiers, was given to Commander Scharfes.

In 1917, the Residence of Rwanda was divided into three sectors. In 1921, it was divided into four "territories": the western territory with headquarters in Rubengera, the northern territory with headquarters in Ruhengeri, the Nyanza territory with headquarters in Nyanza, and the eastern territory with headquarters in Kigali. These territorial divisions aimed to facilitate the implementation of military orders, especially food requisitions and providing porters.¹¹¹ In May 1919, Major Declerck was replaced by F. Van Den Ede, the first civilian Belgian Resident. The civilian administration was maintained during the entire period of military occupation ending in 1926.

There was lack of coordination between the zonal leaders and King Musinga, posing a serious risk of dividing the kingdom. As indicated in the annual report of 1920 to 1921, "the authority of the King was seriously undermined by military requisitions¹¹² and by a starving population caused by Rumanura famine." To these challenges was added *Ikoro* tax, a royal tribute that was paid as a sign of allegiance. This tax also served as income to the Royal court. From the beginning of 1917, the Belgians found themselves amongst total anarchy: "most of the Watutsi chiefs expressed (...) a vague desire for independence, a thing that

¹¹¹ Van Den Eede E. (Resident of Rwanda), Notes on the current political situation of Rwanda, 26th July 1921 archives africaines: AE/II no 1847 (3288)

¹¹² Ministère des Colonies Rapport annuel , sur l'administration belge 1920-1921, p11.

threatened to throw Rwanda into complete anarchy.”¹¹³

On April 6, 1971, an ordinance was enacted fixing the territorial and administrative organization of the occupied territory. This ordinance removed the Eastern and Western zones and reintroduced the former territorial sub-divisions, i.e. the Residence of Rwanda similar to the one that existed during the Belgian rule. In addition, it specified the principles according to which the Residences of Rwanda and Burundi were supposed to be governed. Article 4 of the ordinance stipulated:

In the zones where the Sultanate prevailed, the Residents represented the occupation government. They were therefore charged with maintaining law and order as well overseeing public security. The Sultans were responsible to the Resident and were supposed to cede their political and judicial powers in accordance with native customs and instructions of the Royal Commissar.¹¹⁴

The year 1919 also witnessed the birth of unified provinces governed by senior chiefs. From that time on, the command of the chiefs was not exercised in territories under a single tenant. Almost all chiefs commanded parts of villages scattered in different provinces of the country. The native provinces formed after the Rucunshu coup d'état were nominal groupings devoid of a common chief at the top. The Belgian administration appointed a Provincial chief in 1919, who was a notable who owned personal resources like livestock. In addition to administering his own village, he was meant to command villages of other provincial chiefs. He collected government duties and taxes and supervised road work and equipment. He had no right to demand customary services for his personal benefit from villages beyond the province.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Ministère des Colonies Rapport annuel , sur l'administration belge 1920-1921, p11.

¹¹⁴ Marzorati., Notes for the Royal Commissar s.l.n.d. Rwa (163) 1917 1924 (archives of the Ministry of Foreign affairs)

¹¹⁵ Lenaerts, Answer to question No. 10, Report of 1921/ Nyanza Administration, in Derscheid Papers, Brussels.

4.2.2. Belgian Mandate (1926 - 1948)

a. Definition of the native policy

The first officers and sub-officers who participated in the military occupation knew nothing about the reality on the ground, but it was necessary for them to acquaint themselves with the political players and the local systems and dynamics involved. This information was provided by the White Fathers in the regions where the Belgian colonial officers were stationed. In a study conducted by Father Classe (Vicar General of Mgr Hirth), “The political organization of Rwanda at the beginning of the Belgian occupation in 1916,”¹¹⁶ a point of reference was created for the new authorities. This document attracted the attention of a large audience and was quoted in many reports during the first years of the Belgian rule. It was also quoted by all visitors to Rwanda.

The theory developed in Father Classe’s document was that Rwanda could be compared to a feudal regime of the Middle Ages. All authority theoretically lay in the hands of King Musinga, although in practice, power was monopolized by the Queen Mother and her brothers. The latter commanded authority in the peripheral provinces whereas at the center of Nduga, the authority was shared. Every senior chief sought to have areas or villages that served as connecting points, where they could stay whenever they were at the royal court.

According to Father Classe, power was in the hands of two clans: the Bega and Banyiginya. Part of the political game was marred in intrigue which degenerated into power deprivation. All this took place in an environment of jealousy, a major weakness of the Tutsi monarchy.

The document further described the fragmentation and geographical distribution of power that rendered chiefs less powerful. In some areas, the king was able to create a personal clientele by removing villages from his senior chiefs. There were some exceptions in Bugoyi, Kingogo, Budaha, Gisaka, and Kinyaga, where chiefs exercised limited authority and local clans or lineages enjoyed a wide range of autonomy.

¹¹⁶ With a sub-title: “notes written by Father Classe of the White Fathers Mission of Kabgayi on request by the Belgian administration”, 28th August 1916, Derscheid Papers.

In addition, the document describes the services of the political institutions. An official tax was levied on herds of cattle for the king and his mother. Those who did not own cows brought in kind goods. The rest of the population, especially the Bahutu, paid a land tax (*Ikoru ry'ubutaka*). Some exceptions existed among the residents of Nduga and Marangara. The paying of taxes was a very lucrative operation for tax collectors who earned profits. To these multiple services, new taxes were added such as *Amararo* (gifts for loading caravans of Europeans or traders).

Father Classe's report also referred to Rwanda's social structure by insisting on the *Ubugake* institution (system of pastoral clientele) in Marangara, which he understood very well. He especially understood the obligations associated with this type of clientele. Father Classe also raised the issue of the social-militia (*Ingabo*) under the theme of providing services. Lastly, he dealt with the ethnic groups in Rwanda. The Tutsi exercised command and were generally owners of many herds of livestock.¹¹⁷ He described the Hutu as the "short Tutsi." According to him, the Twa were divided into two categories: those who lived with other Rwandese (near the residence of chiefs and the king, nearly 5,000 in number), and those who lived in the forests of Kingogo, Buhiru, Mulera, and Kinyaga.

In this text, Father Classe gave the essential points to be known by the new masters. However, by generalizing the political system, which he supported and knew very well, especially in Marangara, he distorted local realities that differed from the ones he knew. The account he gave in his report did not only influence the administrative events of that time, but also influenced future knowledge of Rwandan society, given that his theories were quoted without criticism.

b. Indirect rule

Franck succeeded Renkin as the Minister for Colonies. He visited the occupied territories and the Congo.¹¹⁸ During this visit, he outlined major guidelines for effective administration of Ruanda-Urundi. Like the Germans, he opted for indirect rule. He was of the view that this would succeed in countries organized along

¹¹⁷ In Mulera, the term Tutsi meant any inhabitant of Nduga, notes the report.

¹¹⁸ Franck L., *Le Congo belge*. T.1, La renaissance du livre, Bruxelles, 1931.

traditional structures, or those with solid native institutions and with a political class of “sure talents.” “The European,” he said, “was supposed to assume the role of educator and guide.” Franck developed the following organizational chart:

- Two Residents and a Resident General shall constitute a competent Executive Council to prepare a budget to submit to the Minister of Colonies for implementing a program on public works, controlling and supervising the native policy.
- The Resident General shall enjoy direct relations with the Minister of Colonies; the Governor General of Congo shall be responsible for the two Residents.
- The Resident shall be responsible for territorial administration with a help of territorial services divided into several departments (administration, public works, health, finance, civil service).
- All the departments of the Resident shall enjoy “regular support of the Watusi” because of their “innate skills as far as taking commands” as far as the King is concerned. These collaborators shall be trained and remunerated. This is what the Nyanza School was tasked to do since its re-opening in 1919.

The Minister was supposed to respect and use traditional political structures whose recognized legitimacy was based on history. He had this to say:

It was not a question of tampering with political institutions under the pretext of equality. We feel that the Watusi were established since time immemorial, they are intelligent and are a capable people and we will respect this state of affairs¹¹⁹

The Minister developed a colonial charter that was specific to the territory under the mandate that bestowed to it a specific legal status. The charter facilitated the occupation of the new territory at minimum cost in terms of manpower and money. In practice, the king appointed chiefs in the region as the most important authorities who handled all matters regarding Europeans, including the organization of carrying equipment, constructing and maintaining roads, and collecting taxes.

¹¹⁹ Franck L., *Le Congo belge*, t.1, La renaissance du livre, Bruxelles, 1931.

The choice of using the Tutsi as partners was justified on the basis of racial arguments. Influenced by missionaries, the Belgians described the royal class and Tutsi aristocracy with contradictory double-standards. The first standard reproduced the Hamitic myth based on pseudo-scientific details of anthropological and ethnographical features of the Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa. This myth was reproduced in many official texts, establishing stereotypes that were transmitted from one administrator to another. The second standard gave a less attractive reality based on daily experiences.

According to this stereotype, the Tutsi were at best a noble class that originated from Asia and who made a long stop-over in Pharaonic Egypt. All descriptions of Tutsi chiefs made reference to their slender features, tall height, diplomatic qualities, and talent in military command. These qualities distinguished the Tutsi from their Hutu servants. The subordination of the latter originated from their moral character and the servant-master relationship emerging from the Tutsi ownership of cattle. Rwubusisi and Rwagataraka were Tutsi prototypes. The Tutsi triumph of the 1930s disseminated the pseudo-scientific racist character.

The Hutu formed a group of the Bantu considered to be defeated people. They never had qualities similar to those of their masters. Their description conformed to a classic picture of the Negro.

On the other hand, the Twa were devoid of any form of humanity. They did not have a good code of conduct and were cruel by nature. They executed orders of their masters. The annual report of the Nyanza Territory of 1925 described them in the following terms:

An old and worn-out race facing extinction, the Mutwa (...) has a somatic character properly defined: short, broad-backed, muscular, hairy especially around the chest region, with an ape-like face and a distinct flat face and a flat nose that combines the general physical traits of the monkey with obsession for forests

From this assessment, leadership went to the Tutsi. Hard, painful tasks were given to the Hutu who shared with the Twa the consequences of the original sin.

This racial discrimination was unacceptable to all people. This was not the image that the aristocracy held about itself. They believed power rotated around the royal authority and the elite from all races were always in competition. Rwanda's folktales do not mention any superior race. Only the king was portrayed as exceptional and as playing special roles. This function elevated the monarch beyond ethnicity; he was seen as a charismatic ruler. Other cultural institutions and proverbs¹²⁰ gave another view of the ethnic factor. The Tutsi protagonist and the Hutu were represented along similar lines. In folktales, the Hutu were represented as people who had newly succeeded and who were needy and experienced. The Tutsi were portrayed as members of the "nobility, discrete and grateful." The Twa were referred to as "naïve, stupid and cruel." Such derogatory perceptions were likely to have originated from the political context of the ethnic radicalization that coincided with the extension of Tutsi power from the middle of the 19th Century. Rwandan proverbs expressed helped to translate aspects of social life, but they can not be taken as irrefutable proof of division and hatred between Hutus and Tutsis.

The history of social relations between Rwandans cannot be oversimplified to a Hutu-Tutsi-Twa divide. Such divisions, if they ever existed, could not have led to the establishment of a united national community. Indeed, while socio-cultural differences between regions and groups cannot be denied, there also existed many factors of commonality, such as language, religious practices, common habitat, clan network, wars against neighboring kingdoms, and a feeling of patriotism. If the "premise of inequality"¹²¹ ever existed, it was linked to historic factors but not to static congenital criteria or even to the criterion of cow-ownership.

We can look to the example of Kinyaga to illustrate this point. The emergence of the ethnic divide in Kinyaga dates as far back as the second half of the 19th Century, when the Hutu and Tutsi lived together for a long time.¹²² Before the arrival of chiefs appointed by the royal court, emphasis was put on clan groups or neighboring communities. This was true of other regions

¹²⁰ Crepeau, P. and Bizimana, S., *Proverbes du Rwanda*, INRS, Tervuren, 1980.

¹²¹ Maquet, J.J., *Le système des relations sociales dans le Rwanda ancien*, Tervuren, MRAC, 1954.

¹²² Newbury C., *The cohesion of oppression. A century of clientship in Kinyaga, Rwanda*, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 1975.

such as Bumbogo, the northern region, and other territories where power belonged to the lineage and not to external factors connected with the court. It was the Rwandan royal court and the colonial machine that imposed the predominance of Tutsi chiefs.

b. End of the traditional monarchy

The process that led to the end of the traditional monarchy started with a series of measures that targeted it. In 1917, King Musinga was seriously attacked by authorities of the military occupation. In the same year, the administration concentrated, among other things, on the terrible *Rumanura* famine. It was necessary to solve this calamity with the help of the Catholic Missions, the only organizations present in the country at that time. The Protestants had left with the Germans. At the same time, the relations between the colonial authorities and King Musinga's court were very poor.

After the imprisonment of King Musinga, the legal proceedings against him and his entourage were suspended pending the arrival of Major Declerck. The latter came with instructions to handle and solve the matter.¹²³ As soon as he arrived in Rwanda, Major Declerck conducted an inquiry concluding that the *King* of Rwanda was innocent.

The hypothetical poison affair led to the arrest of the King of Rwanda by the occupying authorities followed by a legal investigation. This proved to be the end of sovereignty for the king of Rwanda and demonstrated the painful relations that existed between the royal court and the Belgian soldiers. Later on, other measures that progressively undermined the foundation of the traditional Kingdom of Rwanda were put in place. The most important measures taken were as follows:

➤ Suppression of the right to life and death (1917)

The first measure taken by the Royal Commissar, who was working in tandem with the metropolis government, was to remove the unconditional right over life and property from traditional leaders. The right of justice (*jus gladii*) was reserved

¹²³ Marzorati, Notes by the Royal Commissar, s. l., n.d, Native politics information Musinga file, Rwa (163) 1917 1924, p.2.

for the Belgian King while the indigenous king remained with mere titles and honors. King Musinga was fully aware of their intentions. He and his mother were not moved by this measure. Their abrupt and unexpected demotion reminded them of the happy days of German protection and led to their desire to have it back. This marked the beginning of a silent but cunning resistance which led, fourteen days later, to the deposition of the king and his banishment. Reacting to Major Declerck, who came to remove this fundamental right from the king, the Rwandan supreme royal leader is said to have declared: "Since I can no longer kill as I wish, I do not deserve to be king anymore."

➤ **Declaration of freedom of worship (July 1917)**

In July 1917, there was a big meeting between Major Declerck and the Catholic Church, represented by the Mgr Hirth, his Vicar General, and Father Classe. On the request of the religious leaders, King Musinga was obliged to declare the existence of freedom of worship in his kingdom as stated in the Western legal code. In reality, this act was aimed at stopping the monopoly enjoyed by the traditional religion. Any contravention of this act by traditional leaders would result in legal proceedings. This law benefited the Catholic Missionaries as the only religious group on the ground.

➤ **Undermining Mwami's judicial powers (1922)**

The monarchical ideology perpetuated a specific terminology designed to stress that *King* was the most important human figure, a man of integrity, and *Nyamugirubutangwa* (someone who cannot be contradicted). His orders and decisions were both fair and final, and his decisions were without appeal. In 1922, however, it was decided in discharging his judicial responsibilities that *King* would be assisted by a delegate sent from the office of the Resident in Nyanza.

➤ **Limitation of King Musinga's powers to make political nominations (1923)**

In 1923, King Musinga was notified that he was prohibited from making appointments or revoking the appointment of chiefs or notables whose command originated from the court. Provincial chiefs could no longer appoint or remove their subordinates

without prior instruction from the office of the Residence. The extent of this decision had serious consequences. The Belgian administration became the final source of power. Chiefs and sub-chiefs were no longer responsible to King Musinga, but instead were subordinates of the administration.

➤ **Abolition of “*Ubwiru*” and “*Ubuganura*” in 1925**

In 1925, the Belgian administration decided to banish Gashamura, the chairman of the *Abiru* esoteric code, to Gitega, Burundi. He was accused of opposing development projects and of exercising “unlimited powers to influence King Musinga.” In colonial and missionary literature, Gashamura is portrayed as a great medicine man and sorcerer. He was different from his son Rwampungu, who was admitted to the school for sons of chiefs in Nyanza. His son was baptized by the Catholic Church in 1928. By deporting Gashamura, the *Abiru* institution was left with no more successors.

➤ **Musinga’s deposition**

The fall of the traditional monarchy was characterized by the loss of its principal ideology and judicial power and the removal from the monarch the powers to appoint or remove chiefs. Under German rule, Queen Mother Kanjongera and her brothers could do as they pleased. With the arrival of the Belgians, this power was reduced due to the presence of several informers in the court. This subjected the chiefs in the royal court to a precarious situation. King Musinga complained of being constantly spied upon by the Whites and especially by Leenaerts, a delegate from the Office of the Resident in Nyanza. Using his position as head teacher, Leenaerts used students and teachers in Nyanza School and Rwandans who were opposed to King Musinga’s rule as informers. These informers were given protection by the Belgians.

King Musinga lost all powers before his chiefs because he could no longer physically punish them. In addition, any dismissal of a chief was subject to the decision of the Resident. The king resorted to intimidation, but even then his victims complained to the Belgians. The decline of royal power was reflected in the deterioration of the royal premises in Nyanza. The king lost a big fraction of his material wealth and was unable to refurbish his

residence. The services provided by his subjects were reduced as many of his chiefs shifted their allegiance from him. He received a good monthly salary from Belgian administration. The discount on taxes earned him 7,000 Francs per month. There is little information on the royal court expenditure. According to administrative reforms of 1962, there were budgetary cuts that affected all junior chiefs. In retaliation, the king diverted his salary and food to support the chiefs who were victimized by Europeans.¹²⁴ He used the royal tribute to assist those who were faithful to him. This generosity was done at the expense of repairs to the royal palace. King Musinga divorced his wives in 1923, and they were henceforth taken care of by their respective families. In 1927, the Belgian administration obliged him to meet the expenses of his sons. The colonial authority wanted to discourage him from making donations to sympathizers living in Nyanza.

The monarch was rendered powerless as far as finances and other economic resources were concerned. But the climax of the monarchy's neutralization was characterized by the neglect and isolation conducted by German administrators at political and administrative levels. The situation became increasingly difficult for the king as he could not adapt to the colonial situation. This finally culminated in the king's deposition.

King Musinga's deposition was a result of events that took place between the Residence in Kigali and the court, though their successions separated by times of relative calm. The major difficulty was the reduction of his powers and his refusal to recognize the Belgian administrative powers. The king refused to respect the role assigned to him as far as his legitimacy was concerned. The Belgian authorities thought of stopping all contact with him from 1922-1929. However, they dropped this idea due to local government matters and due to the fact that they did not want to upset the Permanent Commission of the Mandate and the League of Nations.

The annual report of 1928 carried a big charge sheet against King Musinga made by the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi. He was accused of several crimes, including incest, ambition, incompetence, and lack of responsibility. Most of the charges

¹²⁴ Résidence du Rwanda, Rapport politique pour l'année 1929 du territoire de Nyanza, A.A. Bruxelles.

rotated around moral crimes. Consequently, the report proposed his deposition. As they waited for the decision from Brussels, it was decided that the King's allowances be reduced. Brussels refused the proposition for two reasons:

- The advantages of indirect rule: it was still necessary to use the prestige of the royal court to implement administrative orders;
- Diplomatic constraints: it was seen as a serious mistake to abolish an institution symbolizing indirect rule. The Permanent Commission of the Mandatory Powers insisted on respecting this type of institution; its abolition would be perceived badly in Geneva, Germany, and Great Britain.

Equally important however was King Musinga's grievances against the Belgians. Although no witness testified on his side, there were reports and witnesses of administrators and missionaries expressing his bitterness and anger. King Musinga refused to recognize the authority of the delegate appointed by the Resident to the royal court. As far as the king was concerned, the delegate of the Resident was supposed to be equivalent to a senior chief. The king regarded him as his subordinate as the delegate continued to adopt a paternalistic attitude toward the king.

The function of the Resident's delegate was maintained and even reinforced. Leanaerts, the successor of the Defawe, doubled as Chief of Nyanza Territory and head teacher of Nyanza School. His grievances with King Musinga were numerous, although at first he discharged his responsibilities with tact and friendship. This relationship initiated him to the secrets of the Royal court. However, this sympathy was short lived. Out of disgust, the court nicknamed him "*Rurenge*." He was accused of interfering in court matters on several occasions, leading to 9 years in which King Musinga was victimized and surrounded by a crowd of spies. The Resident's delegate became more powerful than the king himself. The king's servants were even replaced by those who paid homage to the white man in Nyanza.

King Musinga protested the appointment of his son Rudahigwa to the chieftaincy of Marangara. He feared it would subject him to bad influence by Mgr Classe. He even asserted that Mgr Classe

was the King of Rwanda because all appointments had to be discussed in advance between him and the Resident.

During the Governor's visit in August 1929, King Musinga and the Queen Mother expressed their grievances about the removal of customary services and rights. They complained about their powers that had been eroded and about the misunderstandings with the Belgian authorities. They resented the Belgians lack of respect for their customs.¹²⁵ The Governor concluded, "the Royal institution relied entirely on custom and tradition and that the king was in a way a slave of tradition because what the ancestors had declared had to be respected."¹²⁶ In the eyes of the colonial authorities, culture and traditional religion were synonymous with stagnation while the religion of the whites was seen as progressive. The backwardness of the country was attributed to King Musinga, who through his commitment to follow his ancestors without accepting change, gave the impression that he was not concerned with the development of his people. This led scores of Rwandans to conclude that the king did not care about their plight. The Governor simply wanted a king who would promote colonial goals.

King Musinga made visits on the ground and violated a cultural prohibition. He crossed River Nyabarongo and went to Kigali to handle matters without consulting his mother. The Governor wanted to neutralize King Musinga's wishes. The king accepted collaborating with the Governor, but only as his superior. This period was brief; Lenaerts accused the king of impatience, irregularity, and contempt toward the Resident's delegates. The king's deposition was inevitable.

The process of deposing King Musinga entailed putting pressure on the Ministry of Colonies, which had expressed interest in keeping him for administrative reasons. Local authorities thus launched a campaign against King Musinga after consulting Mgr Classe.¹²⁷ The argument developed by Mgr Classe achieved its objective; Brussels started developing an idea of initiating a legal suit against the king to justify his deposition.

¹²⁵ Postiaux, Interview notes from 9th to 19th August 1929 between Musinga and his mother Nyirayuhi, C.P./I

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ *Essor colonial et maritime*, 21-12 and 25-12-1930

The administration did not want to involve the *Abiru* institution, which was regarded as an institution of sorcerers. Its influence had to be stopped, but care had to be taken with the chiefs who first had to be consulted. They turned against the king for fear that the Belgian administration would impose sanctions on them. King Musinga's deposition was planned in the following way:

Governor Voisin arrived on November 11, 1931. He notified the king about the decision to depose him. In reaction, the king is said to have responded that he had been waiting for that decision for along time. An inquisitive mood followed. The team aware of the plan was composed of Voisin, Classe, Coubeau, Lanearts, and Rudahigwa. It was difficult to imagine that Rudahigwa, a young man who was faithful to his father, could have kept such a serious secret.

Rudahigwa was declared King of Rwanda on November 14 on behalf of the King of Belgium and was enthroned on November 16. The *Abiru* were happy because their royal institution remained intact.

It is hard to know Rwandans' opinions of this event. The population did not react to the announcement of the king's deposition. According to Kabgayi Mission Diary,¹²⁸ Rwandans and their king expressed a feeling of resignation. Some people said the population did not react because the king's son was enthroned. Others influenced by the anti-Musinga campaign blamed King Musinga for refusing to come to terms with the Belgians. He refused to join the Catholic religion because he was very much attached to the Germans. Others claimed King Musinga was betrayed by his own relatives. The administration gave an order to follow the new king, and the Rwandans accepted. Those who refused to obey were threatened with consequences.¹²⁹

The happiest group in this arrangement was the Christians. The Missionary campaign¹³⁰ insisted on King Musinga's illegitimacy, i.e. Musinga's unfaithfulness *vis-à-vis* the Belgians and his anti-Christian stance. Outside the Kingdom, no reaction was noted.

¹²⁸ Kabgayi Diary of 16th November 1931.

¹²⁹ Rwamagana Diary of 14th November 1931.

¹³⁰ A campaign reproduced by Gishoma Thaddee, a former senior seminarian: the fall of Musinga, Derscheid papers.

No embassy of the Western world, not even Geneva, was moved by King Musinga's deposition!

Far from being a simple affair, King Musinga's deposition became an important event in the history of Rwanda. The colonial authority wanted to purge the royal institution of its divine claims to power and its cultural and historical claims. The deposition of the king aimed at making the latter responsible to the colonial administrative structure by assigning him duties supervised by Belgian civil servants. The deposition also aimed at making the king a common man and not someone with a divine right to rule the Rwandan people.¹³¹ King Rudahigwa's enthronement testified a willingness to conserve the royal kingdom as a political and cultural institution that would usher the entire country under colonial rule.

After the ceremony of enthronement, Governor Voisin decreed a series of reforms regarding the king. Services rendered in kind were replaced by an annual deduction of 1 Franc to be levied as tax. The chiefs were to give cows to the king in order to avoid milk conflicts in the royal court. These reforms were made to give the king both economic and material empowerment so as to ensure his self-reliance *vis-à-vis* his chiefs.

d. Administrative reorganization

The process of Belgian colonial administration was gradual. It started as soon as the Belgians arrived in the country and ended with natives becoming docile civil servants who supported European administration.

¹³¹ Musinga died in Kitendwe district in Tanganyika in Baudoinville Territory on 25th December 1944. He was banished there by the ordinance of 18th June 1940. In a letter by Jungers, the Vice Governor General, to King Rudahigwa of 12th February 1945, he affirmed that the District Commissar in Albertville had told him that King Musinga died of bronchitis which developed into pneumonia and that he left no will. He only left behind some kitchen utensils and some garments. The family left behind by Musinga was made of twenty people (five wives, nine children and six servants). Rudahigwa was authorized to exhume the remains of his father and to repatriate them home. On 2nd July 1946, the exhumation of Musinga's body was announced to take place on 30th July 1946. This date was also postponed to 15th June 1947. Thereafter, nothing was said about this matter. Mystery still surrounds the fate of the remains of Musinga (Archives Africaines, Brussels, dossier n° RWA (1)21).

The first measure by the colonial administration was the deposition of chiefs “who demonstrated a retrogressive character and who refused to abandon their arbitrary procedures of administration.”¹³² This measure was announced in 1924. The following year marked the official formulation of a policy to be implemented by the colonial authority regarding chiefs and sub-chiefs. This entailed recognizing and reinforcing customary authority, implementing “respectable” customs, replacing stubborn chiefs and sub-chiefs and those who were abusing power, and gradually replacing all “*dead wood*” by educated people.¹³³ In 1924, these reforms underwent revisions and were later adopted.¹³⁴

The complexity of the organizational chart of Rwanda’s traditional authority is seen in the number of junior and senior chiefs maintained. Under the reign of King Rwabugiri, the country was divided into two provinces (*prefectures*) with a royal palace as the headquarters; the palace was responsible for channeling all regional services.¹³⁵ Some border-areas were exempted from providing services because they were concerned with military service.

Two civil servants collected taxes (*Ikoru*): the chief of pastures (*Umutware w’umukenke*) collected pastoral taxes and the land chief (*Umutware w’ubutaka*) collected taxes on food items. This arrangement was modified by the sedentary nature of the Nyanza court under King Musinga. All services were carried out in Nyanza, but this was conceived as forced labor by people in peripheral regions.

Below the province, there was another small division called *Igikingi/ Ibikingi*. Long ago, the *Ibikingi* were related to pastures. By extension, the word came to mean a command-base of one or more village hills (collines in French). According to A. Kagame, there were two types of *Ibikingi*. There was the *Igikingi* that depended on the war chief (*Umutware w’ingabo*) and that met the requirements of cow pastures. Villages (*collines*) were scattered. The royal court was not interested in having people with big pieces of land as this would threaten the power of central

¹³² Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1924, p.7.

¹³³ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1925, p.64.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 1927, p.37.

¹³⁵ Kagame, A, op, cit., p.184.

authority. There were also royal enclaves (*Imisozi y'ibwami*) for the personal service of the king. This sub-division was unknown in regions where lineage organization was dominant. These included areas like Byumba, Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, Northern Kigali, and parts of Cyangugu. Here, land ownership depended on the first occupant and not on external political authority.

Reforms of traditional administration started in 1926 with the abolition of the system of three chiefs. This had a profound impact on social relations. The former authoritarian system offered a possibility of choosing between several protectors (chiefs), but this was abolished in favor of a single chief. This system penalized the most vulnerable social classes.

By abolishing the system of three chiefs, the colonial authority wanted to simplify the political administrative process. The Belgians were convinced the traditional structure was problematic and found it difficult to manage many authorities. The aim of the colonial administration was to administer the country according to European administration standards so as to achieve administrative efficiency.

Before 1922, the administration appointed a notable (*chef d'akazi*) who recruited carriers of equipment and providers of free labor. This chief was appointed on regional level to carry out administrative instructions. This new system established a more simplified chain of command.

The Resident was responsible for appointing and dismissing officers at all levels. The king only intervened for ceremonial approval. The new administrative system was intended to fight the absenteeism of senior chiefs, who were obliged by custom to stay at the royal court most of the time. The duration of their stay at the palace was reduced to 15 days per year.

The "Mortehan reform" put an end to the traditional system of three chiefs and created a structure of chieftaincy and a sub-chieftaincy supervised and enforced by Governor Voisin. This reform was pursued from 1929 until the deposition of King Musinga. It had the effect of managing the territory efficiently and sensitizing the entire population on political matters.

There were reforms at the *Igikingi* level. The *Igikingi* consisted of a hill or part of a hill covered by homesteads. The Belgian

administration believed that divisions at the *Igikingi* level were done badly. In 1926, the king abandoned the establishment of new *Ibikingi*. All *Ibikingi* that had fallen vacant due to the death of their owners or otherwise¹³⁶ were to be attached to a sub-chieftaincy. In 1930, the Resident abolished *Ibikingi* divisions and those who were benefiting from them; 1,278 sub-chiefs and the owners of *Ibikingi* were removed.

In the meantime, the administration started a policy of combining chieftaincies so as to include neighboring territorial sub-divisions. The objective of this policy was to have the provincial chief as “the centre of genuine decentralization of power.”¹³⁷ The administration was composed of sub-chieftaincies of at least 100 tax payers. This number later increased to 300. In some areas, the initiative of exchanging territories was left to the notables themselves. In other cases, a massive removal of chiefs took place from 1930 to 1932,¹³⁸ leading to the grouping of several territories. The removal of many lines of command and the decision that chiefs should stay in their chieftaincies helped to achieve the desired goals of colonial authorities.

The territorial reorganization and simplification of the hierarchy led to the problem of existing *Ubuhake* contracts. Someone could become a client of a notable under the arrangement of *Ubuhake*, but also a subject of another according to the administrative arrangement. The notables were always forced to exchange political commands and servants.

The reorganization was completed by the end of 1933. Consequently, there were 65 provincial chiefs exercising authority over an average of 5,500 tax-payers, and 1,043 sub-chiefs whose jurisdictions had an average of 343 tax payers. Divisional groupings continued, but at a low rate. In 1938, there were 56 chiefs and 860 sub-chiefs, in 1947, there were 51 chiefs and 625 sub-chiefs, and in 1959, there were 55 chiefs and 559 sub-chiefs.

The new political organization led to the monopoly of power by the Tutsi. It reinforced ethnic identity through the extension of

¹³⁶ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1926, p.67

¹³⁷ Ibid, 1927, p. 37.

¹³⁸ 10 chiefs and 316 sub-chiefs were dismissed on top of King Musinga, in otherwords more than half of those who existed before the re-organisation.

Tutsi authority and aristocracy to regions where it was never before recognized. Many Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs were thrown out, not because they were incompetent but due to their ethnicity. It is difficult to know how many Hutu were dismissed, but during the 1929 reform, no Hutu were retained. Those few who remained met in remote areas where Tutsi presence was insignificant.¹³⁹

a. End of local and autonomous political entities

At the end of the 19th Century, the administrative structure of Rwanda was a nucleus under the direct rule of the king and his court. The peripheral areas were under the nominal supervision of chiefs appointed by the king. There were areas where central government exercised its influence, but without effective control. All depended on the duration of the control of the central government and the level of integration in the kingdom. Three factors were especially important to this control: the regional and political organization of the region, its strategic importance and the needs of the central government. Some peripheral areas were semi-autonomous either because the king wished them to be so, such as Busozo and Bukunzi, or because he lacked the means to subjugate them, such as Murera, Rukiga and Ndorwa. Their relations with the royal court were defined by paying an annual tribute in kind (*Ikoro*).

According to the rationale of the Belgian administration, territories were not allowed to defy the Rwandan royal authority, though the colonial and native boundaries were not similar. It was therefore necessary to embark on an administrative process that would synchronize the entire system, putting an end to the relative autonomy of these regions. Central royal authority was extended across the entire country. Tutsi notables were appointed to replace all local authorities, leading to ethnic divisions on an administrative level.

¹³⁹ Here are two examples of Hutu sub Chiefs who were dismissed: Nkunzuwimye a sub-chief in Rwabutogo Chieftaincy in Gatsibu Territory. He is presented as follows: “a sub-chief who was least impressive from the prestigious point of view. He was a Muhutu who had to be supervised in all he asked his subordinates to do” (General Report of Gatsibu 1929, p.24 Derscheid papers). Another sub-chief was from Mutara in Gabiro Territory: “Muhuku was not a bad sub-chief. But he was a Muhutu who was supposed to be supervised in all his actions. He has to feel that he is supervised. This was the same for all the Bahutu who were in key positions” (General report of Gabiro 1929, p.29 Derscheid papers).

This expansionist policy was implemented in the north in Murera and Ndorwa, in the northwest in Bushiru, and in the southwest in Bukunzi and Busozo. These regions had never been directly occupied or administered by the royal court. The colonial authority spoke of “restoring royal authority” in these regions, though this was false.

It was in Murera that the Belgian administration introduced a central administration in 1923. E. Borgers was sent as administrator of the region. He imposed firm supervision of the Europeans and the Tutsi. Appointments were supposed to be made jointly by the *King* and the Resident. He appointed some Tutsi notables from other regions due to insufficient numbers of Tutsis in the northern region; they were referred to as the “imported Tutsi.”¹⁴⁰

By the 1920s, the colonial administration was unable to occupy Bushiru but tolerated Nyamakwa, the *Umuhinza* of the area.¹⁴¹ Confronted with increased demands imposed by the Belgian colonialists, the royal authority was challenged by its subjects who refused to implement its orders. It became impossible to obey the orders of both traditional and colonial administrators. The colonial administration proposed that King Musinga appoint a Tutsi chief approved by the Resident.¹⁴² Although the northern and north western regions were under the central government, they did not obey this recommendation. Conflicts between clan lineages in Kibari, Bushiru, Buberuka, Bukonya, and Bugarura were suppressed by the new administrators and security officers. The pacifying process took a tragic turn in small Kingdoms of Bukunzi and Busozo. The end of Bukunzi Kingdom began with the death of its King Ndagano, who died on March 30, 1923. “Ritual assassinations” followed. The Cyangu administrator, Mr. Keiser, sent a military expedition in April. The expedition failed to achieve its goal of subordinating Ndagano’s successors because they were considered to be rebels who refused to recognize the authority of colonial administrators, to pay taxes, and to provide laborers.

The Germans also tried to subdue Ndagano in 1907, 1909 and 1914

¹⁴⁰ Newbury M.C., *The cohesion*, op.cit., p.21, The book evokes “double colonialism”

¹⁴¹ Pauwels M., « Le Bushiru et son Muhinza ou roiteler hutu », in *Annali Lateranensi*, 1967, pp.205 322.

¹⁴² Territoire de Kabaya, rapport politique 1924 et 1925, collection Derscheid.

without success. Administrators determined that Bigirumwera, Ndagano's brother acting as regent for King Ngoga, would come to Mibirizi and meet Father Knoll. He asked him to mediate for him and the Cyangugu colonial authority. The Catholic priest accepted the role. He managed to convince Fiolle, the administrator, to "save" Bigirumwera from the condemnation pronounced by the Royal Commissar. Father Knoll met Bigirumwera and gave him conditions that Bigirumwera accepted. These included returning guns captured during the Keiser expedition, giving 50 cows and 25 francs as tax and for damages for the losses incurred by the colonial government, and providing 30 men every day to work in the carpentry of the territory.¹⁴³

A deadline of three days given to Bigirumwera expired without him fulfilling these conditions. Administrator Fiolle threatened to attack him. From 12th to 13th April 1924, a new military expedition was sent to Bukunzi with the support of Chief Rwagataraka's army (*ingabo*). Bigirumwera and his family managed to escape. The administrator decided to make a prolonged occupation of the region. The final blow was dealt to Ndagano's home on March 9, 1925. The administrator and Chief Rwagataraka, accompanied by some men, attacked members of the royal family in their hiding place at night. Bigirumwera's mother was killed and the young Ngoga was injured and taken prisoner. Bigirumwera escaped by crossing River Rusizi.

After these events, Bukunzi was given to Rwagataraka and Tutsi sub-chiefs were appointed there beginning in 1926.¹⁴⁴ The Mibilizi priests regretted the destruction of Ndagano's residential house but blamed Bigirumwera. Bigirumwera could have avoided war and massacres, but not the disappearance of his kingdom.

The submission of Busozo was less demanding and fewer people died than in Bukunzi. The small kingdom was ruled by King Buhiga, son of Nyundo, who died around 1904. Unlike Ndagano and his successors, his court expressed allegiance to the European and missionary administration. However, they did not meet the Cyangugu demand of providing laborers, paying

¹⁴³ Mibilizi Diary May 1924.

¹⁴⁴ Newbury, C., op. cit, Ntezimana, E. "L'arrivée des Européens au Kinyaga et la fin des royaumes Hutu du Bukunzi et du Busozo", in *Etudes Rwandaises*, XII, 1980, pp. 1-29 ; Ntezimana E., « Cotumes et traditions des royaumes hutu du Bukunzi et du Busozo », in *Etudes Rwandaises*, XII, 1980, pp. 15-35

taxes, and settling near the colonial administration.¹⁴⁵ Father Knoll played the same role of mediation but did not succeed in convincing Buhiga and his son, Bizimana, the effective rulers of Busozo (with Queen Mother), to accept the audacity of colonial authority. In response to this intransigence, a military expedition was sent to Busozo in March 1924. Although the royal family suffered heavy losses, it succeeded in escaping.

As with Bukunzi, the expedition was followed by a long military occupation until 1926. Busozo was also given to Chief Rwagataraka and to Tutsi sub-chiefs. Father Knoll's mediation efforts did not prevent the suppression of these small kingdoms, and this was not his objective. In the new administrative framework, the existence of these enclaves, which the Rwandan court hitherto respected, was against the policy of the colonial authority characterized by power centralization and power monopoly by the minority Tutsi. This partly explains the stubborn resistance of the last small Hutu kingdoms of Rwanda.

The extension of royal authority was extended in the northeast to areas like Ndorwa, Buberuka, Rukiga, and Buyaga. Toward the end of the 1920s, these kingdoms resisted the Belgian and Tutsi administrative cadres. The administration resorted to repression. In order to entrench its authority, the Belgians created a permanent administrative post in Byumba in 1928.¹⁴⁶

f. Tutsi political monopoly

During the colonial period, one of the principle defenders of the Tutsi cause was Mgr Classe. On one hand, he pursued the missionary strategy mentioned above, which consisted of converting the ruling class to Christianity. On the other hand, he wanted to implement the Tutsi-Hamitic theory.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Morteahan, the Resident of Rwanda in 1927, Mgr Classe defended the Tutsi:

The Batutsi authority (...) is opposed to that of Musinga (...): currently, if we want to sound practical in the interests of the country with the Tutsi youth, we have achieved incomparable progress, and that even all those who know

¹⁴⁵ Mibilizi diary February 1924.

¹⁴⁶ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1928 p.42.

Rwanda can recognize this fact (...) the youth have come closer to the Europeans and they fear nothing (except) the return of the former regime (...), the senior and junior chiefs who have lost their posts (...) are very many.

It is in this context that Mgr. Classe exaggerated the praises of the innate qualities of the Batutsi and their exceptional intellectual capacities compared to the Bahutu. This is affirmed by several examples in the following statements: "(...) the Batutsi have the know-how, tact and techniques which the Bahutu don't have; the latter are uncouth and more timid. They still have a sense of self confidence and authority which can even be seen among children of 14 or 15 years. As for a Muhutu, he is hard working obstinate but less polished"¹⁴⁷.

In 1922, Mgr Classe held contrary views from those cited above. He had this to say: "(...) all the Rwandan population is intelligent. And, contrary to the general ideas held, I would like to say that the Batutsi are generally not more intelligent than the Bahutu (...). The Muhutu is hardworking, obstinate and less polished. But we also see frequently in more serious studies conducted that the Muhutu is gradually surpassing the Mututsi. Like here in Europe, we sometimes observe in colleges that a child from the rural areas can end up by succeeding better than a child from town (...)"¹⁴⁸.

It was a sign that what had been analyzed before on ethnic identities was not as true as demonstrated in the explanations given.

Some historians affirm that the intervention of Mgr Classe in favor of the Tutsi youth came to contradict the experience of the colonial government of appointing the Bahutu at the rank of *Batware* and *Bakarani*. This experience failed because of "the innate incompetence of the Bahutu to lead". As for others, it was because of the "opposition of the Batutsi"¹⁴⁹. The intervention by Mgr Classe would have prevented the recurrence of this experience and obliged the government to rely on the Batutsi. The Batutsi, said Father Van Overscheld, were able to maintain

¹⁴⁷ A document, a tale, op. cit.

¹⁴⁸ Classe, L., « Le Ruanda et ses habitants : organisation, politique, la religion, la famille », in *Congo*, 1922, p 681.

¹⁴⁹ Van Overscheld A., *Un odacieux pacifique, mgr Leon Paul Classe apôtre du Rwanda*, Namur, 1948, p 105 ; de Lagger, 1959, op ; p. 523. Linden, I., *Church and revolution in Rwanda*, Manchester, 1978, pp 161 162

power thanks to the Catholic Church. These affirmations are not founded for two reasons. First of all, there is no documentary evidence to show that the Bahutu were appointed to posts of responsibility. Secondly, these affirmations were contradicted by the policy which was implemented at that time, namely promoting Nyanza graduates to positions of chiefs and sub-chiefs. The following administrative reports prove that this policy remained unchanged. Therefore, if this project existed, it was never implemented at all. On the other hand, the intervention by Mgr Classe should be seen in the context of a preparatory campaign to depose King Musinga and in the context of the Tutsi youth movement; the latter wished to convert the Rwandese youth to Christianity.

The Apostolic Vicar did not hide his religious sentiments in the letter he wrote to Resident Mortehan: "(...) as far as we are concerned, from the religious point of view, we believe from experience that the Mututsi factor is the best for us, the most active, the most convinced, the most capable, and one who exerts the strongest leadership influence on the masses (...) this efficient personnel that is in our midst, we should employ them in order to develop Rwanda (...)"¹⁵⁰.

These views had a great influence. They reinforced the Belgian administration in its policy of "Tutsinizing" the colonial administration. By preventing the Hutu to accede to administrative posts, including the very lowest ones, the Belgian administration as well as the missionary Catholic Church exacerbated the ethnic divide in Rwanda. In reality, the Tutsi monopoly was restricted because among the 45 existing Tutsi chiefs, only 6 out of 18 clans were represented. The Tutsi lineages of two clans, that is to say the Nyiginya and the Bega shared 80 % of the entire administrative posts. The remaining administrators were Tutsi chiefs and sub-chiefs promoted on the basis of school education. In 1948, out of 68 chiefs and sub-chiefs occupying administrative posts, 192 of them (i.e. 28.2 %) never had a chief or sub-chief in their families. The Rwandan society was therefore led by almost 5 % of the Tutsi. Hence, the power-sharing arrangement was a privilege of a few limited Tutsi lineages¹⁵¹.

¹⁵⁰ In a long article published in *L'Essor colonial et maritime* newspapers of 4th December 1930 under the title "Pour moderniser le Rwanda" (n° 489, 490, 491), Mgr Classe raised the theory developed in his letter to Resident Mortehan.

¹⁵¹ Linden, I, *Church and Revolution*, op cit., p 18. See also Reytentjens P.; 1985,op.cit.; 107; Mbonimana G., « Christianisation indirecte et cristallisation des clivages ethniques au Rwanda »

g. New native cadres of the colonial administration

The training of cadres was a major preoccupation of the Belgian administration. A school for the sons of chiefs was opened in Nyanza in 1918 in order to conform to King Musinga's demands who never wanted a Christian school. This was replaced by another school of the same type started by the Germans. The school scored immediate success. Musinga's three sons, i.e. Munonozi, Rudacyaha and Rudahigwa attended this school. The first graduation of 30 young sons of chiefs took place in 1923. The finalists did their internship on territorial administration with specific duties on registration, tax collection, etc. In 1925, before they graduated as leaders, 58 ex-students from Nyanza got administrative posts. The movement continued to grow because at the end of 1935, the percentage of educated chiefs and sub-chiefs was 60%. On top of the knowledge acquired in their administrative specialization, the trained graduates were brainwashed to consider European education as the best.

On 11th July 1929, the government signed a convention with the congregation of Brothers of Charity of the Teachers of Gand. This convention aimed at establishing the official "Groupe Scolaire of Astrida". This school was supposed to complement the Nyanza School and later on replace it in 1935. The "Groupe Scolaire" started business on 20th January 1932. It admitted young people from the Tusti ruling class. The school uprooted students from the customary environment to the extent that they despised culture and the Nyanza royal court.

The Belgian administration played the role of sensitizing people. It was argued that both educated people and Christians, preferably Catholics should be recruited into administration posts. The Nyanza students understood this appeal. Hence, from 1928, they joined catechism in big numbers. In 1936, 78% of the chiefs and 84% of sub-chiefs were of Catholic denomination while only 18% of the total Rwandan population converted to this religion.

The customary cadres gradually became civil servants who supported the colonial administration apparatus. They could be promoted, punished, dismissed, demoted or transferred. They were required by the colonial administration to provide services that contradicted traditional norms and values. These services

(1925 1931) », in *Enquêtes et documents d'histoire africaine*, 1978, p. 155-56.

of chiefs and sub-chiefs were rewarded by a good salary. They established a department of finance at the chieftaincy level which was charged with purchasing customary vestiges. Ordinance No. 67/ Section / A.I.M.O of 20th November 1944 fixed salaries of chiefs and sub-chiefs. The salary was divided into taxable and non-taxable bases. The former was composed of a tax of 50 Cents levied on cattle for chiefs and a tax of 3 Francs on capitation tax for sub-chiefs¹⁵².

The chiefs and sub-chiefs had no real responsibility. They were resented by the majority of their subjects due to the work they forced them to do against their wish. They were closer to Belgian administrators and were used as instruments of repression. The natives suffered a lot of ill-treatment. The common-man lived in a state of permanent fear because of being terrorized by native cadres who forced him/her to work under orders of Europeans. Thus, cadres created a gap between them and the common-man because they wanted to protect their leaders, keep their posts but also maintain their salaries.

The European staff directly controlled the new native cadres. The Royal Commissar in the occupied territories became Vice-Governor General and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi according to the law of 21st August 1925. This law put Rwanda at the level of a Congolese Province. The Royal Commissar was represented in Rwanda by a Resident from 1917. At first, he was a military man who was afterwards replaced by a civilian. In 1917, the Residence of Rwanda was sub-divided into 3 sectors or subdivisions without specified borders. However, from 1928, the administration started making accurate territorial demarcations. At that time, 9 territories were established. These were: Kigali, Nyanza, Akanyaru, Astrida, Rubengera, Gisenye, Mulera, Bushiru-Cyingogo, Gatsibu and Rukira-Gisaka. In 1929 and 1931 respectively, Kamembe Shangugu and Byumba were added to this list. In 1932, 10 territories were created as a result of Ordinance No. 26/ A.I.M.O of 17th March 1932¹⁵³. This gave the following official territorial divisions: Kigali, Nyanza, Astrida, Kamembe-Shangugu, Kibuye, Kisenyi-Kabaya, Rihengeri, Byumba, Gabiro, and Kibungo-Rukira. The latter division was modified and the number of territories ranged between 8 and 10. For economic reasons, Gabiro Territory was dropped

¹⁵² Bulletin officiel du Ruanda-Urundi, 1944, p.162.

¹⁵³ Bulletin officiel du Ruanda-Urundi, 1932, p. 98.

in 1935. Later in 1936, Kibuye was also dropped. However, these territories were later re-introduced in 1953. The territory of Gitarama was created in 1959. The demarcation of native divisions was a major criterion in establishing these territorial divisions.

The Resident was the only officer charged with diplomatic relations with the king. He was also responsible for political administration and was deputized by a number of “delegates” who represented him in native chieftaincies. The powers and duties of Belgian administrative authorities (Resident and territorial administrators) were stipulated in the Royal decree of 11th January 1926. The powers of corresponding authorities in Belgian Congo were replaced by the Royal decree of 29th June 1933 and the decree of 1st July 1947. The powers of Vice-Governor General and Governor of the Territory were conferred by ordinance. The territories were administered by territorial administrators under whose jurisdictions were several deputy territorial administrators and agents. It should be noted that territorial administrators were responsible to the Resident.

The obligations and functions of the territorial administration were described in the “handbook of duties and responsibilities of civil servants and agents of the territorial authority”. The first copy of this handbook was published in 1916 in London. This collection was replaced by the “*Vade Mecum*” of duties and responsibilities of Civil Servants and Territorial Agents in Belgian Congo. It was published in 1953. There existed very many hierarchical relations at the level of the territorial administration. Each agent had a higher senior officer who, accordingly, had influence on making postings and determining job descriptions for his subordinates.

In this new administrative structure, the European administrator had several functions. He supervised several chieftaincies. It was him who centralized power in his hands. He supervised and oversaw the implementation of orders. He was a judge and at the same time an officer of the Ministry of Public Affairs, a public officer, an agricultural officer, a tax collector, a population census officer, a territorial accountant, a credit manager, a builder, a facilitator, etc¹⁵⁴. The administrator led a life of a traveler and

¹⁵⁴ Van Leeuw, Cl., *L'administration territoriale au Cong Belge et au Rwanda-Urundi*, Louvain la Neuve, 1981.

was a jerk of all trades. As a result of his versatility, he was always concerned with concrete achievements. The territorial administration was a true workshop of the Belgian colonization. The European personnel, whose number significantly increased, supervised the smallest detail of the entire administrative and political apparatus including the royal court in Nyanza¹⁵⁵. Their number increased from 1926 to 1960 in Ruanda-Urundi. The legislative ordinance No. 347/ A.I.M.O of 1943 restricted the role of customary rulers to the implementation of orders made without the participation of the latter. Hence, the administrator of Nyanza shared with the king the responsibility of a supreme judge. In implementing orders, the administrator exercised a lot of pressure, threats and blackmails on native cadres through threats of punishments such as dismissals, fines, beatings, etc. The administrator did not have any direct contact with the population due to language barrier. He used an interpreter who sometimes falsified his messages.

The actual relationship between territorial authorities and natives took place at the territorial level. The only orders that the king could give to chiefs was that of saying that Belgian orders had to be obeyed. The line of command respected the following order: Resident- administrator-chief-sub-chiefs. According to customary law, chiefs and sub-chiefs were responsible to the *King*. They were also responsible to the European administration.

Owing to the responsibilities and powers exercised by the European civil servants, indirect rule ended up becoming a direct rule. Some administrators even asked themselves why the policy used was called "indirect rule". They proposed that this expression be dropped because it did not reflect the reality on the ground. "We can no longer seriously speak of indirect rule," said one of the Nyanza delegates¹⁵⁶. In 1931, J. Paradis, the administrator of Astrida once asked: "(...) What is the job description of the *King*? In all the areas, we have effectively taken a code of conduct in discussing our decisions. King

¹⁵⁵ The colonial agents were trained at the Antwerp colonial University among others by Professor Louis Verlaene whose book was entitled "Notre colonie, contribution à la recherche, entre autres, de la méthode de colonisation", became a reference text book for the colonial era. Hence, the view that the abuses suffered by the natives were a result of the colonial method from this teaching.

¹⁵⁶ Nyanza Territory: Political report during 1930, Archives Afric n° R/RU (89); see also Residence of Ruanda, annual report 1930, Arch. Afric n° R/RU 2 (54), p 121.

Musinga continues to give his views on all questions related to politics (...); but in effect, it is our views that prevail (...). This consultation of *King* on all matters, hasn't it become pure comedy with a single objective of confirming the use of customary authority on all administrative decisions which sometimes are directly against custom? (...). And from the notables, what are their current functions? (...) to faithfully carry out orders from the administration, not instructions but specific orders and overseeing the smallest detail of their implementation. In all fields (...) the notables are nothing more than agents to implement the decisions of the administrative authority (...) ¹⁵⁷.

The legislative ordinance No. 347/A.I.M.O of 4th October 1943 on native political organization of Ruanda-Urundi¹⁵⁸ was the first text in which Belgium defined the terms of the native policy in a legal manner. According to the specialists, its legal base was extremely narrow¹⁵⁹. A sentence from Article 4 of Ordinance No. 2/5 of 6th April 1917 stated that: "The Sultans shall, under the supervision of the Resident exercise political and judicial duties in accordance with native custom and shall follow instructions of the Royal Commissar". The important points of this ordinance were:

- The *King*, chiefs and sub-chiefs were to be recognized by the mandatory authority which had powers to dismiss them;
- The Resident supervised the actions of the King and territorial administrator, chiefs and sub-chiefs;
- Native customs became a source of customary authority in traditional matters only where it did not contradict public order or legal provisions with aim of substituting other laws by native custom;
- The obligations imposed on the *King*, chiefs and sub-chiefs were under Territorial Authority;
- The management of the country's finances and those from the chieftaincy was to be supervised and managed by the Territorial Authority.

This ordinance legally protected the political organization that

¹⁵⁷ Paradis, J., Letter to the Resident (O. Coubeau), of 7th May 1931, N° 291, p.1.

¹⁵⁸ Bulletin officiel du Ruanda-Urundi, 1943, pp.596 623.

¹⁵⁹ Renytjens, F. 1985, op. cit, pp. 143 148.

was developed in accordance with the Commissar and Governor's instructions. It therefore became a legal document during the colonial period.

a. Organization of legal system

The organization of justice was based on the Belgian philosophy. The organization of native justice was made legal in 1943¹⁶⁰. Article 2 of Ordinance No. 2/5/ of 6th April 1917 cited above gave German administration and instructions of the Royal Commissar the right to judge civil and criminal matters. The native jurisdictions were restricted to customs and traditions. In principle, justice towards natives was in the hands of the *King* and chiefs. The native legal reorganization was part and parcel of the policy of indirect rule.

Like in administration, modifications were envisaged and implemented in the legal field at an early stage. The Ordinance of 27th April 1917 established several jurisdictions (territorial courts and police posts) which were competent to judge offenses on written criminal law and offences committed by natives.

There were criticisms against traditional judicial systems. For example, the recourse to royal court was ridiculous and crimes were badly judged, etc.¹⁶¹. In 1925, jurisdictions were reorganized¹⁶². This established a territorial court at the headquarters of each territory and a court of appeal or the king's court in Nyanza. The territorial courts were constituted by a judge, a chief, 2 to 5 assessors, sub-chiefs and a court clerk. The territorial administrator substituted a native judge whenever the court sat at the administrative post. But whenever it sat elsewhere, the European civil servant chaired the court without acting as judge. The Nyanza court was composed of judges, assessors, and chiefs who were all appointed by the Resident. The Resident and his deputy or administrators who were specially designated constituted the judge of the court of appeal. The *King* chaired this court and had the same powers like the Resident. The native jurisdictions were competent to judge all conflicts between the Rwandese or between Rwandese and natives of neighboring territories¹⁶³. These jurisdictions were ¹⁶⁰

Renyjens, F., 1985, op. cit, pp. 149 160.

¹⁶¹ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1922, P.10.

¹⁶² Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1925, P.68 69.

¹⁶³ Vanhove J., « Les juridictions indigènes du Rwanda », in *Congo*, 1939, p.161.

successful in judging people, given the number of cases handled at that time, i.e. 1,352 cases in 1924 and 3,219 cases in 1929¹⁶⁴.

In 1934, reconciliation courts were created in Nyanza Territory. They aimed at solving less important cases and were supposed to make conflicting parties to agree before native courts handled their cases. This was extended to other territories from 1935¹⁶⁵. These “courts” did not solve problems but just reconciled conflicting parties.

The order of the *King* No. 3 of 13th April 1937 only recognized indigenous courts as the only courts in the Province (chieftaincy courts and reconciliation courts). There were also territorial courts, the court of appeal and the king’s court. These courts handled matters between natives. Matters before the chieftaincy court were only heard after presenting cases to the sub-chief who acted as a reconciler, assisted by 2 notables. A case could be brought to the chieftaincy court if reconciliation had failed to be reached. The *King* acted as judge in all native courts of the country. He was also free to revisit all judgments made. The revenue to run chieftaincy’s court came from the chieftaincy finance department while Territorial courts and the king’s court were supported by the Mutara Fund.

The colonizers interfered significantly in the organization of legal matters through Ordinance No. 348/ A.I.M.O of 5th October 1943 on native jurisdictions. This text handled 3 customary jurisdictions, namely the chieftaincy court, territorial court and king’s court. The chief was a *de jure* chairman of the chieftaincy court but could be replaced by an assistant (assessor) confirmed by the territorial administrator. The king’s tribunal was chaired by the *King* and was composed of 2 or several assessors chosen by the *King* among the country’s notables who were supposed to be approved by the Resident.

As far as native courts were concerned, they were exclusively made of natives and were despised by Europeans. That is why European courts were different from native ones. The Territorial court was a jurisdiction for Europeans and only sat at the level of the Residence. It could annul judgments made by native courts. As result, customary norms were only applied if they were not

¹⁶⁴ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1924, p.13 and pp. 50-51.

¹⁶⁵ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1934, p.75 ;
ibid. 1935, p.78.

contrary to public order (colonial) and legal provisions/regulations.

Like in the administrative apparatus, the personnel in the judicial machinery were Tutsi. This arrangement was strongly criticized. From 1957 to 1962, the Hutu accused all Tutsis of being unfair and arbitrary. We have already seen how this was done by the colonial powers. The Rwandese also faced trials of a colonial nature referred to as “common law” in both criminal and civil cases. The jurisdictions of common law dealt with cases based on written law whereas native jurisdictions handled cases on customary norms. They did this as long as “they did not contravene public order and good moral standards”.

The organic text on civil and repressive justice was the Ordinance law No. 45 of 30th August 1944. It dealt with police courts whose jurisdiction was determined by the Royal Commissar. It dealt with a territorial court for the entire country and a court of the first instance or a court of appeal for the entire Ruanda-Urundi territory. These courts were, in principle, competent to handle all crimes committed by natives. In practice, these crimes were of written nature (written law).

The judicial organization of the common law was reformed by the decree of 5th July 1949 which handled police courts in every territory. This was organized as follows: the prosecution court, the Residence court for the Rwandan Residence, the court of first instance and the court of appeal for Ruanda-Urundi territory.

The dual-judicial system which made it possible for the co-existence of both traditional and imported law was not as rigid as one could imagine because the colonial order always had precedence over native order and the decision of native judges became gradually legal. The competence of native jurisdictions was determined by formal law whereas the traditional customary punishments were based on customary ethics. A dependent system (customary system) was authorized to stay and was a supervised pluralistic legal system.

b. Colonial burdens and their consequences

Taxes (*Umusoro*) and forced labor (*Akazi*) were the major burdens through which the Belgian colonizers achieved their goal of domination and exploitation. On the other hand, these

two instruments were used by colonialists to act as they wished on mentalities and life conditions of the masses. Given the authoritarian and arbitrary environment in which tax payment and forced labor were made and given the suffering involved, colonial abuses left behind bitter souvenirs among the people who were forced to implement them.

➤ **Fiscal system**

The fiscal system was the means used by all colonial powers to compel natives to join a cash economy and to provide goods and services demanded. The objective of the fiscal policy of the Belgian colonial administration aimed to provide provide colonial services to the Rwandan population. The direct fiscal system was principally dominated by a conglomeration of taxes, namely: capitation tax, polygamy tax, cattle tax, income tax, personal tax¹⁶⁶, etc.

Capitation tax

We have already shown above that capitation tax was introduced by the Germans. Up to 1917, it was the only tax imposed in Rwanda. The rate of this tax was fixed at 3.5 Francs in all territories. The differences in the rates of capitation tax in various areas and territories started to be noticed in 1921¹⁶⁷. In 1923, the rate of this tax was fixed at 15 Francs for urban residents (Kigali). For other localities, the rate remained the same (3.5 Francs). The tax payers were divided into two categorizes, i.e. those from rural areas and suburbs of Kigali.

The framework of the country's political re-organization which came into force from 1926 saw the tax rate revised from 15 to 10 Francs for natives in urban and rural areas respectively¹⁶⁸. From 1930, the rate of capitation tax became generally compulsory¹⁶⁹. It was fixed according to the resources in the region and according to the degree of economic development of the people, in other words, 15.5 Francs in Kigali territories, Astrida and Nyanza; 17.5 Francs in the territories of Shangugu, Kisenyi and Ruhengeri; 10 Francs for the territories for Gatsibu and Rukira. In 1945, this rate was fixed at 46 Francs for six territories. These

¹⁶⁶ Mbonitegeka, D., *La politique fiscale dans le Rwanda colonial (1912-1962)*, Mémoire de Licence, Butare 2003.

¹⁶⁷ Ordinance, No.11/13 of 9th November 1921.

¹⁶⁸ Ordinance, No.55 of 17th February 1926.

¹⁶⁹ Ordinance, No.1 of 09th March 1930.

were: Kigali, Nyanza, Astrida, Ruhengeri, Gatsibu and Kabaya/Kisenyi. The territory of Shangugu was divided into two, that is to say 56 Francs for Kamembe and 28 Francs for the remaining parts. Rukira had the lowest rate of 26 Francs¹⁷⁰.

In extra-customary areas, the rate was 24 Francs in 1927; 40.75 Francs in 1930; 70 Francs in 1949 and 80 Francs in 1945. From 1923 up to 1930 the rate quadrupled whereas the income of the population did not increase at the same rate¹⁷¹.

From 1946, the fiscal policy was an effective instrument of mobilizing financial resources, especially within the framework of the 10-year development plan. In 1946, the rate was fixed at 50 Francs for all territories except Shangugu which had 2 rates, that is to say 60 Francs for Kamembe and 30 Francs for the rest. In extra-customary areas and suburbs, natives and people of color paid 80 Francs. After the elaboration of the ten-year development plan of 1951, the tax rate was revised and fixed at 100 Francs. This was the same in many parts of the country except in the territories of Shangugu, Kigali and Kisenyi which had the highest rate of 130 and 180 Francs between 1952 and 1960. In 1969, the capitation tax was replaced by a tax called “minimum personal contributions”. It was compulsory for all adult males aged 18 years and above. Its rate was valued between 380 and 390 Francs for the fiscal year 1961. The capitation tax therefore was considered to be the most crushing of all taxes.

The exemption of the capitation tax was authorized by the administrator or his assistant after presenting a medical certificate showing that the applicant was “inept”. The other people who were exempted from paying this tax were chiefs and sub-chiefs who had been in service for 3 months, the soldiers and members of the police force, the sick tax-payers who had suffered from sickness for six consecutive months and church ministers who belonged to religious denominations and cults recognized in Ruanda-Urundi. All this was done to discourage and fight against any attempt to evade tax payment.

The problem of exempting adult students who were attending school in the missions frequently occurred though the government was tolerant on this matter. From 1915, the government’s declared intention was to fix the maximum age of tax exemption to 16 years, i.e. not exceeding P5. Students who were older than

¹⁷⁰ Bulletin officiel du Ruanda Urundi , 1917 to 1945.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

that were expelled from school.

The tax payer had to be an adult man, a native whose physical and moral character depicted a “sound state”. The official reference documents were the voting identity card or a document issued by the mission indicating baptism and birth dates.

The people were informed about the rate of the tax to be paid before 1st January of every year. A department of information prepared leaflets brochures and indicated different categories of taxes to be paid in chieftaincies and territories. The most effective method consisted of assembling all the population in a public place. Tax-collectors disseminated all the necessary information on tax collection. The time limit for collection of native taxes did not to exceed 15 days. Taxes were paid in one deposit and in cash by special tax-collectors designated for that purpose. The tax payers who did not pay their taxes within the specified time were forced to participate in public works whose modalities and nature were determined by the Governor. These included doing construction work, making road repairs, cleaning rivers, working in state enterprises, carrying equipment for government use, slashing grass and sanitation. These public works never exceeded two months.

Polygamy tax

The Ordinance No. 56 of 12th December 1924 subjected men to polygamy tax: “all men of color, non-natives or those residing in a conventional suburb paid polygamy tax for each one of his wives apart from the first wife”¹⁷². This was done to implement the colonial charter of 18th October 1908 which recommended to the colonial administration that natives should be progressively encouraged to withdraw from polygamy. In addition, the powerful Catholic Church considered polygamy as an obstacle to the expansion of Christianity and was seen as a barbaric custom. The idea of introducing this tax dated as far back as the German period but the Germans did not attach much importance to it. The colonial authorities considered polygamy as a sign of wealth. From 1931, according to Ordinance No. 2 of 26th December 1930, the tax on polygamy became compulsory for all polygamous men. This tax was charged on every extra-wife. It was considered in accordance with the wealth and level of development in every region. It was fixed at 13 Francs in the territories of Shangugu,

¹⁷² Bulletin officiel du Ruanda Urundi, 1925, p.6.

Kisenyi, Musha, Ruhengeri and Kabaya. In the territories of Kigali, Nyanza and Astrida, it was put at 10 Francs in the fiscal year 1931. In the territories of Gatsibu, Rukira and Byumba, the rate was put at 6 Francs. Extra-customary suburbs paid 50 Francs. At the end of the mandate in 1945, the rate was fixed at 33 Francs in most territories except in Kibungo where it was at 20 Francs. Shangugu was taxed between 22 and 40 Francs and extra-customary suburbs were taxed 65 Francs.¹⁷³

Under the Trusteeship, the fight against polygamy took another form after publishing Ordinance No. 21/164 of May 1949 and the decree of 4th April 1950. These laws officially prohibited polygamy and prevented polygamous people from going to some public places¹⁷⁴. From 1950, the rate of polygamy tax was almost equal to the capitation tax. In 1951, this tax was fixed at 95 Francs in 5 territories as follows: 105 in Shangugu, 80 Francs in Kibungo, and 150 Francs in AEC. From 1951, this tax increased exorbitantly. In some regions, some polygamous men had to chase away their wives or chose to live with them secretly.

Cattle Tax

Cattle tax was established in 1923. It was charged at a rate of 1 Belgian Franc per cow. It was reformed in 1927¹⁷⁵ and its new rate was fixed at 2 Francs. In 1936, it rose to 5 Francs and in 1945 to 10 Francs. During the mandate, this tax rose from 1 to 10 Francs in all regions. As a result of cow diseases of 1939, the rate of cattle tax was lowered but soon went up when the cow disease ended. During the Trusteeship, the rate increased to 18 Francs in 1947 and to 27.5 Francs in 1950. It shot to 50 Francs in 1954 and later to 75 Francs in 1960¹⁷⁶

Tax collection was done after making cattle and human censuses. This exercise was done by secretaries recruited among students who graduated from Nyanza School accompanied by the chief and sub-chiefs of the areas. The first cow census took place in 1927 and accordingly, 500,000 cow-heads were counted. The major difficulty encountered during this exercise was that the proprietors did not declare their animals faithfully. They had an

¹⁷³ Bulletin officiel du Ruanda Urundi, 1931, p.145.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid,1951.

¹⁷⁵ Ordinance of 6th June 1927.

¹⁷⁶ Bulletin officiel du Ruanda Urundi, 1947 to 1960.

intention of evading tax payment¹⁷⁷.

From 1950, the problem of pastures was also felt. In a meeting held in Usumbura on 23rd August 1950, the “problem of livestock keeping” became the order of the day. In that meeting, the Deputy Governor General hinted on the possibility of eliminating excessive cattle. This provoked an outcry from cattle keepers. A compromise was reached and a tax was established on any cow that was described “undesirable”. This involved over age cows of more than 12 years plus cows declared unfit by veterinary personnel. This tax increased every year for every extra cow. Generally, the tax on cattle increased exponentially with aim of discouraging farmers from keeping many cows and it gradually led to the decrease in the number of cows.

Personal tax

This tax was inspired by the system that was taking place in Belgian Congo. In 1917, the surface area with buildings was subjected to taxation. The ordinance No.71 of 15th November 1925 made it possible for the decree of 22nd December 1917 to be applicable in Rwanda. The tax rate on buildings (living houses, offices and shops) was fixed according to the criterion of the number of square meters occupied, i.e. 7 Francs in areas known as “first class”, 5.25 Francs in “second class” areas and 3.5 Francs. There was also a special rate for buildings used for accommodating native employees, workshops and drying rooms: 3.5 Francs in first class neighborhoods, 1.7 Francs in second class neighborhoods and 0.7 Francs elsewhere. The number of taxable areas was divided into 5 categories from 1944. There also existed an annual tax payable by a number of employees, maids, and workers. A tax on vehicles used for transporting people and goods was established from 1932. Lastly, a tax on mineral concessions was established in 1937. During the period of the mandate, the tax base was indeed very narrow.

The taxable items owned by government, religious institutions and non lucrative private organizations were not subjected to a personal tax. The same applied to buildings, land and vehicles exclusively intended for agriculture and livestock farming, cults, hospitals, schools as well as religious, scientific and sports activities.

¹⁷⁷ Nkurikiyimfura, J., 1994, op. cit, p. 214.

During the Trusteeship, the taxable base did not change a great deal. According to the decree of 10th March 1950, personal tax was based on the following criteria: the surface area occupied by the buildings and constructions, the surface area of un-built land in urban areas, employers, workers and maids, boats, vehicles transporting people, trade items and objects of value, areas with mineral concessions. In addition, another tax base was added, that is to say a tax on bananas established by Ordinance No.332/352 of 21st November 1961. It should be noted that from this date, cattle tax was also integrated into personal tax.

Income tax

It was Ordinance No. 72 of 5th November 1925 that established income tax in Rwanda. It was already in force in Belgian Congo. It consisted of taxes on movable assets. This tax was introduced once again in countries where the majority of the people lived on subsistence economy or where salaried civil servants were not many. This explains why its output was low.

From 1951, this tax was channeled to construction sites, forestry industries, fishing and hotel industries. Its aim was to increase the tax base. The decree of 20th January 1960 introduced another reform on income tax. Lastly, the professional tax affected the profit margins of all industrial, commercial crafts, agricultural productions as well as fixed assets. It reduced remunerations of civil servants and employees in private and public sectors.

Indirect tax

The income tax of this category came from both export and import taxes and consumption taxes. A customs department and warehouse were established in Rwanda in 1921. By virtue of the law of 30th June 1922, Ruanda-Urundi was part of a customs union that extended to Belgian Congo. The custom tax was charged on entry at Rwanda's borders for the first time in 1924. The rate and modalities of tax payment were established by the decree of 31st December 1923. However, not all goods were taxed. Every year, the colonial administration established a list of goods imported to Rwanda with frequent modifications. Products of daily consumption, for example food items, were often exempted whereas luxurious products were taxed more heavily. This tax was reduced on items and equipment useful for social economic development of the county such as vehicles,

machines tools and metallic products, etc.

Export tax was established for the first time in 1924 on sheepskin. Later, export taxes on coffee and mineral products were introduced from 1927. A custom surtax was established during the Second World War on exported goods.

Consumption taxes were levied on the following products: alcoholic drinks apart from mass-wine which served religious cults and fermented drinks made by natives for personal use, manufactured tobacco, imported or produced in Rwanda, minerals, etc. All fraudulent measures were punished by a fine that was equivalent to 15 times the amount of the product. In addition, the items involved in fraud were confiscated.

The Ruanda-Urundi budget was supported by income from taxes as well as non-taxed income described above. According to the world fiscal income trend, it was the native and cattle taxes which earned some considerable income to the country, i.e. 10,437,244 Francs in 1934 (on a total income of 37,636,706 Francs). This income played a considerable role in the Ruanda-Urundi budget. Fiscal income increased considerably. The territorial departments played an important role in using the income.

According to the Convention of 15th August 1952, Belgium and Belgian Congo intervened in the profit department of the public debt of Ruanda-Urundi by giving grants which were to be refunded later. Ruanda-Urundi continued to receive these grants up to independence.

It is uncontestable that revenue from fiscal income helped to build schools, hospitals, administrative buildings, purchase of equipment, salaries for colonial and customary staff, etc. A small amount of money was invested in works of social and economic interest. Development programs were determined in accordance with the income from local resources especially from tax income and forced labor. But it is also true to say that many negative consequences of these taxes impacted on the country's development. These included migration movements and the food crisis. We shall deal with these later.

➤ **Forced labor (akazi)**

The works referred to as “works of public interest” (in French TIG or *travaux d'intérêt general*) also called “*akazi*” or “forced labor” were authorized by ordinance No.25 of 7th November 1924. They consisted of exploiting big agricultural land for cultivating agricultural and non-seasonal crops such as cassava and sweet potatoes and cash crops like coffee, constructing roads, establishing anti-soil erosion measures, land exploitation for agricultural purposes in valleys, reforestation, etc. ‘Works of public interest’ were imposed on the people without explaining to them the rationale behind and this created discontent among the population who expressed passive resistance to them in different forms¹⁷⁸. In a new arrangement, the services rendered according to traditional norms and referred to as “*Uburetwa*” took a new dimension.

The term “*akazi*” was borrowed from Kiswahili and it entered into Rwandan use during German rule. It covered realities of a complex nature: services in kind that people owed to authorities, all non-remunerated work or work whose remuneration was derisory. The Germans were committed to maintaining “traditional” charges as they entirely existed. An oral treaty on this matter between King Musinga and Captain Bethe was put in force in 1899. By maintaining these public works, the new regime proceeded to impose a series of new works. Only regions which were located near the German posts and missions, and to a certain extent, regions crossed by roads were concerned with public works.

Among the new imposed demands by the Germans, there were road repairs, supply of food items to colonial authorities and availing supplies for construction material. We have already seen above that the recruitment of porters played an important role in trade. The Germans also introduced and popularized the use of the cane (*ikiboko*) in the country. This was abusively used by German and Rwandese authorities to punish those who evaded or tied to evade forced labor.

During the colonial period, Catholic missionaries benefited from forced labor. In the beginning the *Batware* gave the workers exotic

¹⁷⁸ Uwizeyimana L., *La croissance démographique et la production agricole au Rwanda : Impossible adéquation*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1989, p. 39.

products. When the missionaries became more powerful they gave them nothing in return for the work done. The exotic items included salt, sugar, cotton fabrics, pearls, and Rupees. The missionaries used porters to carry bricks¹⁷⁹. Thus in constructing Save Catholic Church, priests went to the royal court and asked for people to carry and transport construction material. For a period for four months, almost 10,000 people were mobilized to transport 300 logs of trees¹⁸⁰. In 1922, the Kabgayi missionaries looked for porters to carry construction wood from Budaha. This exercise was considered as both abusive and painful. It took three days to get to Gishwati forest and at least eight days to come back to Kabgayi with a heavy load of wood on the head. The burden of constructing Kabgayi Church still looms in the memories of local populations because thousands of people were mobilized to supply carpentry material and wood to feed brick furnaces.¹⁸¹ As a result, missionaries participated in exploiting and inflicting heavy burdens on Rwandan peasants.

From 1917, the Belgians established a system of compulsory cultivation of cassava. They also introduced a new reforestation program for the entire country¹⁸². The measures to implement these projects started in 1926. Coffee was cultivated from 1924 to 1925 but this was just a trial phase. The ordinance which conferred on the Resident the powers to coerce natives to establish coffee plantations was dated 7th November 1924. Many other texts followed this ordinance regarding the establishment of new forms of forced labor, regulating *Ubutwa* or reducing it. The Belgian administration report of 1924 had this to say on this point: “(...) it goes without saying that governments implementing their policies in less advanced societies must, in some circumstances, have power to impose strict measures of general interest”¹⁸³(...).

Thus the period from 1925 to 1959 was generally considered as the period of forced labor. It was characterized by many administrative provisions on forced labor, its intensification and diversification. From 1926, the campaign to grow food crops like cassava and sweet potatoes intensified. Officially, the cultivation of these crops was known as “works imposed by the European

¹⁷⁹ Kabgayi Mission diary of 10th June 1907, p.74.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 16th February 1906.

¹⁸¹ Kabgayi mission Diary of 9th June 1907, p.74; Read also the memoir on Kabgayi Mission.

¹⁸² Letter no. 791/A/53 of 2nd August 1917, on the organization of the Kingdom.

¹⁸³ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1924, p.28.

authority in the interest of native workers”. This marked the beginning of the first measures of coercing local people to implement polices on reforestation and construction of roads. The latter were referred to as “works done in the interest of the collectivity”. In this regard, Ordinance No. 347/ A.I.M.O of 4th October 1943 on the political organization of Ruanda-Urundi was an important legal document. Nevertheless, other texts on implementing this program followed suite. These texts gave the Resident power and authority to impose a series of forced labor tasks. They included large scale reforestation works, intensification of food cultivation, works to fight soil erosion, etc. The rules proposed afterwards by the Resident specified the minimum surface area that every coerced laborer (*HAV*)¹⁸⁴ was supposed to cultivate. This entailed 2,500 square meters for sweet potatoes and 3,500 square meters of cassava.

The forced labor scheme was arranged according to the political organization of the country. The Governor of Ruanda-Urundi prepared a master plan for the works to be executed. He presented the dossier before the Resident who in turn transmitted it to the King. From 1953, after consulting the Higher National Council (*CSP*)¹⁸⁵ the king determined annually all services to be provided by every chieftaincy in implementing the master plan. The territorial administrators were informed about this plan and were supposed to ensure its implementation in their areas of jurisdiction.

On the instructions of chiefs, sub-chiefs were supposed to distribute equitably these works between the coerced laborers. In implementing these services the chief of the minor lineage (*inzu*) was the intermediary between the chiefs and sub-chiefs before 1924. Thereafter, new chiefs replaced these intermediaries with the people they favored or with members of their own families. Note that this was contrary to traditional norms. The new intermediaries were divided into two categories, i.e. *ibirongozi* and *abamotsi*.

The *ibirongozi* could deputize their masters or sub-chiefs in case of problems and they supervised the work done by the coerced laborers (*abanyakazi*). On the other hand, the *abamotsi* helped sub-chiefs to recruit coerced laborers and to announce the decisions of sub-chiefs to the local populations and they informed laborers about the place where work would take place. Before

¹⁸⁴ This was an abbreviation in French

¹⁸⁵ This abbreviation in full is : “*Conseil Supérieur du Pays*”

starting to work, a sub-chief or *Kirongozi* took a roll-call (*iperu*) to identify those who were present and absentees. The absentees were punished. All intermediaries were by law not supposed to be paid. In principle, they were not supposed to enjoy the benefits of forced labor like sub-chiefs. However, the *Ibirongozi* regularly collaborated with chiefs to coerce some workers to perform personal tasks on their own farms. In addition, the *Ibirongozi* themselves were exempted from forced labor and this was not a mean achievement at all.

➤ **Works imposed in the interests of individual homesteads**

These works dealt with cultivating compulsory food crops such as cassava and sweet potatoes. But also, they included the cultivation of coffee and storage of beans.

Shiku

The imposition of the coerced cultivation of food crops was known by the name of “*Shiku*”. This was a coined term which came into use in 1930. Food-crop farming was supposed to be done in plots which were not owned by peasants, that is to say in land designated by competent authorities. This forced labor was intended for the good of the population. It eventually became very unpopular. That is why in the cultivated fields, the services which were delivered were given the name of “*Shiku*” from the verb “*Gushikura*” meaning cultivating with a lot of force using of a hand-hoe. This was true because that work was done on fallow land (*imishike*) which was generally hard and dry to cultivate. *Shiku* was also called “*akajagari*” to mean land assigned to a group of cultivators each of whom was supposed to cultivate his own part. The *Shiku* of cassava was located on hill-tops. The sweet potato *shiku* was located in valleys and marshlands.

From the land tenure point of view, the *shiku* system was not the same as “*amasambu*” (private property owned by peasants). *Shiku* land did not refer to collective fields. Suffice it, *shiku* simply referred to collective gardens for individuals who were grouped to work together. The individual occupants did not have rights of ownership on the plots which were given to them to cultivate. They were supposed to use it temporarily. After harvesting, the plot belonged again to the village reserve (*colline*

in French). The following year, the distribution of these plots was transferred to other locations. Nobody had a right to claim a plot they had previously cultivated.

The intensification of food crop cultivation suddenly changed the image of the rural areas. Hence in every sub-chieftaincy, there were two or three big fields of cassava called “*agakiza*”. These cultivated fields belonged to the people; they were resorted to during periods of famine and food scarcity. As opposed to *shiku*, the *agakiza* fields were collective gardens which were bigger than the *shiku*. The *agakiza* plots measured 10,000 square meters. To obtain sufficient land for cultivation, pastoral fields were gradually encroached upon by the *agakiza* fields and eventually became agricultural land. Hence, several demonstrations of discontent by herdsmen emerged against the intensification of coerced agriculture.

Food crop agriculture passed through a trial-phase from 1926 to 1930. It was followed by large-scale mobilization of cassava stem distribution from Rubona plantations¹⁸⁶. There were competing suppliers and buyers as well as the HAVs (i.e. adult men capable of performing forced labor) to carry stems provided by the colonial administration. Sweet-potato stems were also distributed on the spot.

Before cultivating, it was important to select the cultivation area. This was done by the competent authorities and, in this case, the sub-chief. The criterion of area proximity was privileged. The sub-chief lived adjacent to the cultivated surface area. He risked losing his job if there was the cultivated surface in his domain was small. In order to facilitate the supervision of the fields by the territorial authorities and other visitors, the fields had to be located within a radius of the same locality, preferably near major roads. The objective was to enable inspectors to see from a distance, with their own eyes, the enormous work done by the Territory chieftaincy and sub-chieftaincy without leaving their vehicles or motorcycles to walk on foot. By exhibiting these accessible model gardens, the sub-chief or chief made supervisors to believe that the situation was the same everywhere and that the authorities of the region were indeed hard working. These locations were not chosen according to the distances covered by the coerced laborers

¹⁸⁶ In 1927, two selection experimental stations were established in Rubona and Ntendezi (Cyangu). The latter was abolished in 1929.

or HAVs. It was very common for coerced laborers who were living in marshlands or uncultivated hills going to cultivate in very distant areas. These abuses contributed to making the *shiku* system not only very unpopular but also unproductive.

After choosing a proper location where *shiku* was to be performed, the sub-chief invited the coerced laborers (HAVs) with the help of “*abamotsi*” to come to the fields for work. They helped the sub-chief to divide the field into plots of 40 meters long and 20 meters wide. The person to whom a plot was given fixed demarcation poles along the four corners of his field. The sweet potatoes plots were smaller than cassava ones. No demarcation poles were needed for potatoes. And, coerced cultivation started in earnest. The average surface area of sweet potatoes plots was 40 square meters (10 m x 4m). The distribution of plots to households was one of the major characteristics of the *shiku* system. The aim was to expand the size of the cultivated area for fear of poor harvests in case of bad weather or pests.

The cultivation works started in November or April. For sweet potatoes and hill-top cassava, it took place in June and July and sweet potatoes were cultivated in valleys. The number of plots for a household was proportional to the labor provided by family members. It was compulsory to finish the work assigned on a given plot on time. In achieving this objective, and to avoid punishment, the most practical practice was to work together as a team along hill-tops. In practice, HAVs only cultivated a small piece of land but tactfully covered the other part with some soil obtained from the cultivated area. Generally, the supervisors aimed at demonstrating a very big surface area of cultivated land but not the output because this was evidence of effective land use by the sub-chieftaincy. Coercing people to go and cultivate in distant places became a big obstacle. It was caused by the daily movements by HAVs during the weeding and harvesting seasons. Thus, some fields were not harvested due to long distances involved. In fact, homesteads suffered more from the *shiku* system than they benefited from it.

The colonial administration justified the imposition of food crop cultivation in the following way. First of all, cassava and sweet potatoes were supposed to help the people to fight against famine and food scarcity by providing surplus food. Cassava was not known in the country but sweet potatoes were cultivated in some regions. The choice of these two crops was influenced by

the fact that they were less vulnerable to climate change. This justification went hand in hand with the argument frequently developed in the colonial literature that these crops helped natives from being lazy. This was a false argument and was contradicted by several events. As we shall see later, one of these was that many Rwandans went to work in other countries to escape forced labor. But in addition, the Belgians put a lot of importance on cassava because they envisaged the possibility of exporting it to Katanga.

From 1954, compulsory agriculture took a new dimension. It was no longer a question of cultivating these crops in areas identified by authorities, agricultural officers or the sub-chiefs. From now on, every coerced laborer was under obligation to work permanently and dig 1,500 square meters of cassava in any place where the desired output would be produced, if not, the HAV faced serious reprimand on top of canning, though this corporal punishment was suppressed in 1948.

Coffee growing

Coffee was introduced in Rwanda at the beginning of the 20th Century by the Catholic Missionaries. The first coffee trial plantations were established in Mibilizi and Nyundo Catholic Missions. Coffee seeds came from Guatemala and passed via Bukoba where missionaries selected the seeds in a German Experimentation Center in Amani¹⁸⁷. It was from this station that coffee seeds were disseminated to other parts of the country. The introduction of coffee growing by the native population goes back to 1921. Many orders were given by the Deputy Governor himself and the Resident to the administrators. These instructions not only stressed the importance of coffee but also gave technical advice on planting this new crop. Hence, the following letter written to the Resident of Rwanda of 23rd October 1930 provides ample evidence of these instructions: “(...) I insist on the necessity of putting young coffee plants on soil heaps; and through a natural process, the soil heap around the plant will go to the bottom. If such heap of soil is not provided, the soil will be washed away and the plant will be in a bare hole which would allow rain water to accumulate and lie stagnant around the young coffee plant (...)”¹⁸⁸.

¹⁸⁷ Ngirinshuti, H.J., *Histoire socio-économique du Rwanda : Le cas du café (1930-1964)*, Mémoire, UNR, Butare, 1997.

¹⁸⁸ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge 1930, p.107

Between 1921 and 1932, coffee producing results were sub-standard, contrary to the praises in official reports that hailed the development of this crop. This was due to coercion of laborers and lack of elementary knowledge on the management of the crop. In 1931, 300,000 coffee seedlings were planted. By 31st December, there were almost 155,000 seedlings remaining, in other words a loss of 50 percent¹⁸⁹. At the end of the following campaign, the rate of plant attrition was 20%¹⁹⁰. One of the strategies used was to coerce chiefs and sub-chiefs to plant coffee seedlings. This choice was inspired by other colonial experiences such as the cotton growing experience in Uganda where coffee was planted by chiefs and who in turn made their subjects to cultivate it¹⁹¹. Hence, every chief and sub-chief was supposed to prepare a coffee nursery near their residence. The heads of households received seedlings which they also planted under the supervision of local authorities and agricultural officers.

On top of this involvement by authorities, other means of coffee dissemination were meetings, sensitization sessions in public places such as markets, tax collection seminars and mining cooperatives. Even the powerful Catholic Church got involved in this campaign of disseminating coffee among the population. In 1943, Mgr Classe sent a letter to all priests in the Vicariate requesting them to collaborate with government for the success of the coffee campaign and asked them to give an example by not neglecting their seedlings¹⁹². The intensive growth of coffee continued but was later interrupted by the Second World War. There is general consensus that coffee campaigns and road works occupied an important place among the numerous programs established by colonial authorities.

Coffee growing demanded a lot of labor. In the beginning, people were required to conduct the following operations: making thousands of baskets for nursery beds and transporting hundreds of thousands of plants to gardens which were often located in distant places. Since the campaign of 1933/1934, the procedures were softened and some works were abandoned. Coffee nursery beds were multiplied although the task of putting coffee plants in baskets was abandoned. The propaganda region

108. Letter from the Resident of Rwanda addressed to territorial administrators, 28th December 1931.

¹⁸⁹ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1932, p.13.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 1933, p.145.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 1930, p.106.

¹⁹² Classe, letter addressed to the priest of Vicariate of Rwanda, 1st August 1933.

was reduced to cover only those regions where previous trials were positive as far as coffee growing was concerned. Hence, areas like Kanage, Rubengera, and Astrida Central plateau and Gitarama, Mayaga and some regions and the territories of Byumba, Kibungo and Kigali were declared to be less suitable regions for coffee growing. The coordination of coffee trade was done by the “*Office du Café indigène du Ruanda-Urundi* (OCIRU)”. This body was created in 1945.

The first coffee growers did not see the rationale of introducing this crop to Rwanda; they actually ignored its importance. This situation was complicated by asking farmers to spare the best land for coffee and to prepare the land regularly to avoid being punished. The first coffee seedlings were planted near settlements, in areas which were originally used for seasonal crops or even in banana plantations which were destroyed. In addition, there was no coffee popularization campaign in place. Nor was there technical training given to peasants.

The period of general lack of knowledge about coffee growing and use lasted for almost four years. It was at a time when first harvests were made and after making important sales that the interest in the crop became obvious. The use of money became widespread and was used to satisfy many needs. From 1933, this was the period of coffee growing which was more or less voluntary. The introduction of coffee on the agricultural landscape became, without doubt, a fundamental change in Rwanda's agricultural calendar and it improved the economy of households. Considering the period of coffee growing and the labor involved, the introduction of coffee growing implied three major phases of an equal importance.

The first event was marked by collective works of preparing nursery beds, transplanting seedling lings, placing young plants in plots previously arranged and finally preparing the transplanting gardens. During the phase of preparing nursery beds, every sub-chief was supposed to coerce the laborers to prepare beds of coffee seedlings on hill tops in his area of jurisdiction. Then, every household head chose a plot which was prepared for seedlings. The ground was prepared with the help of an Agricultural Assistant. The sub-chief distributed the plants to household heads each of whom received 50 plants.

Thereafter, the planting process started. This was done towards October or during April. The previous duties consisted of mulching or regular weeding with frequent use of manure. The introduction of manure pits in rural areas was linked to the introduction of coffee growing. In addition to this labor, other techniques to take care of the coffee were introduced: planting and harvesting of coffee beans as well as the removal of pests that attacked the young plants. Every farmer had to present himself before a sub-chief with a bottle full of a pesticides to demonstrate that the latter effectively participated in the fight against pests. This measure ended with the introduction of D.D.T between 1946 and 1947.

The supervision and implementation campaigns were organized by chiefs, sub-chiefs and Territorial administrators. If the work was done belatedly and if there was poor management of the plantations, coffee farmers usually paid very dearly for it and the sub-chiefs were often severely given corporal punishment or demoted.

The coffee growing exercise was at first done manually by the farmer and his family. Farmers used the “drying method” as the common technique. It consisted of spreading coffee seeds on mats or tables made of reeds (*intara*) and putting them under the sun to dry for several days. When they dried up, coffee husks were carefully separated from the seeds¹⁹³. From 1951, the “moist method” was introduced and largely disseminated. It consisted of putting coffee grains in the pulp-removing machine. Water was added to the machine and then the machine was hand-turned in order to separate seed from husk and pulp. Thereafter, the farmers dried the seed. The introduction of this method went hand in hand with the installation of the pulp-removing machines in all coffee growing areas by the Belgian administration.

The colonial administration justified the imposition of coffee in several ways. For them, coffee was chosen among other crops which had been tested such as cotton, tobacco and palm oil. The imposition of coffee was based on a three-fold objective:

- Rwanda had joined an international trade and therefore the production and export of industrial-related crops was to become a new source of income

¹⁹³ See the instructions of King Mutara Rudahigwa « Uburyo bwo gutunganya kahwa », in *Kinyarwanda*, no. 1, 1st September 1933.

- to feed the national coffers.
- Coffee growing was advantageous because of the economic value attached to it; it was on the increase since the 8th Century.
 - The coffee farmer was called upon to join the peasant in a new cash economy by allowing him to earn some money and participate in trade and commerce¹⁹⁴.

Effectively, coffee played an important role in improving incomes of some homesteads which produced it. It provided regular financial income. According to the Belgian administration report of 1959, coffee alone represented 48% of family revenue¹⁹⁵. This percentage would have increased if those who were charged with pricing this product had not fixed very low prices for the same.

Storage of beans (*guhunika*)

Launched in 1948, the compulsory storage of beans was the last coercion activity that took place in Rwanda. It dealt with beans and entailed another form of coercion, namely storing it.

The beginning of bean storage was directly linked to the construction of silos by coerced laborers at sub-chieftaincy level. In the beginning, beans were stored in huts of small capacity. These were constructed near residences of sub-chiefs. In 1950, these huts were replaced by silos made of bricks and thatched with tiles. These new silos were built near roads.

Several shelves were constructed inside the silos and on each of these were placed several pots made of clay containing beans. Married laborers as well as peasants, mission workers, European and state laborers were responsible for storing beans. The stocks were made immediately after the “*Umuhindo*” harvest (the short rains between September and December). If the harvest was poor, the farmers viewed this with apprehension; no reason could justify the lack of beans for storage. In this case, the solution was to buy beans from other areas where the harvest was good especially in Murera, Cyingogo and Bugoyi.

¹⁹⁴ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1930, p.106.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 1959, p.40.

The amount of kilograms of stocked beans varied. In the beginning it was fixed at 100 kgs. But it was soon discovered that this quantity was too high. That is why the quantity was reduced by a half in 1947, i.e. 50 kgs. Later in 1949, it was further reduced to 20 Kgs.

Beans were stocked because they provided food for homesteads and because every homestead could produce them. In regions where cow-peas were grown, both beans and cow-peas were stocked. The authorities attached a small tag on every pot on which the name of the owner was written. Later, they put a small stick in the pot with the owner's name.

Storage became unpopular because it demanded night supervision by all laborers in the sub-region. Only government workers and those who worked for Europeans and missionaries were exempted. Those who did night supervision spent the night in the silos. Sometimes, they stole the beans or replaced good quality beans with poor quality ones. They gave good quality beans to their friends or exchanged them for beer. Even sub-chiefs did the same. This process continued until the stocks in the silos were half empty.

At the time of distribution, some people found their pots empty although night guards were supposed to keep watch. This resulted into compelling everyone not to exceed the minimum weight and especially to stock beans of very poor quality. Lastly, due to poor storage conditions and maintenance, beans were attacked by bean-weevils or were destroyed by rain water. Thus bean-storage became unpopular because people did not see its rationale; it only served the interests of sub-chiefs and some few opportunists. In the end, bean-storage was abolished on request of the Higher National Council.

➤ **Communal works of national or regional interest**

These works consisted of constructing and repairing roads, planting trees and fighting against soil erosion.

Reforestation

In all sub-chieftaincies, the administration implemented a policy according to which every sub-chief had to plant trees to produce

wood for the people under their jurisdiction. Trees had to be planted by the entire population which benefited from them. The colonial administration enforced this policy in the following way: “(...) the administration does not want isolated, separate small plantations of trees without proper supervision; trees shall be planted on sampled land where cash crops are not grown, i.e. around farmers’ settlements; the tree-planting exercise must therefore be a collective exercise (...)”¹⁹⁶.

The cattle keepers viewed the tree planting exercise with a bad eye. This coercion together with the *shiku* led to the reduction of pastures. That is why some sub-chiefs did not strictly supervise the planting of proposed tree species. A technical department was charged with selecting the required species while the afforestation department was overseen by the sub-chief. Labor was provided by coerced people. In general, barren land was chosen to plant trees. Nursery beds were established along main roads and on top of hill, in valleys and marshlands to facilitate the supervision process by administration agents.

The most planted tree species was eucalyptus and black wattle. The latter was outcompeted by eucalyptus owing to their quick growth to satisfy the needs of the population in terms of wood. The coerced laborers were involved in taking care of newly planted trees. The tree planting exercise had another justification. From the economic point of view, carpenters in local markets needed wood for construction. For the rest of the population, wood was a new source of energy especially in regions without natural forests. Lastly, the colonial administration deemed it urgent to establish massive forests to control rain seasons as stated in the annual report of 1948: “(...) it is uncontestable that if the unreliability of rain is a major cause of famine, then the quality of soils and their ability to retain rain waters are important factors which must be given special attention. That is why the fight against soil erosion has to be undertaken”¹⁹⁷.

By imposing these labor activities, the Belgians considerably increased the burden of peasants. For more than 10 years, the country became as a vast zone of coerced labor of a new type. As a result, the tax payer no longer worked for himself. That is why the most active population preferred to migrate. The departure of

¹⁹⁶ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1928, p.76.

¹⁹⁷ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1948, p.6.

the active population aggravated food shortages in some regions.

Construction and repair of roads

Road construction was imposed to facilitate trade. It eased the administration of the country and linked it to the outside world. The establishment of road networks constituted a very difficult task which was imposed to Rwandan laborers. The burden of road works became increasingly heavy and took along time to complete especially if it involved constructing major and secondary roads as well as small feeder roads and paths for travelers¹⁹⁸.

The construction and repair of major roads demanded considerable labor. The laborers lived far from the construction site and were obliged to make long distances before reporting for duty. Every sub-chief had a specific number of laborers who were sent to the road construction site. The number of workers was often determined by the total number of people in every sub-chieftaincy.

The organization of road works for major and feeder roads was the responsibility of the territorial administrator who was assisted by clerks (*abakarani*). These were charged with technical training. The area where roads were constructed was divided, on daily basis, into small plots where every sub-chieftaincy was supposed to complete its task. In so doing, stiff competition existed between sub-chiefs. Some sub-chieftainces coerced their laborers into working beyond recommended hours without giving them any break. Even people who were exempted from doing hard labor were also asked to provide services. They included widows and widowers, mission employees as well those who worked for Europeans and for the state. Whereas sub-chiefs and other supervisors worked with a lot of zeal, the peasants were very passive. Work was done in a disorganized manner. The workers and the supervisor played hide-and-seek game. There were crowds of laborers who became complicated to manage owing to their big numbers.

The repair of feeder roads and paths for travelers was under the exclusive responsibility of the sub-chieftaincy. Every sub-chieftaincy had its boundaries. For road construction and repair,

¹⁹⁸ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1957, p.86.

the laborers used a hand hoe and a basket. There was totally no use of machines. The use of rudimentary tools increased the burden of laborers. The latter became jerks for all trades. In cases where the household head migrated to escape forced labor, his wife and children were supposed to replace him during collective works to deliver customary services.

Fight against soil erosion

The beginning of the fight against soil erosion started in 1946. It was brutally introduced to the population who never understood its rationale at all. The digging of erosion trenches was totally against to customary practices of digging along slopes and gradients. The fight against erosion was not systematically estimated in advance. Technical training was given by a European agricultural Officer who was helped by a native Agricultural Assistant. The bulk of the work was done by the native laborer. The colonial system led to abuses in the provision of native labor. The colonialists did not liberate peasants as portrayed in the colonial and missionary literature. On the contrary, they contributed to increasing the vulnerability of the population especially in matters related to satisfying food needs.

j. Customary services

Pre-colonial Rwanda had very many taxes, coerced labor services and customary works. Some of these are recent. They played an important role in shaping the social and political life of the people. Belgium set itself the goal of improving the social economic conditions of the masses by abolishing what it considered to be burdens of the traditional system. As mentioned above, Belgium's dilemma was its wish to protect the weak. But it achieved this by strengthening those who were powerful.

➤ Uburetwa

The institution of *Uburetwa* consisted of an "obligation whereby every man had to work for two days during the traditional week that was made of five days. The latter worked for the administrative chief without any compensation whatsoever". In the 1950s, the *Uburetwa* and *Ubuhake* institutions were presented as a form exploitation of the Hutu by the Tutsi during the pre-colonial era¹⁹⁹. The validity of the above statement should be confirmed

¹⁹⁹ Bourgois, R., 1954, op.cit, T.2, pp.84-86 ; Murego, D., *La révolution rwandaise, 1959 1962*, Louvain, 1975, p. 249.

after considering a complexity of factors.

In 1902, Father A. Brard, the founder of the first Rwandan Catholic Mission in Save identified two categories of Hutus, namely the *Ingabo* and *Ibiretwa*, in other words, people who were supposed to implement forced labor²⁰⁰. In one way or another, other documents have equally referred to the existence of *Uburetwa* in Rwanda. For example, in 1907, J. Czekanowski described the social organization of Rwanda by saying that the *Biretwa* were among the four social classes in Rwanda, “that is to say a group of free peasants without land titles. They cultivated crown land and offered 2 to 3 days of forced labor per week for the tribal chief (...)”. As for Defawe who was a Belgian civil servant, he noted in 1920 that among the “Wahutu”, two classes of people could be identified, namely the “*Bagaragu*” or pastoral clients and the “*Biretwa*”²⁰¹. At the beginning of the Belgian colonization, forced labor done for the Rwandan authorities was of diversified nature. It was characterized by looking after cattle (*kuragira inka*), cleaning the kraal (*gukuka*), cultivating in the garden (*guhinga*), night watchman ship (*kurarira*), construction and repair of residences of the authorities’ dependants (*kubaka inkike*), and carrying items on the head (*guheka*).

By opting to govern with the Tutsi aristocracy, the Germans and Belgians gave more weight to the delegates of the Royal court who in turn mobilized laborers to perform services and works of all sorts. The regions which enjoyed autonomy lost it in favor of Tutsi chiefs who were posted there by the colonial administration.

Before the introduction of colonial reforms, every homestead (*urugo*) provided labor services for a period of two days per week of the traditional week, in other words, 146 days per year. In 1924, the *Uburetwa* labor system was reduced to 42 days per year, that is to say two days per week, according to the European week of seven days²⁰². Registers were kept to monitor the attendance of laborers and the work done. It should be noted that excess days done were not even reported in the register. In 1927, the Residence reduced the services provided under the *Uburetwa* system for every adult male to a period of one day per week (a

²⁰⁰ Brard A., letter of the priest to the Superior General of the White Fathers of 8th February 1902.

²⁰¹ Defawe, *Eléments essentiels de l’organisation politique et sociale du Rwanda*, Bruxelles, 9 novembre 1920 : archives Africaines AI [4370] 6 bis, p.6.

²⁰² Ministère des Colonies, *Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1924*, p.7.

seven-day week), in other words a maximum of 13 days per year.

For the Belgians, this reform represented progress. However, this new policy was seen as more burdensome by the providers of this labor. Before 1900, the *Uburetwa* system was based on lineages (*Umuryango* or *Inzu*) and its representative could be relieved of this burden on behalf of all the group members. Compared to the period prior to colonization, this situation changed because the family authority and solidarity were undermined. The “rationale” behind the institution of *Uburetwa* introduced by the Belgians was that forced labor done by a group of people was less burdensome than that performed by an individual. In other words, *Uburetwa* was henceforth performed by more people than before. In addition, the system was even extended to Rwanda’s northern regions where the practice was originally unknown.

In 1933, another royal decree reduced the number of days for performing *Uburetwa* to 13 days per year for the chief and 10 days per year for the sub-chief. Under the *Ubuhake* framework, even the *Bagaragu* were forced to provide annual labor services.

From 1936, the principle of paying for the *Uburetwa* services was accepted for natives who worked in European companies²⁰³. Up to that time, the colonial authority considered *Uburetwa* as an expression of subordination and obedience of the subject *vis-à-vis* their chiefs and sub-chiefs²⁰⁴. On the eve of the Second World War, the monetizing of *Uburetwa* services was extended to other categories, namely workers employed on contract, administration employees, herdsmen owning at least 10 heads of cattle, seasonal workers who were absent from their homes for at least 9 months in a year and catechists²⁰⁵. These included natives who were not living in their customary environment, i.e. those who were economically active. In 1944, the monetization of services was made optional for all coerced laborers, and its value was fixed at 19.5 Francs. The monetization of services was later made obligatory with effect from 1949.

At first, the colonial administration generalized this new *Uburetwa* arrangement by trying to protect people against its abuses. The administration was against its abolition and eventually gave

²⁰³ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel de l’administration belge, 1936, p.66.

²⁰⁴ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel de l’administration belge, 1933, p.71 ; see also the commentaries of Mgr Classe on this point, in Rutayisire, P., 1987, op cit.

²⁰⁵ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel de l’administration belge, 1939-1944 p.36.

in to its replacement by a tax. This was how bureaucracy got introduced in administrative system.

➤ **Ubuhake**

When the Europeans introduced a new factor of production and put in place the means to acquire it, they fundamentally changed the mentality and behavior of the traditional masters *vis-à-vis* their servants/ clients. Thus, the introduction of a cash economy gave rise to the accumulation of wealth outside the traditionally accepted norms. The cash economy helped to revolutionize power relations and dependence between generations and sexes as well as between authorities and subjects.

During the period of German colonization and the period of Belgian military occupation (1916-1926), there was no significant change as far as the “*Ubuhake*” institution was concerned. It is worth noting, however, that the first Catholic missionaries behaved like masters (*ba shebuja*) towards those who resided in the missions and continued to be regarded as such in Zaza Mission.

From the politico-administrative point of view, various measures were put in place by the Belgians to undermine the system of *Ubuhake*. The latter retained its original aspect, namely the relationship between a wealthy person with a lot of cattle and a poor person who was at the mercy of his master asking for at least one cow.²⁰⁶

From 1926, the first changes were noticeable in the way the colonial administration intervened in matters related to the system of *Ubuhake*. In fulfilling his duty as judge, the king was assisted by a European officer. The Western legal system influenced the settlement of disputes in Nyanza. Among the most important cases tried by the king at his court of appeal were disputes on the system of *Ubuhake*. The Europeans intervened in trials to enforce justice between masters and their clients. This happened between King Rudahigwa and Kayondo.

Some administrative decisions were also made to restrict the scope of *Ubuhake* system. For example, it led to the abolition of “*imponoke cows*”, that is to say, cows given to the master by the client to replace the king’s cattle which were hit by cattle diseases

²⁰⁶ Nkulikiyimfura J. N., 1994, op.cit., pp. 138-139.

or the “*indabukirano*”; this arrangement also covered cows given by lineages to chiefs or deputy-chiefs after their appointment²⁰⁷ as well as the ban on chiefs or deputy-chiefs to become servants or clients of two masters at the same time²⁰⁸. These changes simplified the delivery of services by servants with effect from 1st January 1932.

The provincial chiefs had to stay at the king’s court for only 15 days; the deputy chiefs stayed there for a period of 10 to 12 days per year²⁰⁹. The 1936 report by the Ruanda-Urundi administrative authorities noted serious absenteeism by servants who were always away from their homes; they were supposed to fulfil their duties as *Abagaragu* (servants) according to the new colonial arrangement²¹⁰. Meanwhile, conflicts between servants and masters became so common that each side thought of terminating its *Ubuhake* contract. In effect, clients were no longer afraid of breaking such ties.

From July 1939, in order to reduce the master-servant conflicts and in order to provide reference documents to facilitate the mitigation and settlement of disputes, the colonial administration and the king tried to codify customs and practices on *Ubuhake*. A document was henceforth produced after a series of consultations. It was entitled “*isezerano ry’ubugaragu*” meaning “*the client’s contract*”. It was published on 1st August 1941 and came into force with effect from January 1942. This contract aimed at reassuring pastoral masters. The most important of these were chiefs and deputy-chiefs. This legal text consisted of 23 articles: two of these stated the obligations of *Shebuja* (master), eight articles defined the obligations of *mugaragu*’s (client), four articles talked about mutual services between both sides, and one article dealt with the *mugaragu*’s rights. The “client’s contract” put emphasis on the obligations of the *umugaragu* but it ignored the rights of *Shebuja*. On the other hand, *Shebuja* contract neglected the rights of *Umugaragu*.

Article 2 of this contract advised masters and clients/servants to have their contracts registered. It compelled all those who did not conclude contracts to do so with effect from 1st January

²⁰⁷ Service order 2213/ Order of September 26th, 1924.

²⁰⁸ Bourgeois R., 1954, op.cit., p.24.

²⁰⁹ Idem

²¹⁰ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel de l’administration belge. 1936, pp. 65-66.

1942. Article 23 of the same contract stipulated that, in case of any dispute between the master and client, these two parties would resort to a fifty-fifty sharing-deal as it was done in Nyanza. However, the majority of clients remained under the system of *Ubuhake*, without subscribing to *Uubuhake* contract for fear of reprisals from their masters.

Generally speaking, a few contracts were concluded in writing after 1942. Since that time, cases of terminated *Ubugaragu* contracts increased year after year. This break with the past came as a result of a change of attitude whereby the old clientelist arrangement ceased to be accepted, and was looked at with resignation²¹¹.

The *Ubuhake* system became unpopular especially due to the 1926-1931 reforms which put an end to the “social militia”. The former rights were translated into a “pastoral bondage contract”²¹². The dismissed leaders wanted to maintain their grip on the cattle of their ancient warriors while newly invested chiefs thought that they were entitled to the prerogatives enjoyed by the former chiefs whom they had replaced. Some took advantage of the arrangements by the new administration and took some of the livestock which they once looked after as stewards of former state-owned herds. In many cases, clients who did not want to follow their dismissed *shebuja* sought the protection from a powerful chief. It should be noted that only very few of them followed their former masters.

In response to many colonial demands, some people became pastoral clients of chiefs and deputy-chiefs in order to avoid the rigors and burden of coerced unpaid labor. Other cattle owners gave their cows to their neighbors who helped them to cultivate obligatory food and cash crops, and to those who participated in the afforestation program, etc.

King Rudahigwa expressed his wish to “completely abolish the *Ubuhake* pastoral serfdom” from 1946. As for Governor Jungers, he preferred to wait, believing that the abolition of this system would be accompanied by a new law on pastures. In

²¹¹ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration belge, 1946, p. 47

²¹² Kagame, A., 1952, op.cit., P.7; Kagame, A., 1975, op.cit., pp 209-216; Reyntjens, F., 1985, p. 199, note 7; Bourgeois R., mistakenly thought that *ubuhake* was less important (Bourgeois, R., 1954, op.cit., t.2, p. 272)

the meantime, he conducted an opinion survey among chiefs in 1946 to obtain their views on its abolition. In developing the ten-year development plan, the proposed abolition of *Ubuhake* system was maintained. But the advice of the colonial circles was that they should act with caution to avoid upheavals from areas where the system was liked. This was because Belgian officials considered the abolition of *Ubuhake* system as a revolutionary measure. They feared that its abolition would give rise to discontent among the people.

In 1952, King Rudahigwa once again expressed his concern about the harmful effects of the *Ubuhake* institution. He had this to say: “(...) of all the problems we are confronted with, it is undoubtedly that of the abolition of *Ubuhake* which is the most complex and delicate affair to handle. Also, I think that, with regard to this serious problem, time has come to make it known to all the Banyarwanda that the intentions of those who have taken over the administration of our nation’s destinies are (...) Abolishing *ubuhake* has been under consideration since 1950, when the 10 year plan was developed. European and indigenous authorities agree that this abolition is necessary and this is the solution to the problem of livestock surplus”²¹³.

The objectives of abolishing the *Ubuhake* institution were:

- To establish individual ownership of livestock;
- To ensure that there was individual freedom through a fair sharing process that would allow all the Banyarwanda to engage in work of their choice without being bound to respect labor services resulting from the *Ubuhake* contract concluded by their ancestors.
- To create the freedom of trade between the master and former client, to the extent that the latter could sell his cattle as he so wished without having to wait for the approval of his “master”;
- To encourage the development of individual initiative.

The Royal Order 1/54 of 1st April 1964 determined the cow-sharing arrangements between pastoral masters and their clients. The operation began in Nyanza Territory on 15th April. For several months, this arrangement was optional in other

²¹³ Mutara Rudahigwa, “Projet de suppression du régime féodal (*Ubuhake*) », in *L’Ami*, n° 90, juin 1952, pp. 105-109.

territories in the country. It was extended to other territories by the Orders of 3rd August 1954 and 24th January 1956. The courts were mobilized to assist in cattle-sharing sessions which were sometimes preceded by trials. Since then, the number of cattle-sharing cases and shared cows increased steadily.

The abolition of *Ubughake* left the problem of pastures unsolved. In 1934, Rwanda had 1,572,527 inhabitants, 624,102 heads of cattle and 1,263,400 hectares of virgin land that could be used for grazing. Thus, each cattle had approximately 2 hectares of grazing land. In 1955, Rwanda had 2,309,499 inhabitants, 579,831 heads of cattle and grazing land of 875,619 hectares, that is, 1.6 hectares per cattle.

The ten-year development plan made a provision on the increasing number of men and cattle. It gave no other choice other than confining people and cattle to land that had become increasingly smaller. The plan supported the abolition of *Ubughake* and the possibility of selling large numbers of cattle although did not happen.

As a result, former clients who were now free from *Ubughake* system could no longer graze their cattle in their former masters' grazing lands as it originally happened. Henceforth, they had to pay an annual rent in order to enjoy their former grazing rights. Although some pasture owners did not charge fees, others did so. This outraged cattle owners who had no pasture reserves. They were obliged to pay 100 Francs per cow to pasture owners during dry seasons. In 1957, the *Kinyamateka* newspaper devoted many articles on the issue of grazing.²¹⁴ There were people who tried to prove that they enjoyed some rights on fallow-land located near their concessions (*isambu*). Others thought that the institution of free grazing was accompanied by the settlement of farmers on farming land. The discontent that prevailed was generated by the *Ibikingi* pasture system. According to some Rwandan authors, the *Ubughake* system was one of the factors that undermined the Rwandan society. It was on the increase from the 1950s.

When the decree of 14th July 1952 on political and administrative reorganization of Ruanda-Urundi was published, the *Ubughake* system was cited as one of the most outdated institutions that needed reform or abolition, to say the least. For King Rudahigwa, this decree did not only commit the traditional administration to

²¹⁴ For example *Kinyamateka* of April 1st 1957; October 1st and November 15th 1957

a process of sustained progress, but it also ushered the country into a new democratic system that was particularly characterized by the electoral system. Moreover, the decree on *Ubuhake* laid down the foundation for the transformation of Rwanda into a modern state. The king had this to say: “ (...) in this way, Rwanda could progress instead of getting marred into the feudal *Ubuhake* institution which was both obsolete and outdated”²¹⁵. However, in 1958, some Tutsi and Hutu elites lauded the *Ubuhake* institution saying that it played a key role in building healthy relations between Rwanda’s two social classes.

The *Ubuhake* institution was denounced and fought relentlessly by Joseph Habyarimana (also known as Gitera). As for Grégoire Kayibanda, during the aftermath of the inauguration of the first session of the Higher National Council (CSP) in 1954, he made the following comments on the *Ubuhake* institution: “(...) it seems that the problem is hard to solve [...] destroying not only the practice and spirit of *Ubuhake* as soon as possible. The feudal mentality was in fact built on falsehood, the art of sowing discord, unrealistic policies in order to favor X and Y and kill a rival, consequently, causing mistrust, hatred and other faults of this nature. This is the canker which is most opposed to the assimilation of Western contribution”²¹⁶.

The logic against “Tutsi colonialism” was simple to understand. It was absolutely necessary to fight the institution of *Ubuhake* which was the core practice of the Hutu-Tutsi problem, and above all its mentality. Since 1954, the *Ubuhake* institution was identified as a “Tutsi” practice, which did not correspond to reality. It was considered as “an ulcer (*nkongwa*)” which people had to fight. The media of the day as well as political songs and slogans continued to de-campaign the *Ubuhake* institution and those who advocated for it, that is to say the Tutsi and some Hutu who were described as advocates of apartheid (“*bagashakabuhake*”). It should be noted that colonial and missionary literature as well as research works done by the ‘Scientific Research Institute in Central Africa’ (IRSAC)²¹⁷ located in Astrida played an important role in this divisive discourse. The elite of the 1950s seriously read and circulated this literature.

²¹⁵ “Speech by the King of Ruanda, Charles Mutara Rudahigwa during the inaugural speech of the Higher National Council”, in *L’Ami*, n° 111, March, 1954, p. 101.

²¹⁶ *L’ami*, n° 112, April, 1954, p. 129.

²¹⁷ Abbreviation from the French designation: ‘*Institut des Recherches Scientifiques en Afrique Centrale*’

The standardization of customary practices increased the oppressive nature of the social and political relations. Some authors spoke of 'dual colonialism' to emphasize the colonial pact between two colonizers, namely the Belgians and the Tutsi elite, both of whom contributed to the "emergence of a social stratum poised with increasingly pronounced ethnic consciousness"²¹⁸. But it would be naive to put the actions of the Tutsi elite on an equal footing with that of the European administration.

k. Some consequences of the colonial burdens

Food crises

Most of the above mentioned steps were taken to cope with repeated food crises facing the country. Repetitive famine resulted into heavy losses of lives. There were periodic food shortages which reflected the fragile nature of the Rwandan economy, hence the inevitability of a possible upheaval, however mild it would be²¹⁹.

In addition to its repetitive nature, famine in Rwanda was always regional. This was mainly due to the uneven distribution of rainfall. The low-land areas especially in the east had low rainfall. This region was frequently subjected to drought, leading to famine. On the other hand, highlands were sometimes spared. Heavy rainfall also caused food shortages. The causes of food shortage in Rwanda were primarily due to natural factors like rainfall unreliability. Long droughts or heavy rains became obstacles to normal agricultural activities and this severely affected the growth of seasonal crops. In the previous sections, we have already alluded to *Rumanura* famine that struck the North. The famine of 1924/1924 known as "*Gakwege*" and "*Rwakayihura*" of 1928/1929 were both caused by prolonged droughts; they were also aggravated by intensified colonial impositions. The last famine in the eastern part of the country was indeed fatal. It left 80,000 people dead and more than 100,000 people migrated in search of food.

During the Second World War, Rwanda was involved in

²¹⁸ Reyntjens, F., 1985, op.cit. p. 176.

²¹⁹ Everaerts, E., *Monographie agricole du Ruanda-Urund*, Bruxelles, Ministère des Colonies, 1947; Guichaoua A., *Destins paysans et politiques agraires en Afrique centrale*, tome I, Paris, l'Harmattan, 1989.

supporting the war effort. Since Rwanda's status as a mandate did not allow Belgium to mobilize troops in this country, war effort basically focused on the provision of food items. In return, the native producer got derisory prices set by government. The main items delivered were foodstuffs and beef. The Belgians bought cows on the local market at very low prices and resold them at higher prices. The market price for cows was fixed by veterinary officers.

As a result of the constant delivery of food supplies, a prolonged drought ravaged the country. This happened for two consecutive years and the population was forced to sell their beans at less than 1 Franc per kilogram. The produce was sold to some European intermediaries who carried the supplies to the mining Centers in Belgian Congo. The commodities exported to the Congo were sold at a profit of 5 Francs per kilogram. The logical consequence was that a great famine known as the *Ruzagayura* hit the country. On this was added the wrath of forced labor (*corvée in French*) which resulted into a series of migrations of many Rwandans to neighboring countries. It should be noted that no administrative staff dared to report the presence of this calamity officially. Governor Jungers' reports concentrated on praising the well-being of the population especially during the 10 years of his leadership. In October 1943, the Catholic Missions reported to the Metropolitan government about the deaths that were caused by starvation and described the Rwandan people as countless, skinny and starving²²⁰.

Governor Jungers immediately ordered the suspension of the delivery of food items to the Congo. Instead, food started arriving from there. The Catholic missions became food distribution centers. An investigation was conducted on what was euphemistically called "cattle purchase" which was ostensibly blatant theft. Native cattle owners were coerced, under the penalty of arrest, into bringing their fat cows to their regular cattle markets in every chieftaincy. Every cow owner had his name written down. His cow was taken away in exchange for only 5 Francs! This was blatant theft because official intermediaries forced farmers to give them cows at take-away prices but sold them

²²⁰ King Rudahigwa was busy with preparations for his baptism; he did not report the alarming situation of food scarcity among the population, and Governor Jungers criticized him for it.

at exorbitant prices, for example each head of cattle was valued at 5,000 Francs at least! These intermediaries conspired with the Europeans and native administrative staff. An investigation into this matter led to the arrest of one European and one chief.

Migration trends

Without doubt, there was a link between various colonial/traditional abuses described above and the migration that Rwanda experienced during the colonial period. However, there were other causes of this migration.

The high density of Rwandan population and pressure on land were some of the other causative factors for their departure. As for the migration to Belgian Congo, it was associated with “a numerous and explosive population that was attracted to areas of very low population densities across the border²²¹”. Moreover, there were socio-economic factors that compelled Rwandans to migrate. In fact, host countries offered more favorable living conditions. This was true of Uganda. Not only was it easy to find money there, but also the labor system in Uganda was not as hard and unfair like in Rwanda. Rwandans preferred to sell their labor where they were well remunerated. But migration to Belgian Congo was partly facilitated and supported by the colonial authority.

Internal migrations were few and mainly consisted of population movements in search of food in areas unaffected by food crises. These movements were temporary, spontaneous and were often unregistered. Another form of internal migration was that of populations from chieftaincies to non-traditional centers. It was a rural-urban migration. This movement was not pronounced during the colonial period because of the poor rate of urbanization in Ruanda-Urundi.

The written documents by colonialists and missionaries propagated the image of Rwandans as home-bound and lazy people²²². Facts contradicted this assertion because, during colonization and thanks to the economic development of the neighboring countries, the Rwandese who migrated en *masse* in

²²¹ Gourou, P., *La destinée de la population au Ruanda-Urundi : Esquisse d'une étude géographique*, Bruxelles, Institut Colonial Belge, 1953, p. 184.

²²² Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1928, p. 72.

search of fortune worked hard in those countries.

Despite the existence of laws regulating migration, Rwandans migrants broke these laws. Thus, according to the decree of 19th July 1926, and its implementation ordinance No. 54 of 31st October 1941, no native from Ruanda-Urundi could leave the country without a passport²²³. However, many Rwandese and Burundians went to the British East Africa sphere of influence without any identification papers. That is why migration statistics should be looked at with caution.

Migration to British East Africa

This was characterized by the emigration of Rwandan labor force to Uganda, Tanganyika and to some extent, to Kenya. These migratory shifts took place during the German colonial period but intensified as a result of the economic development of host regions.

The first migratory movements were directed to 'Tanganyika Territory' which together with Ruanda-Urundi formed the "*Deutsche Ostafrika*". The densely populated Rwanda and Burundi were regarded by German authorities as the reservoir of labor force for the entire colony. In 1912, a commission was set up to study the possibility of resettling a portion of the population of Ruanda-Urundi at the Indian Ocean Coast. Indeed, some Rwandese were taken there and they worked in the sisal plantations at the coast.

After the departure of the Germans, the migration trend shifted from Tanganyika to the North, namely to Uganda which offered better economic conditions. This migration started in the 1920s because the Rwandan and Burundian labor force was needed in the cotton, coffee and banana plantations. They were also employed in road construction works. This growth contrasted with the unpleasant situation in which many Rwandans lived in their home country. While there was hard and unpaid forced labor in Rwanda, the British colonies offered paid work. The poor country-folk Rwandese worked for wealthier people and earned money. Thus the Rwandese were reluctant to devote themselves to coerced labor conditions in their country. Instead, when they went to countries with better working conditions, they did not

²²³ Ibid., 1948, p. 113.

remain idle or lazy²²⁴.

The influx of emigrants to Uganda occurred in three major phases. There was a movement which started in 1920 and intensified in 1926/1927. This took place under the support of the British authorities, following the notorious famine of 1928/1929. The second phase, 1933-1947, was characterized by young people who migrated in big numbers. This migration was amplified by the World Economic Crisis and the Second World War. The third phase described as “settlement phase” took place between 1948 and 1960. It corresponded to the end of the war and the decolonization process. The migration movement to Uganda was generally a rural-rural one; it was both free and seasonal. It was sometimes a mass movement of people. This made it the most significant migration in terms of numbers. An estimated 50,000 Rwandans, that is to say one male adult out of six, migrated every year in the late 1920s. Until 1959, almost 350,000 and 35,000 Rwandans moved to Uganda and Tanganyika respectively.

Migration towards Belgian Congo

This massive movement of people depended on two distinct factors: the resettlement of rural populations in Belgian Congo’s plantations and the labor force migration to mining concessions. Both forms of migration were directed and planned by the colonial authority. On the one hand, they wanted to use the abundant labor force from Ruanda-Urundi in exploiting the abundant wealth of Belgian Congo. On the other hand, they also wanted to reduce the high population densities of Rwanda by allowing citizens of these countries to settle in neighboring Congo.

The resettlement of the Rwandan population which was done out of demographic and economic reasons was directed to Kivu region. White settlers were in need of sufficient labor force to work in the Kivu plantations. In 1927, a commission was set up to study this point but the migration plan was implemented in 1937. It targeted settling pastoral farmers in Gishari. In effect, between 1937 and 1946, Gishari was almost saturated with over 23,000 Rwandan families²²⁵.

The second plan of this vast resettlement scheme was spearheaded

²²⁴ Chrétien, J. P., « Des sédentaires devenus migrants. Les motifs des départs des Burundais et des Rwandais vers l’Uganda (1920-1960) », in *Culture et développement*, X, 1, 1978.

²²⁵ Guichaoua, A., *Le problème des réfugiés rwandais et les populations Banyarwanda dans la région des Grands Lacs africains*, Université de Lille, 1992.

by the *Banyarwanda Immigration Mission* (MIB)²²⁶. It focused on Bwito and Mokoto regions in the administrative territories of Masisi and Rutchuru. Overall, Rwandans occupied more than 150,000 hectares in Kivu. To attract more rural masses, MIB offered better benefits and facilities, including free transport, food supply, exemption from traditional forced labor, provision of schools, dispensaries, veterinary clinics, etc. The first phase took place from 1937 to 1945. It corresponded to the establishment of major agricultural concessions in Kivu region. The second phase lasted from 1949 to 1956. This was characterized by the most exceptional development of these concessions. Emigrants were mostly from the North-Western region of Ruhengeri and Byumba owing to the geographical proximity that enabled easy movement of the population across the border. This migration ceased with the demise of MIB.

The colonial power legitimized this form of emigration by presenting it as a humanitarian action intended to assist the Rwandese and Congolese populations. It was meant to relieve Rwanda from overpopulation and to develop the sparsely populated areas of Kivu region, considered to be almost similar to Rwanda in all respects. This would enable the resettled Rwandese to maintain their way of life²²⁷. This emigration was indeed economically motivated as opposed to its humanitarian character. It was the European settlers who took advantage of this type of migration.

Migration of labor-force to mining concessions

In line with the arrangement to resettle the Rwandese in North Kivu, another arrangement was made to send some other Rwandese to the Congolese mining concessions to meet the challenges of labor shortage there. Recruitment was done by large mining corporations such as the '*Société des Mines d'Or de Kilo Moto*' (The Kilo Moto Gold Mine Company), the '*Compagnie Minière des Grands Lacs*' (the Great Lakes Mining Company), the '*Comité National du Kivu*' (the Kivu National Committee). And finally, there was the infamous '*Union Minière du Haut Katanga*' (U.M.H.K.), i.e. the 'Upper Katanga Mining Corporation.'

These companies had limited funds. They were thus unable

²²⁶ An abbreviation from the French designation: '*Mission Immigration Banyarwanda*'

²²⁷ Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l'administration belge, 1927, p. 64.

to transport more than 300 laborers per month. Transport for these laborers was supposed to be free. During recruitment, the company was primarily concerned with the workers' productivity. It is for this reason that those who wanted to be hired were first subjected to a medical test. The U.M.H.K established a program defining recruitment conditions. In most cases, those who left tended to stay in the host country; they renewed their contracts at the end of three years. This type of migration was based on purely economic reasons and exclusively benefited the colonists and the mining companies.

The movement of migrants to the Congo mines and especially to Katanga was minor compared to other migrants to other parts. This was due to the geographical distance involved between the departure point and the final destination. In other words, huge sums of money were needed to transport emigrants. In addition, other parameters limited the scope of this emigration such as the difficulties in the management of workers, the unfaithful character of Rwandans, disease and high mortality rates in camps, etc.

The repercussions that accompanied the migration trends were strongly felt in Rwanda at all levels. They were basically demographic, economic, sociological and political. Thus, between 1935 and 1942, the Rwandan population was reduced in terms of manpower by 29,513 people who went to the Congo and 158.920 people who escaped to Eastern Africa²²⁸. The migration trend was instrumental in changing Rwanda's population structure to the extent that it affected a large part of adult males, thus altering the country's age and sex distribution. There were also decreasing birth and marriage rates due to male migration to Uganda. In some areas, girls were compelled to migrate to look for marriage partners. In short, many areas lost many young people. Thus, many families came under the care and responsibility of women. Another consequence was that since people escaped from the wrath of forced labor and paying crushing taxes, those who remained behind suffered from the burden of such abuses. The strict nature of both the native authority and colonial administrations noted the decrease of coerced laborers in the country. Unlike what was reported by the Belgian authorities that conditions were better during the colonial period, it seems

²²⁸ Gatanazi, N. A., *Migration des populations rwandaises dans la région africaine des grands lacs*, Dakar, 1971 ; Ruzibiza H., *Population et développement agricole au Rwanda. Contribution à l'étude démo-agraire*, Thèse de Doctorat, Paris, s.d. ; Bagaye Uwamahoro M.C., *L'évolution de la population rwandaise de 1922 à 1978*, Mémoire UNR, Butare, 2001.

that, on the contrary, the fate of the natives deteriorated more than ever before²²⁹.

1. Social and cultural policy

➤ The political impact of Catholic Missions

In 1916, the arrival of the Belgians marked a new phase in the delivery of missionary services. The privileges and government grants encouraged the extension of their social and religious actions. The invasion of Rwanda by Belgian troops increased the potential attraction of the missions. Between the departure period of the Germans and the arrival of Belgians, there was a transitional period which was exploited by missionaries to extend their influence.

The post of Save became a stop-over during World War I on request of the colonial government. Father Huntzinger was charged with overseeing the action plan and was assisted by all neighboring chiefs. His competence increased with the arrival of the Belgians. He personally had this to say: "I did not hesitate at all, and, in agreement with Belgian authorities, I temporarily took over the leadership of the country"²³⁰. The priest's intention was laudable. He wanted to spare the region of Bwanamukari from atrocities and destruction that had taken place in Bugoyi. Without informing the top authority, Father Huntzinger transformed himself into a real military leader.

His main task was to give food and material supplies to troops and facilitate the recruitment of porters. He was helped by Christian assistants who replaced village chiefs in executing orders from Save. He was deputized by G. Mbonnyubwabo who enriched himself as a result of his rank. He also imprisoned, expropriated and gave corporal punishments to stubborn and disobedient village leaders. There were 36 imprisonment cases identified by P. Gorju. Some subordinates took the opportunity of the political vacuum created to get rid of chiefs or masters who had collaborated with Germans.

Father Huntzinger occupied an important administrative position during the operations of the military occupation. His intervention in Nyanza was testimony of his political role. In a

²²⁹ Liden, I., 1977, *op.cit.*, P. 187.

²³⁰ Visite canonique du Père Gorju, correspondance, doc. 112026 bis, A.P.B.

new policy implemented by Major Declerk, it was decided that in order to avoid misunderstandings with King Musinga, all dealings with the Father had to be stopped. Hence, a new post was established at Irango in July 1917.

Nyanza did not tolerate Father Huntzinger's interference in administrative matters. King Musinga asked for and obtained the arrest of all Christians who had served as leaders during the war. Father Huntzinger left the country on 25th April 1918²³¹. This was the last attempt by a missionary to exercise direct political control over the region. In other posts of Nyundo, Rwaza, and Zaza, the missionaries also took advantage of the upheavals caused by war to replace chiefs in neighboring regions with Christians. However, this did not reach the extent of Save. Father Huntzinger and his associates wanted to expand the influence of the mission by taking advantage of the political vacuum left behind by the departure of the Germans.

In 1921, Bishop Classe replaced Bishop Hirth as the Apostolic Vicar. This choice was a guarantee for better collaboration between Catholic Missions and the new political leadership. The Bishop collaborated with natives and enjoyed the sympathy of the Belgians. When the Belgian troops entered Rwanda, they gave special treatment to Catholic missionaries. According to Article 8 of the Mandate, Belgium was supposed to ensure freedom of conscience and freedom of worship to the colonized people. They granted all missionaries, who were from member states of the League of Nations, the opportunity to stay in Rwanda and facilitated them in their activities.

But in practice, the Belgians were very selective as far as dealing with religious denominations was concerned. Some religions like Islam and African traditional religions were prohibited. Other religions like Catholicism and the *Société belge des missionnaires protestants* (SBMP) were tolerated and supported. Belgium argued that it was her right as a mandatory power to support some missions through grants, property, compensation for services rendered, exemptions, etc. In addition, the mandatory authority was inspired by Christian institutions and practices which were not contrary to their system. Hence, Belgium applied the 1906 Convention with the Vatican which gave grants to the Catholic Missions in Belgian Congo.

The Belgians did not support the presence of many Protestant

²³¹ See the document by Father Gorju.

sects for fear of sectarian conflicts. In this way, they basically supported Catholic Missionaries. The Belgians colonial administrators and the Catholic Missionaries collaborated closely in the fields of health and education. The colonial administration signed contracts for cooperation and funded many missionary projects.

By giving favors to Catholics, the Belgians wished to express their gratitude to the White Fathers for the services rendered during the war. The influence of Catholic Missionaries in Belgian colonies exceeded that of the Anglo-Saxons. In 1921, the local government gave a grant of 56,675 Belgian Francs to the Diocese of Kivu. This Diocese included the Catholic missions of Rwanda and Burundi. In the fiscal year 1924, Belgian grants were increased to 70,000 Francs, and later to 150,000 Francs in 1925, 200,000 Francs in 1927 and 210,429.35 Francs in 1931.

The Catholic Church provided services and expressed allegiance to the colonial state in return for the given grants. Undoubtedly, some of the missionary activities were funded by the generous Belgian government. The State offered grants to construct churches in Kigali, Astrida, Zaza and Mibirizi. The rationale behind this funding was to fight against witchcraft. In fact, the colonial government wanted to take advantage of the Catholic Church to extend its influence because its administrative system was still weak. In addition, the church preached obedience to civil authority, for example paying taxes and fulfilling other various obligations. All testimonies at that time converged on the partnership between missions and the colonial state. The financial donations were added to the acquisition of estates, relief from customs duty and funding linguistic and sociological studies. This assistance stimulated the unreserved dedication of missionaries to the colonial cause. Under the influence of Bishop Classe, the White Fathers were worried by the Protestants who supported British penetration. The Anglican Mission at Gahini was maintained because the English had accepted to give up Eastern Rwanda; this was a region which was occupied under the Orts-Milner agreements of 1919-1922. Bishop Classe's strategy was to fight against this danger through intellectual and spiritual means. On the other hand, the Residence authorities were determined to fight it politically.

The two parties agreed on the principle of colonization between

the Catholic Church and the colonial administrators. However, minor conflicts between individuals existed. This happened especially between the administrator and Father Huntzinger. These disputes were settled amicably and ended up in administrative transfers. It was absolutely necessary to establish an image of understanding between the two powers. The only complaint by the Ministry of Colonies was the small numbers of Belgians missionaries present in Rwanda. The missionaries who were on the ground were predominantly French. It was not until the end of the Second World War that Belgian missionaries also started settling *en masse* in Ruanda-Urundi.

The Catholic Church got a lot of benefits from this collaboration. Among these was the procurement of financial support to establish a strong infrastructure. The colonial government provided basic infrastructure needed for evangelization. In return, the missions contributed by pacifying local communities. The only disadvantage of the Catholic Church was its compromise with the colonial enterprise. The colonial government intervened in religious matters, for example in the appointment Father Classe as the Apostolic Vicar. This was the case during the succession affair of Bishop Hirth. Under Ryckmans who deputized the Resident in 1921, the colonial authorities dealt with the White Fathers instead of directly addressing the matter to the Vatican.

Through diplomatic channels, the Vatican was informed of Belgium's support to the candidacy of Father Classe. The same applied to the replacement of Bishop Gorju in 1936. The Government indicated that they wanted an Apostolic Vicar of Belgian nationality and hence Graus was appointed as Bishop. The government politicized church matters and this led to serious consequences in the management of the Church in Rwanda and Burundi. The missionaries considered Belgians as "natural allies" because they were citizens from a "Catholic" country. Hence, they worked together in managing the country. The fields of education and health were completely or partially entrusted to missionaries at the request of the Belgians.

At the end of the day, Catholicism became Rwanda's state religion. Many Rwandans converted to Catholicism as a result of mere obedience to the order from above but not out of spiritual conviction. The orders were from the colonizers, native administrative assistants and missionaries. Catholicism

became a mass religion in which external factors became more important than personal commitments.

For many years, Catholicism was viewed as a sign of progress and a perfect spiritual ideal. In the 1960s, the missionary press referred to Rwanda as a “Christian nation”, a “Christian kingdom” and a “Christian Republic”. The tragedies that befell the country later on shattered all these ideological and theological beliefs.

On the eve of independence, the Catholic Mission dominated the whole national space through the ownership of numerous centers. They controlled missionary stations including all major and sub-branches, schools, hospitals and health centers. Only a few areas were occupied by Protestants and Muslims. All these centers, including administrative ones, were seen as the cradle of a new civilization; they became a source of new ideas, new ways of living, new behavior, new attitudes, all of which were introduced by the colonizers and missionaries. The political turmoil of the 1950s also originated within such centers and their immediate environs.

In making Catholicism a State religion, the role of the Tutsi aristocracy was decisive. To begin with, after WWI, it was the “*intore*” young nobles from King Musinga’s court who secretly attended religious teachings provided by the Catholic missionaries and their native assistants.²³² In 1916, several rare adult members of the ruling class attended catechism classes. In 1920, the conflict between King Musinga and some senior chiefs led to the movement of a few discreet Tutsi chiefs who had converted to Catholicism. The latter were not driven by spiritual motives; they were inspired by political considerations. This happened because the European administration saw conversion to Catholicism as a sign of acceptance of the colonial power. Nyanza School for sons of chiefs was used as a tool to convert the nobility to Christianity. The school was established under the instigation of Administrator Leenaerts, Father Classe and their teaching staff. The Rwandan youth openly embraced Catholicism and King Musinga could not stop this movement.

The conversion movement intensified in 1925 after undermining

²³² Note that the first group of converts from Save included 7 poor Tutsi children and 17 Hutu children. In Gisaka, several Tutsi sought to escape the influence of Tutsi chiefs in Nduga and wanted to become catechists.

King Musing's authority. This caused a change in attitude by the aristocracy *vis-à-vis* the monarchy. Many chiefs approached Europeans and encouraged their children and subjects to attend the missionary school. In the 1930s, mass conversions to Catholicism were referred to as a "tornado". This was a term used for the first time in a special issue of the *Grands Lacs (Great Lakes)* journal on the progress of evangelization in Rwanda. Its full title was: "*Là où l'Esprit souffle comme une tornade: un document une épopée*" translated as "a place where the Spirit blows like a tornado: a document, an epic". The Rwandese called this movement "*irivuze umwami*" or "the king's order never fails". It was based on the prevailing opinion that King Rudahigwa was thought to have ordered all his subjects to get baptized in the Catholic Church. Although such an order was never given as such, it is true that the king supported the move to convert his subjects to Catholicism.

The Catholic conversion tornado was hailed as the greatest achievement of the Catholic Church on the African continent. Thanks to the annual increase in the number of Christians, especially in 1933 and 1934, Rwanda held the highest world missionary record²³³. The *tornado* was celebrated as the miracle that God's finger had used to write on a white spot in the centre of this African land - Rwanda. It was here that, 60 years ago, this white spot signified an unexplored land or an unknown land on the geographical map²³⁴. Some missionaries were however opposed to the wave of the *tornado*; they proposed to mitigate its strength by first strengthening the faith of the converted Christians. A missionary who was discouraged by the negative mass conversions said that "if it was possible, they should concentrate on baptizing three quarters of the converted Christians"²³⁵. The movement of mass conversions to Catholicism reached its peak in 1943 with the baptism of the king and the queen mother. This was followed by the official consecration of Rwanda to Christianity in 1946.

Apart from converting a few village chiefs or petty local notables, the Protestants did not attract many converts. A systematic persecution was directed against Rwanda's traditional religion which was considered as both heathen and hostile to progress.

²³³ Lacger, (de), 1959, op.cit., p. 689.

²³⁴ Grands Lacs, n° spécial sur le Rwanda, op.cit.

²³⁵ Righi, P., cited by Rutayisire P., 2009, op.cit., p. 117

The main actors in this repressive movement were missionaries who collaborated with Christian chiefs, the clergy, catechists as well as the *bakuru b'inama* (local Christian leaders). Some Christians who wanted to be praised by the mission persecuted leaders of Rwanda's traditional religions. The administrative authority mobilized police raids against Nyabingi sect²³⁶. In short, this period was characterized by religious intolerance and violence. This was achieved through crack-down campaigns on sorcerers and followers of the traditional religion. The result was to force the latter to practice their religion secretly.

➤ **Resumption of Protestant Missions**

The beginning of Bethel Mission was modest owing to inadequate resources in terms of men and equipment. During the hostilities of WWI, several stations in Zinga, Kirinda, Remera and Ruhengeri were closed. At the end of the war, there was nothing left regarding the old missionary foundations in Kigali, Zinga, Rukira and the *Pied-à- terre* of Nyanza. The Protestant missionaries left concurrently with German troops.

The recovery was very difficult due to the Catholic monopolistic ambitions. Nevertheless, the projects to revive Protestant stations of the SBMP were supported by King Musinga and some Belgian circles who wanted the Protestant Church to compete with the Catholic Church. In addition, conflicts between King Musinga and the Catholic Church forced the former to recruit Protestants as his new allies. As for Brussels, it rejected the proposal by the Adventist Church to open up missions in Rwanda because it was alleged that the latter were fighting for Black people's rights. The SBMP offer to the Ministry of Colonies came at the right time. It facilitated the consolidation of the Belgian influence, but the Missionary Society reserved the right to associate with foreign missionaries who were speaking national languages. The Belgian government also gave grants to the SBMP.

The first years of recovery yielded poor results due to financial problems. The Protestant organizations got government funds from church donations and fundraisings. As for salaries, travel expenses and equipment costs as well as the running of the secretariat were offset by funds sent from Europe. This state of poverty impacted on the development of the Protestant Missions.

²³⁶ For instance in Rwamagana, in *Diary of Rwamagana Mission*, March 24th, 1925

The catechists and workers were not paid; they therefore turned to richer Catholic Missions. In addition, there was no unity among the three stations run by SBMP, i.e. Kirinda, Remera and Rubengera. In the end, this led to personal and ideological disputes among the missionaries. The SBMP would have solved this problem if, like the Catholics, it had applied for membership to the Educational Convention which was signed in 1929 between the Belgian government and the Catholic Church. This would have enabled it to acquire skilled teaching staff and equipment.

For all these reasons, SBMP was unable to compete with the Catholic Missions which were more equipped with grants from the Colonial government. In addition, Catholics were supported by the Belgian Ministry of Colonies. Although SBMP was in an embarrassing and paradoxical situation, the government encouraged its presence and closed the door to other foreign applicants. But the Belgian public questioned the validity of grants given to SBMP. Since the latter was headed by Heyden. He was a German Pastor who worried Belgians. The central government mistrusted the Protestant denominations of Anglo-Saxon origin because they considered these as supporters of England which wanted to gain ground in Rwanda. Although CMS was not expelled, its request to start new stations was categorically rejected. By limiting the establishment of Protestant Churches, the state encouraged the conversion to Catholicism at the expense of SBMP.

➤ **Education policy**

In the field of education, the work of the Germans was rather insignificant. It was thanks to the missionaries that the development of education effectively took off. The White Fathers opened a school at the royal court to teach young nobles. The curriculum offered was supposed to be purely secular and all religious education was abolished. This school was run by catechists who came from Uganda, namely Tobi Kabati and Elias. They were later replaced by two Rwandan Christians in 1906, i.e. Prestanci and Wilhelmi. King Musinga himself embarked on learning Swahili and ended up acquiring the skills of reading and writing. In the eyes of missionaries, this school had the advantage of penetrating the political and aristocratic circles of the country. This helped them to start the work of evangelization secretly²³⁷.

²³⁷ ERNY P., *De l'éducation traditionnelle à l'enseignement moderne au Rwanda (1900-*

In every Catholic Mission which was founded, there were premises provided for elementary education of boys and girls. This was under the supervision of a Catholic priest. In 1905, there were 10 schools. This number rose to 33 in 1910, with a total enrollment of 1, 250 pupils a quarter of whom were girls. Among the conditions required for someone to get baptized, the unmarried novices were supposed to have basic knowledge in reading and writing.²³⁸ The catechists who opened up missionary branches were basically concerned with religious teaching; they served as teachers for children of school-going age and for adults who were not yet married.

In 1909, the White Sisters appeared on the scene and indeed, their contribution to education was significant. Effectively, the contribution of women to education reached a remarkable level of development than in the missions which were run by Catholic priests or wives of Protestant Pastors.

In 1912, Mgr Hirth wrote the first document which was intended to guide the organization of education in the colony. He identified three sections:

- Children aged from 7 to 12 years met 4 times a week for one hour; they attended lessons of reading; they were taught education and songs.
- The intermediate group was made of novices aged from 12 to 15 years; they met three times a week for a similar program. The lessons were preceded by mass.
- The grown-ups and youth from 18 to 20 years who were more advanced in age followed a specified timetable which covered a whole morning session. The lessons given were based on catechism. Those who were trained as future seminarians were attached to this group for 2 years. The first seminarians were trained at Rubya from 1904 on Lake Victoria. In 1930, they established their mission in Kansi and later in 1914 at Kabgayi where the first priests in Rwanda were ordained in 1917²³⁹.

1975), Volume I, PhD Thesis, University of Strasburg II, 1978.

²³⁸ Mgr. Hirth, Instructions, 1912.

²³⁹ Reberaho Donat was the first Rwandan priest who originated from Save. He speaks about the methods and atmosphere of the first seminarians. See « Reberaho Donat, « Le premier décédé des prêtres du Rwanda (1885 1925) », in *Grands Lacs*, no 154, 1952, pp. 6 26

Under the German rule, the most important factor in the field of education was the dynamism of Christian institutions, especially the Catholics and the modesty of official projects. The missionaries attached a lot of importance on training an autonomous clergy and catechists. They gave them basic literacy skills linked to religious education. The missions were facilitated by pastoral activities. They initiated the work of evangelization by putting emphasis on the youth. They initiated a program of civilization that conformed to Christian values. The children of the baptized people were given appropriate education. The converts were also given an unshakable religious foundation. The elites were trained to become future cadres with a religious background. They were given quick training which transformed them into a local clergy, with maximum leverage and power to handle Church institutions within emergent societies. The aim of the missionaries was not to train a class of intellectuals but a Christian elite capable of supporting the administration of the missions. On this issue, Father Lupias had this to say: “(...) we don’t intend to have intellectuals but we shall be satisfied if, through the school system we shall manage to train an elite of Christians who are enlightened and capable of propagating faith amongst them. The important subject is not reading or writing but religious education”²⁴⁰

At school therefore, moral and Christian values for young people took precedence over intellectual training. The goals of Church education and those of the colonial administrators did not necessarily coincide. The fact that the Church was forced to train administrative clerks was a big threat to the missionary enterprise.

Despite a certain degree of similarity in their objectives and methods, the educational program of the missions in Rwanda, like elsewhere in Africa, was conducted in an environment of competition charged with inter-denominational conflict. At the level of the common man, the relationships were sometimes not good. Schools were built in big numbers; they aimed at snatching children and imposing their religious beliefs on them. The Vicar’s report of 1933 commented on this issue as follows: “(...) because of the neighborhood of two heterogeneous missions, we are forced to have many schools and good schools (...) The school has become a powerful tool in the fight against competing groups,

²⁴⁰ Nkabuwakabili, A., *L’enseignement primaire au Rwanda avant la deuxième guerre mondiale (1900-1939)*, BA dissertation, Louvain, U.C.L., 1971, P.24.

ours is henceforth also involved in this fight. These gentlemen have finally recognized that the school has given us an upper hand in the country and has attracted the youth of the ruling class. We have made a strong start forward; it is true but it is just a starting point (...). For them, it is not too late and they are vigorously taking up the responsibility”²⁴¹

Whereas administrative authorities settled in key centers, missions were preferably established in rural areas. The latter were less open to foreign influences. It was here that many modest village schools were established with the aim of training catechists. Emphasis on basic education was one of the characteristics of missionary education. This education went hand in hand with the provision of hygiene and health services and the opening of workshops of all types. Some people have criticized the usefulness of this type of education, especially those who are interested in professional schools. In its report, the colonial administration also complained about the system of education which targeted the lowest strata of society. The upper class of society was sidelined. For all intents and purposes, the village school heavily impacted on transforming the Rwandan society right from the missions which became the epi-centre for developing a new society.

With the arrival of the Belgians in 1916, the White Fathers reinforced their position. The new regime was more favorable to Catholic Church than the previous one. By giving missions the freedom to extend their school network, the new colonial authorities started to implement a project of creating four state schools in Cyangugu, Ruhengeri, Gatsibo and Rukira. The student population in these schools was 265 in 1925 but this number rose to 677 in 1929. Note that this was their final year of existence.

At the royal court of Nyanza, a primary school of better quality was started for sons of chiefs. It replaced the school founded by the White Fathers in 1900. Its aim was to prepare sons of chiefs for routine duties and responsibilities as well as training them to become clerks in the colonial administration. Others were trained to become inspectors of government schools. For the Tutsi children whose parents were neither chiefs nor sub-chiefs, they were trained to become clerks.²⁴² In 1923, the missionary

²⁴¹ Ibid, 1971, op. cit., p. 44.

²⁴² Ministère des Colonies, Rapport annuel sur l’administration, 1923, p. 29.

institution was headed by a European head teacher who was deputized by 3 supervisors. It ran a program of three years in Swahili followed by one year of specialization in administration. Some notions of French were introduced in second year and a lesson of moral education replaced religious education.

The curriculum gave special importance to lessons on modern physical education. As time went on, the duration of studies was prolonged to six years. In 1925, the school enrollment was 349 students. In that year, 78 secretaries and 59 sons of chiefs were trained to help the priests with their administrative duties. In 1929, the teaching of Swahili was abolished under the pretext that it encouraged the promotion of Islam. The missionaries considered Nyanza School with skepticism because it entailed a: "(...) mixture which is a challenge to the most elementary psychology. Married men were separated for 10 to 12 months from their wives, the youth and children for 12 years and this conglomeration cannot be supervised beyond class hours. Every one sleeps wherever they can (...) the school is located in the worst place, the most stinking place that one could imagine, i.e. in the royal court of Musinga"²⁴³

Other educational institutions "strictly reserved for sons of chiefs and notables of Tutsi race" were in less satisfactory conditions compared to Nyanza School. The pupils were forced by the administration to come to school and were threatened to pay fines. The school buildings were rudimentary. The teachers often had no authority to enforce discipline to individuals of higher rank and sometimes their students were older than them. The colonial administration recognized that these schools were of "very little value". From 1930, they were integrated within the subsidized free institutions under the supervision of the Catholic Church. The Nyanza School was transferred to Astrida from 1932 to become the *groupe scolaire* d'Astrida. It was run by the Gand Brothers of Charity.

All along the colonial period, the catholic authorities controlled and monopolized secular education given to the future elite which was supposed to be above the ranks of customary aristocracy. After 1925, the position of Catholic Missions was clear: they had the right to educate leaders. The schools which they founded were a result of their deeds and evangelization. The

²⁴³ Société des Missionnaires d'Afrique, Annual Reports of 1929-1930, p.303.

assistance given by the State was done out of justice and the institutions they established belonged to them permanently and not temporarily²⁴⁴. It was therefore understandable that they despised all types of institutions which enjoyed state support. This was the case of the 'Groupe scolaire of Astrida' whose management was run by the religious. The hostility expressed in funding Protestant schools officially led to the removal of this protection. This led to the declaration of the introduction of secular education.

The education policy in Congo influenced the trend and practice of Rwanda's education. It was characterized by moral education which was supposed to result from evangelization. This education gave priority to the policy of collaboration between the missions and official schools. It encouraged and adopted educational programs of State Missions by putting in place a system of grants. Thus, in 1924 a system of free education in the Belgian Congo started. In this system, official schools which operated by the state were distinct. Free subsidized schools were run by *state missions*, that is to say with headquarters in Belgium, operated by Belgians and with two thirds of Belgian missionaries operating them; they were non-subsidized free schools run by private funds. Education was therefore in the hands of the Belgian Catholic Church.

In Rwanda, the year 1925 was characterized by a withdrawal from an official secular education system to a state-controlled system whereby *state missions* operated schools on the basis of conventions and subsidies. On 1st January 1930, before the contracts were signed for these reforms, a transitory regime was put in place. The reasons for changing this policy were the same like in Belgian Congo. They were detailed in the report on Belgian administration in Ruanda-Urundi of 1925. "The religious missions were better qualified and better equipped than all other institutions in providing education across the entire country. They received special training on education. And, having been preoccupied with and specialized in evangelization as well as promoting the study of local language and native psychology, and having stayed in the same area for a longer period than government civil servants, Catholic missionaries became the best educationists for the native people. In addition, they were

²⁴⁴ Vase R.P.E., *Vade mecum: A Guide for the head teacher*, which summarizes the religious theories of 1929 on the Christian education of the youth

involved for many years in training supporting staff to perform all sorts of jobs: training an indigenous clergy, training catechists and artisans, etc. The major objective of the missions was to provide religious education. But evangelization in itself entailed a minimum degree of general education. It was therefore the duty of the state to provide sufficient grants to religious missions to enable them obtain school equipment and develop the curriculum. This is what the administration of the mandatory territory endeavored to achieve by relying on state grants.

According to the terms of the contract, missionaries were committed to providing buildings, furniture, equipment and recruitment of staff. The grants were given according to the criteria of class or school and in accordance with the level of education and the number of students and teachers. An allowance was given to missionary inspectors. The teachers were supposed to hold a diploma after completing three years in a teacher training college. Graduate teachers were employed on temporary basis. In 1938, 36 central schools, 340 rural schools and 540 instructors plus 64 female instructors were subsidized by the state for the Catholic Church whereas 694 Sunday schools remained without any assistance. Non-state missions were excluded from the system of grants.

The organization of education was the same like in Congo. In primary school, there were two cycles. On the one hand, there were rural schools or Sunday schools whose program ran for two years. On the other hand, there were central schools which ran for three years at the Headquarters of the Mission. French was the language of instruction from the 4th year. It replaced Swahili as second language. In the long run, they envisaged a wide range of post-primary and secondary schools with a special department to train clerks, primary school teachers, workshop heads, etc. The sons of chiefs and Tutsi notables were supposed to receive special education which was more skilled and appropriate. Seminaries continued to play an important role in training the intellectual elite. For along time, seminaries were the only genuine secondary and high learning institutions and, the first generation of cadres and intellectuals passed through them.

The educational goals and objectives were closely linked to the realities on the ground such as farming and manual work. They advocated for reducing literary education to the minimum; they

taught arithmetic lessons and vernacular, they motivated pupils to learn agriculture and initiated them to job-oriented education, traditional technology, etc. The school zones corresponded to religious zones, in other words, the Rwanda Vicariate became “a genuine Ministry of Public Education”. It was under the control of government authorities and it enjoyed much more freedom. In 1925, 20,000 students were given state grants of 8,000 Francs. This figure increased to 88,000 students of whom 28,000 were subsidized by 75,000 Francs in 1935. In 1945, the number of students rose to 100,000 out of whom 30,000 were subsidized by 2,800,000 Francs. Mgr Classe put all school activities in the hands of the evangelists in the Vicariate. He did not like to see religious congregations dealing directly with the administration. He was strongly doubtful of the existence of official schools whose management was handled by religious people because, in his opinion, they were potentially secular²⁴⁵. It should be noted that the education for female students did not move at the same pace like that of boys. It developed in missions where there was female staff.

4.2.3. The Trusteeship (1946-1962)

After the Second World War (WW2), the League of Nations gave way to the United Nations Organization (UNO). Rwanda was placed under a Trusteeship on 13th December 1946. This was the effective date when the Trusteeship accord was approved and signed by the General Assembly of the UNO. The Trusteeship accord envisaged a specified period at the end of which the territory under Trusteeship would become an independent and sovereign state. The fundamental objective of the International Trusteeship Program was to prepare the inhabitants under protection to evolve politically and progressively until they were mature enough to administer themselves and later accede to independence. The mission for protecting the country was the following: “(...) the authority charged with the administration will encourage the promotion of indigenous institutions which correspond to the interest of Ruanda-Urundi. To this effect, the Trusteeship Authority will give a chance to the inhabitants of Ruanda-Urundi to participate increasingly in the administration and providing local and central services in the territory, to promote the participation of inhabitants in a representative

²⁴⁵ See the turbulent report with Brothers Charity of the *Groupe Scolaire* and with the White Sisters

democracy among the population in appropriate conditions and specific circumstances, to take all measures possible to ensure political evolution of the population of Ruanda-Urundi”²⁴⁶

As far as international politics and diplomacy were concerned, there was no fundamental difference between the mandatory system of the Trusteeship in terms of obligations and powers of the metropolitan power. However, from the structural point of view, the Trusteeship brought changes in the implementation of its resolutions and its visiting teams which made it possible to make follow-up missions that were organized at regular intervals to monitor the progress achieved in the territories under the Trusteeship such as allowing indigenous people to express themselves. In practice, the Trusteeship authority did not implement the mandatory system as it was defined by the Pact of the League of Nations. This was because Rwanda was put at the status of a colony at the same level with Belgian Congo in spite of the direct rule advocated by the Treaty of Versailles and the principal of the respect of rights of the colonized people or those under the mandate.

c. Challenges on the eve of decolonization

The period which began in 1946 was characterized by several events which unfolded one after the other. This happened at a supersonic speed up to the ethnic violence of 1959 and the advent of the Republican regime in 1962. These developments considerably shaped the ways of life of many Rwandese and are still fresh in both their individual and collective minds. It is therefore understandable why the interpretation of these events is still a subject of controversy.

After the Second World War, the movement of liberating colonies was in top gear. The new organization of the United Nations recognized the right of nations to attain self determination. The colonies and territories under the Trusteeship were supposed to prepare themselves for self-rule first and independence later.

Nonetheless, the political evolution of Rwanda was described by the UNO as being slow. The observations made by the different UNO visiting teams to the territory under the Belgian

²⁴⁶ The United Nations Organization, UNO Trusteeship Council report of the UNO visiting mission to Ruanda-Urundi, 1948, New York, pp. 9-10.

Trusteeship concurred on this point. As for the 1948 visiting mission, while it expressed “its admiration for constructive action of the Trusteeship authorities in the economic fields”, it was reported as being “shaken by the fact that the political evolution of the Territory was considered as a process of extreme sluggishness”. The conclusion of this report expressed its wish to see this evolution accelerated. The second visiting team of 1951 led to the remark that the “political evolution denoted a certain degree of retardation”. The third visiting team of 1954 regretted that “the political process was relegated to a second position”.

It was under this framework of preparing Rwanda for autonomy that a ten-year development plan (1951-1961) was developed²⁴⁷. This plan, which primarily aimed at achieving social economic development of the people of Rwanda and Burundi, solved a big problem because, hitherto, the country was administered without any clear direction. In the framework of this plan, many achievements were realized in several areas especially in the provision of health and infrastructure as well as in the field of agriculture. But the biggest problem faced in implementing this plan was that the masses were obliged to carry out forced labor together with other colonial burdens. This explains partly why there was a big influx of migrants to bordering countries, namely in the British colonies. This made the ten years that preceded independence to be characterized by social strife and crisis.

The abolition of *Ubugake* took place on 1st April 1954. This was a reform advocated by King Mutara III Rudahigwa from 1948 but which had relatively limited impact on the people. Surely, it enabled the contracting parties to share livestock distributed under the *Ubugake* institution. However, the reform left the problems of pastures (*Ibikingi*) still unsolved. There was livestock distribution without corresponding distribution of pastures.²⁴⁸ According to the statistical figures of 31st December 1956 on livestock distribution, more masters (*Shebuja*) frequently asked for livestock distribution than clients (*Abagaragu*). The figures indicated 32,702 masters against 31,858 clients.

²⁴⁷ Plan décennal pour le développement économique et sociale du Ruanda-Urundi, édition Vissher, Bruxelles, 1951, Kageruka, C., *Analyse et critique du plan décennal pour le développement socio-économique du Ruanda-Urundi (1951 1961)*, Mémoire, Université Nationale du Rwanda, Butare, 1999.

²⁴⁸ Interview held on 18th November 2004

The distribution requested for by the two parties represented a weak proportion, i.e. 12,938 for a total of 79,641²⁴⁹, between 1956 and 1958. Thus, the rate of distribution and the number of cows shared increased regularly.

In this context, the political reforms initiated by the royal decree of 14th July 1952 gave way to some small political space by enabling a certain degree of representation in the Consultative Councils created at the level of the sub-chieftaincy, chieftaincy and in the territories as well as at national level (Higher National Council *or CSP*). But in the final analysis, these new structures were dominated by the Tutsi elite. The latter were privileged by the system. This discrepancy led to frustrations among those who were excluded, especially the Hutu elite. But in addition, a big fraction of the Tutsi elite were frustrated. It was therefore not by accident that the beginning of the second term of these councils was characterized by political disputes in 1956.

From 1955, the King and the High National Council (*CSP*) insisted that the text of reference of 1952 be reformed. During their visit to Europe on 29th and 30th September 1955, the kings from Ruanda-Urundi raised many questions and proposals on the modifications to be made on the decree of 14th July 1952. For example, the King of Rwanda proposed that more than 30 modifications be discussed at the Higher National Council.²⁵⁰

There were four reform proposals vehemently supported by the King of Rwanda. The first one was the modification of the relationship between the king and Resident. King Rudahigwa presented this request at first in an indirect way by proposing a change of the ambiguous status of his adviser. He had this to say: "(...) I would like in the first place to see that my advisor depends directly and exclusively on the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi and not on the Rwandan Resident. My adviser should effectively and frequently defend points of views which are not those accepted by the Resident and he must equally have all the freedom to give me ideas and advice which are not automatically similar to those which the Resident wants to see me adopt. However it is impossible for him to fulfill this function in total independence if he is under the Resident who is his senior in terms of hierarchy. In the second place, my adviser and the Resident must be treated

²⁴⁹ Bourgeois S R., *L'évolution du contrat de bail à cheptel au Ruanda-Urundi, 1958*, pp.36-39.

²⁵⁰ 1^{ère} direction de la 2^e direction générale, Hon. Minister's address of 25th October 1956.

on equal footing. Consequently there should be a rank which is equal the District Commissar (...). This civil servant should be responsible to the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi in terms of hierarchy as in the case of a Provincial Chief”(...)”²⁵¹

The King of Rwanda did not wholeheartedly support the Trusteeship of the Resident. His major problem was that the Resident exercised his authority on him through Council and through veto. That is why the King of Rwanda asked that the collaboration between him and the administration establish a rank of Vice-Governor General. The king also proposed that the pre-eminence of the king on the Resident and on junior members of the administrative hierarchy be recognized. He proposed that the appointment and the destitution of the *King* should only come from the Vice-Governor General or better still from the Minister, the Parliament and even the Belgian King himself. Nevertheless, the answer to all these requests was negative. The king’s proposal was: “(...) judged unacceptable because there is still need of a European authority which is strong enough and uncontestable. Freedom from the Trusteeship administration and the africanization of national cadres is judged to be premature (...) it is so because the proposal represents a disguised autonomy. It may undermine and reduce the respect of the current administrative hierarchy. It may cause problems of insubordination vis-à-vis the European personnel as well as the use of government technical services (...)”²⁵²

The king of Rwanda also asked that the chairmanship of Higher National Council be reserved to the chairman elected by his colleagues because he wanted to stand firm on the principal that the king must rule and does not govern and that it was necessary to separate these two functions. These proposals by the *King* were also ruled to be unacceptable because of “general lack of political maturity by the population as well as some members of the Higher National Council”. The technical service of the minister concluded his note address with the following remarks: “(...) there is surely in Ruanda-Urundi a powerful opinion movement towards democratization from which the Kings have, from now on, nursed the idea that there is need for profound reform in the current political structure and that, as a result, ~~there is need~~ to give a chance for this evolution to take place”²⁵³

²⁵¹ Van Hoech, A. Vice Governor General, 16th August 1955 ,

²⁵² Halleux D., Complementary notes to the Honorable Minister of 15th June 1956,

²⁵³ 1^{ère} direction de la 2e direction générale, Notes for the Honorable Minister 28th April 1956.

The instructions given were that nothing should be changed. The government remained armed and vigilant against any eventuality regarding anything that threatened the political structure of the country²⁵⁴. The Vice Governor General accepted the post of Vice President of Higher National Council (CSP). The election of the members of the Council of the Sub-Chieftaincy was proposed by CSP as follows: “(...) CSP proposes to substitute the election by the population. The agents of the minister of the colony have declared in the discussions that the composition shall be turned upside down because the Hutu are the majority; this argument did not pleased the participant”²⁵⁵.

Meanwhile, the *King* of Rwanda clearly expressed his opinion that he did not fear such an eventuality and that he wanted to put his people’s genuine preferences under consideration²⁵⁶. The Ministerial Technical Committee was convinced that there was no urgency in reforming the decree of 1952. This was because it produced the desired changes. “The Batutsi exerted a strong influence on the Bahutu”. The Bahutu managed to send representatives to the Higher National Council. And then, the debate ensued: “the opinion of the Bahutu is generally defended”²⁵⁷; this corresponds to the reality on the ground. The *King* of Rwanda asked for the election of the Council by the people. “This proposal was ruled unacceptable given the general lack of political maturity of the population”²⁵⁸. The minister rallied behind the proposals of the Vice-Governor General, namely not to rush anything²⁵⁹. The last proposal was to attach to the king’s team a section of “Technical Ministries” in a form of service chiefs. The response from the Trusteeship was the same. The *King* would get “advisors” and not “ministers” because “time had not yet come”²⁶⁰. There was also the danger of “politicizing” problems²⁶¹.

These proposals and demands were seen as a sign of “latent nationalism emanating from the hard-line position taken by the Higher National Council members” of Ruanda and the proof

²⁵⁴ 1^{ère} direction de la 2e direction générale, Notes for the Honorable Minister 25th October 1956.

²⁵⁵ Paulus J.P., Notes for the Honorable Minister 26th September & 1955.

²⁵⁶ 1^{ère} direction de la 2e direction générale, Notes for the Honorable Minister 28th April 1956.

²⁵⁷ 1^{ère} direction de la 2e direction générale, Notes for the Honorable Minister 28th April 1956.

²⁵⁸ Opinion reported by Halleux, D.

²⁵⁹ Buisseret A., letter to Vice Governor General 13th April 1956.

²⁶⁰ Buisseret A., letter to Vice Governor General 12th November 1955.

²⁶¹ Halleux, D., complementary notes to the minister 15th June 1956,

for urgency of reforms by the natives²⁶². J. P Harroy however concluded that there was no protest movement. He contended that it was a tactic of the Batutsi who wanted “ to progressively get rid of the Belgian authority” by causing the authority of the Resident (...) to disintegrate and suggest (...) that the office of the *King* was responsible to the Vice-Governor General and to the Governor General who was the Minister of Colonies at that time²⁶³. The Colonial authority recognized that the reforms were necessary but were not supposed to be effected in a premature and in an untimely manner to avoid unnecessary complications in terms of native politics. The Batutsi could take advantage of this chance to put their weight on the shoulders of the Bahutu²⁶⁴.

From the technical and economic points of view, the issue of political, administrative and democratic maturity was not sufficient to grant a politically fair and effective government. That is why it was necessary to proceed by gradually africanizing the general administration. The colonial authority did not get it wrong. The objective of the reforms was to restructure all the system and not to be content with minor reforms²⁶⁵. Nevertheless, the Trusteeship still considered itself as being indispensable. These few examples illustrate the contradictions under which the Belgian colonial system operated. In the case of Rwanda, it can be said that there was absence of willingness and determination because most of these reforms were executed without much conviction and were imposed by the UNO.

At the time when social political and economic demands of the Ruandan elite were made hastily, the colonial authorities thought that they still needed enough time to prepare the country for self rule and independence. Van Bilsen advocated for a plan of 30 years for Belgian Africa to accede to independence²⁶⁶. The event which followed from 1956 therefore took the Belgian Trusteeship by surprise.

As for the powerful Catholic Church which was an ally of the Trusteeship, the political emancipation of the colonized people

²⁶² Van Hoech, A. Vice Governor General, 16th August 1955 ,

²⁶³ Harroy, J.P. , letter to the minister of colonies December 1955.

²⁶⁴ Ibid

²⁶⁵ 1^{ère} direction de la 2e direction générale, Notes for the Honorable Minister of 21st January 1958

²⁶⁶ Van Bilsen, *Vers l'indépendance du Congo Belge et du Ruanda Urundi* , Bruxelles, 1958, p. 164.

was considered as an undeniable right in some ecclesiastic circles. The Bishops of Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi affirmed the right of the people to “take part in the running of their public affairs” and to consider “the sovereignty of native interests. This decision was reached at the end of the ordinary meeting by the Bishops which took place in Leopoldville from June 21st to 1st July 1956. Three years later, the Bishops of Ruanda-Urundi raised the same ideas saying that the Church supported and respected the “legitimate aspirations and demands of the popular masses who demanded that their rights be recognized and their human dignity as citizens be restored and that they never wanted to live in a society based on privileges any more²⁶⁷.”

However, for these Church leaders, some conditions for the masses to achieve their objectives were more appropriate and acceptable than others. Therefore, accordingly, the changes were supposed to be effected in a “progressive” manner. In addition, the emancipated people were supposed to recognize “the contribution of Europe to their development”. The Bishops of Ruanda-Urundi raised this idea again in their collective letter of 1957 by saying that: “(...) the natives are demanding that more and more natives should be included in the management of their own affairs and be given a considerable role to play. We are not party to the idea of blaming them for aspiring for more advanced posts in governing their country. This does not mean that the Church advocates for quick solutions like some people have alleged, i.e. those who want to benefit from the ensuing troubles by imposing their dictatorship and reducing the masses to a level comparable to slavery(...)”²⁶⁸.

The Bishops of Ruanda-Urundi demanded for the right of the natives to participate in their political destiny, “to make a judgment on a good or bad doctrine or such an attitude of temporary nature that interfered with the doctrine and Christian morals”. They did not hide their worry of seeing the efforts of the Catholic Church “destroyed by institutions and laws of non-Christian background”²⁶⁹.

²⁶⁷ Pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops of Ruanda-Urundi, 25th August 1959.

²⁶⁸ Pastoral letter, 25th April 1957.

²⁶⁹ Collective letter of Apostolic Vicars of Ruanda-Urundi 25th August 1959

b. New social strata

➤ System of education from World War II to independence

After the Second World War, there were many consultative meetings aimed at determining the direction of the education system and the demand for reforms. The problems related to education were discussed in public places²⁷⁰. According to the 1948 regulations, the goal of education was to prepare the ordinary natives to serve in their environment for their own good in particular and for the good of their community at large. It also aimed at training and developing an educated elite that would cater for the masses. It was a utilitarian type of education centered on the immediate environment and focused on regional economic opportunities offered to farmers. A restricted number of youth who had undergone rigorous tests were given a more advanced education. They were prepared to become indigenous cadres at a later stage. Some women were also trained to fulfill specialized female responsibilities.

As the grants to vicariates and congregations increased, so did their duties and responsibilities. The criteria for giving grants were established. These included: available equipment, staff qualification, free education at elementary level, minimum number of student enrollment, the language of instruction (official language in Belgium), the number of activities per year, the establishment of a specific time for manual labor, authorized programs, examination results, the establishment of official inspections (academic, administrative and medical). The inspection was conducted by an inspector of Belgian nationality as well as other official inspectors. Godding, who was the Liberal Minister, was against the arrangements that allowed foreign Protestant missions to benefit from grants under some conditions²⁷¹. Before 1948, only the following congregation and societies were granted subsidies: the White Fathers, White Sisters, Bernardine Ladies, Penitent Sisters, Saint Augustine Canoness Ladies, Ladies of Mary and the 'Belgian Society of Protestant Missions' (SBMP). In addition, from 1948, the following congregations were added: the Danish Baptist Mission, the Church Missionary Society, The Free Methodist Mission, the Free Swedish Mission and the Friends African Gospel Mission.

²⁷⁰ See print media such as Kinyamateka, L'Ami, Kurerer'Imana, Hobe, Servir

²⁷¹ School leaders had to spend one year in Belgium for a course in teaching methodology, colonial matters and French.

In their field-visit reports, UNO delegates were reluctant to entrust education to religious groups. They issued observations and recommendations, saying that “the grants which the government allocated to private schools should be awarded on condition that religious-oriented education was optional”. According to the UNO mission, a specific number of public schools had to be neutral and the number of teacher training colleges was to be increased.

The 1948 resolutions introduced something new. At primary school level, especially in boys’ classes, there was an outright separation between the first level and second levels. The first level was intended for mass education. The second level was selective and aimed at producing future intellectuals. The introduction of local trades introduced a core curriculum (in French: *tronc commun*) for the second ordinary level that guided the entire teaching curriculum towards practical subjects. In doing this, the colonial authority wanted to prevent pupils from pursuing other studies other than agriculture and crafts if they were not apt to do so. This was also done in the context of promoting an elitist type of education.

Secondary school education consisted of 4-year middle-range schools reserved for training office clerks and teachers for the first and second ordinary levels as well as six years at secondary school offering general knowledge that enabled successful candidates to occupy interesting intellectual posts and to prepare them for higher education. Among these categories, there were special secondary schools. On the one hand, there was a 3-year low level science school and on the other, a 3-year advanced level in specialized options that prepared students for specific posts. In general, Latin or science-secondary schools prepared students for university education.

Technical and professional education occupied an important place. In fact, this type of education was given priority for the following reasons. Those in charge of education often ignored that the technical field was less interesting for pupils who, with their widespread mentality against technical schools, preferred general education. Besides, technicians often earned less salary. The ten-year strategic plan envisaged to start two professional schools in Bujumbura and Kigali.

The professional curriculum in the *Institut Léon Classe* and *Ecole Artisanale de Nyanza* went beyond mere workshop sewing. The construction of a big modern professional school in Kigali started in 1957 at Kicukiro.

The 1948 plan envisaged to provide courses that were specific for boys and girls, from the second level of the primary cycle. Girls who completed primary education went to post-primary schools where domestic science was taught. This was intended to prepare future rural women. At a higher level were middle-range schools. Enrolment to these schools was done a year before the selection that took place at the end of primary education. Studying in the sixth and seventh years made girls eligible for teacher training colleges. There was also post-primary education with an exclusively domestic orientation. It was a practical course for young ladies whose age was beyond the 4th or 5th year. Domestic education was also taught to adult women who wanted to complete their elementary education. The education for girls was planned with a practical component. The 1948 reform did not envisage a curriculum for girls' education that was as complete as that of boys. This was because "mental retardation experienced by black girls did not allow them to undergo a program similar to the one designed for boys and the youth. What was therefore important for the time being (...) was that girls' schools would follow a teaching curriculum that was mainly practical in nature, aiming at preparing girl students to perform their roles as future wives and mothers; they had to stick to indigenous girls' moral education, especially by fighting against beliefs in magic and superstition so as to create a family environment that was receptive to our concepts of civilization".²⁷² The ten-year strategic plan pointed out a considerable handicap caused by inadequate development of women's education.

The 1948 reform coincided with the development of education for European children in schools under the metropolitan regime (inter-racial schools). The first public or private schools were established in big centers and they were managed by a staff of Belgians. They followed a Belgian curriculum. These schools were mainly intended for European pupils. However, indigenous or Asian children were also admitted to such schools after undergoing a medical examination and satisfying some educational conditions imposed by Europeans. Note that

²⁷² Van Hove, J., 1983, op. cit., p.159.

financial factors played a decisive role in determining entry to these schools. On the whole, the inter-racial factor was also felt in principal.

The schools of the metropolitan regime became model schools. Everybody wished to have their children to be educated like the Whites. This resulted into a trend of opinion in Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi whereby metropolitan educational system was unanimously adopted. The “*évolués*”²⁷³ contested all forms of adaptations and strategies seeking to africanize their education because they suspected that colonialists would give them low level education and award inferior certificates to Africans as compared to Europeans. They believed that this would prevent quick access by Africans to modern civilization. That is why they suggested sending their children to Europe and America for education. These claims went together with slogans against cultural alienation by colonialists.

The Belgian colonialists insisted on mass education. They expressed great caution in preparing an élite of indigenous intellectuals for the country. It took a long time for them to admit the need for higher education. When they finally did so, the English colonies were thirty years’ ahead of them in creating and managing modern African Universities. The colonizers found it hard to choose between sending students to their mother country, that is why they created unique and neutral schools which they entrusted to the Church. This hindrance resulted from the internal political rivalry between secularists and the clergy, between the Flemish and the Walloon, and between the Metropolitan institutes and universities. Lovanium came into existence in 1954. It was planned to be in Kisantu. To compensate this Catholic source of influence, a second secular institution inspired by *Brussels Independent University* was created. This was named “the Public University of Congo and Ruanda-Urundi”. It was set up in Elisabethville (Lubumbashi) and not in Ruanda-Urundi because the Belgians did not want to establish it from their own budget. This university stagnated for many years due to lack of personnel and due to ideological conflicts in Belgium.

In Rwanda, the king was at first in favor of the system of scholarships. That is why 117 bursary recipients lived abroad in 1957. For a long time, the Catholic Church used to send priests

²⁷³ Translated as “an elite group of newly civilized natives”.

abroad for studies. Consequently, the Belgian colonialists lagged behind in training civil servants who were not there at the time when they were needed most.

At primary and secondary school levels, the Trusteeship regime wanted to embark on school expansion. The number of pupils in primary schools rose from 112,000 to 265,000 between 1949 and 1960. 31% of the pupils in these schools were girls. It was at secondary level that progress in education became more pronounced. In accordance with the ten-year plan, the teacher training colleges were also increased.²⁷⁴ In the field of professional and technical education, 10 teacher training colleges and schools were opened in 1948. Secondary school education developed with the introduction of big colleges in Bujumbura, Gisenyi, Nyanza and Kigali. At higher levels of education, a pre-university section, whose graduates joined Congo's universities later, was opened in 1955. A University Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science was established in Butare from 1957 to 1959. Discussions aimed at establishing universities were held in 1950. However, this project was sabotaged by the colonial regime and hence never came to fruition.

In December 1954, the Minister for Colonies published a sensational report entitled "Educational Reform in Belgian Congo". Coulon, Deheyn and Renson who were authors of this report were sent by the Liberal Minister. Their mission was to report on the state of colonial education. The new Belgian cabinet with a liberal and socialist ideology was upset by the dominance of clerical programs that characterized the system of education in the colonies.

Not only did Coulon's report criticize the achievements and status of the schools but it also criticized the spirit in which they were conceived. The report pointed out that the education offered by the missions was cheap and was of poor quality because it was given by incompetent people. The teaching of French in the missions was stopped. French was not used in primary schools despite the request by natives to use it. This was due to the hostility expressed by the Flemish missionaries and the fear that French could facilitate contacts between the colonized people and the outside world. They feared that French would be used as a tool for subversion

²⁷⁴ Especially for boys in Byimana, Save, Butare, Byumba, Ruhengeri, Gisenyi, Nyamasheke, Shyogwe, and for girls in Muramba, Byimana and Kigali.

and emancipation of Africans. The major recommendation made by the Education Commission was to introduce an immediate and crosscutting network of secular schools despite the opposition it received from the administration and missionaries.

The minister planned to act very quickly to establish big, public and secular schools. The commission collected letters and petitions from chiefs and African elites who requested for the establishment of a network of secular schools. Some were driven by the desire of kicking missionaries out of school control.

The missionaries reacted with tough measures and bitterness.²⁷⁵ One priest asserted that secularism for “religious” black people was inconceivable. The issue was seriously addressed in the publications produced by the *évolués*. They argued that “what was feared most was not to have insufficient knowledge but the biggest problem lay in lack of moral values”.²⁷⁶ In 1954, a joint letter by both Bishop Deprimoz and Bishop Bigirumwami warned people of the “dangers that were threatening education in Rwanda.” They said that it was far better to have fewer and less beautiful schools “than be poisoned by religious problems, secularism and sectarianism spread across the population.” However, there were some *évolués* who were in favor of secular education because they wanted to get rid of missionaries.

In July 1954, a permanent committee of Bishops from Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi published a document that summarized the Catholic view point. It argued that “Africans had a deep-rooted need for religion. Destroying their false beliefs without replacing them with correct ones was tantamount to condemning them to anarchy and disorder, and this would mean making them prey to materialist Communism. The so-called neutral education did not respect the fundamental tendencies of the African soul and was even against them²⁷⁷” The Bishops made it clear that “if need be, they should not hesitate to use all means at their disposal to defend Christian education and defend the ultimate interests of the population of Belgian Africa²⁷⁸. They were warning people against immeasurable consequences of

²⁷⁵ Brys, R.P., 1956, P. 129.

²⁷⁶ Grands Lacs, no 175, 1954.

²⁷⁷ See “La question de l’enseignement en Afrique Belge”, in *Revue du clergé africain*, novembre, 1954, pp. 632-638

²⁷⁸ *ibid*

academic quarrels as opposed to public peace.

In its campaign against public schools, the missionary press insisted on bad conditions found in schools. They wanted to give an impression that since the educational demands of the population were not met, it was not timely to establish secular schools that were very expensive compared to missionary schools. Thus, the problem of public schools was tabled in the High Councils of Rwanda and Burundi. Consequently, the Higher National Council (CSP) in Rwanda voted against public schools because of the immeasurable consequences that they would entail in terms of academic quarrels and public disorder. In Rwanda, 19 members voted against secular schools, 3 voted in favor and 5 members abstained. In spite of open opposition, secular schools were started in Bujumbura. In this endeavor, the Higher National Council (CSP) simply played a consultative role. The Colonial authority did not take their opinions into consideration. This viewpoint outraged the local people.

In 1958, another report entitled "the problem of education in Ruanda-Urundi" was published by three professors from the University of Liège at the request of J. P. Harroy, the Vice-Governor General. These were: Mrs Dubuisson-Brouha, Mr. E. Natalis and J. Paulus. This report aimed at solving the problem of a big number of young people who finished school but could not get good jobs. According to him, education was missing its goal in so far as it trained neither the country-folk nor the elite that was worthy its salt.

The report appreciated the efforts made but criticized the new option of introducing programs from the metropolis. It then resolved to develop what appeared to be an educational system that was adapted to Africa, one that sacrificed neither the masses nor elite, and thus rectified the direction already taken. It consisted of a blatant transposition of the Belgian system into an African setting. During the first cycle at primary school, this education had to be mainly directed towards the study of the environment which was linked to real life (education for manual labor). As for the second cycle of the primary school, it was suggested that the distinction between general and specialized levels be dropped.

Primary six, which was meant to prepare pupils for secondary education, only produced a small number of pupils at that level. The candidates were selected according to the criterion of intellectual ability. Pupils who went for teacher training colleges were selected with much care. The Catholic mission only recognized the education offered in technical schools. They proposed to produce textbooks that were adapted to African realities and introducing European teachers to teach Bantu ethnography. The missionaries were apprehensive about creating universities which, according to them, were premature. They preferred to introduce a system of granting scholarships. They put emphasis on promoting education for women because the latter were less interested in education and had an inferiority complex. This colonial-centered report had no tangible results and did not produce any impact on the educational policy. It should be noted that the question of education was at the heart of public opinion debates from 1958. By recommending the “adaptation” and “africanization” of this education, the report was opposed to the social demand by the people on the ground which advocated for education in the colonies to be structured along similar lines as the metropolis.

The issue of education stirred up hot debates during years that preceded independence. In the document entitled “*clarification on the sytem of education*” which was published in anticipation of the UNO periodic mission, members of the Higher National Council demanded a quick development of public education for both secondary and higher learning institutions. The Hutu manifesto of 24th March 1957 denounced the segregation that the Hutu were subjected to. It stated that higher institutions of education were enough and that a university was not necessary in Rwanda. They advocated for professional and technical education as well as social clubs for young girls and women²⁷⁹. Political parties also expressed their position on this matter. UNAR demanded for an urgent educational convention with the missionaries so as to involve a significant number of people from all over the country concerning the organization and management of education. They demanded for a Rwandan version of the Belgian program charged with starting faculties in Astrida University and developing the cultural values of the country. The Roman Catholic Bishops reacted to UNAR’s position

²⁷⁹ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op. cit., pp.20-29; Bishop Bigirumwami, in *Témoignage Chrétien* of 6th September, 1958; Cyimana, G., in *Rwanda politique*, op. cit., p. 63.

by accusing them of being socialists and harboring Communist and Islamic-oriented tendencies. They accused them of trying to distance schools from missions' influence and of recruiting the youth into a kind of national service or "youth movement".²⁸⁰

In their manifesto of 18th October 1959, PARMEHUTU suggested a democratization of education. This consisted of a quick generalization of primary school programs as well as introducing 'education for all' children aged between 7 and 15 years, i.e. residing within a distance of less than 6 km from school, and establishing vocational training schools for 2 years and ensuring an ethnic balance in schools. They proposed that "all student cards should bear the terms Hutu, Tutsi and Twa in order to provide information for those who were supposed to fight against racial discrimination in the field of education." RADER advocated for free primary 'education for all' children and in addition, proposed that scholarships for secondary school and higher education be increased.

During the Belgian colonial period, education was in the hands of missionaries and religious congregations. This enabled the administration to build schools extensively at a low cost, with maximum moral guarantee. It also resulted into replacing traditional beliefs with an imported religious system. There was a kind of homogeneity between the colonial school and the metropolitan one. The Roman Catholic Church enjoyed monopoly in education. The government's role in education was restricted to providing finances. The Protestants who were rivals to Catholics were sidelined. Thus the report by the Liberal Ministers (Goddin and Buisseret) had little impact. In 1961, the Government of Rwanda inherited a clerical structure. The rest of the educational network was in the hands of the Church, and all cadres of the country received rigorous religious training. The Church adopted a monopolist position and a single-minded attitude that distorted the direction of their action. This monopolist attitude was against equity, freedom of conscience as well as freedom enjoyed by parents. At the end of the colonial period, the crucial problem was that of the Rwandan youth who, after finishing primary school, aspired for secondary and university education. However, they were not allowed to do so. The effects of mass education were felt but its rationale still remained the same. In short, it promoted an elitist type of education.

²⁸⁰ Circular of 24th September 1959.

➤ **The question of the *évolués***

The colonial education system produced a small group of privileged people known by the French term of “*évolués*” or “the newly educated and emancipated natives”. An “*évolué*” was a native who fulfilled some conditions. He lived in a culture-free centre; he entertained very few ties with ancestral traditions; he was monogamous and accepted colonial rule. Another condition was that he was supposed to behave differently from other natives owing to the secondary education or technical training he had acquired. The *évolués* were also different from the masses because they served in “European” professions, such as being clerks in the administration or in a private company; they also belonged to the middle class. If one fulfilled these conditions, one would theoretically qualify to get a salary that was higher than the average income of an uneducated native.

Both the colonial civil servants and European missionaries needed native assistants to fulfill their duties. However, given the fact that colonists and missionaries worked in different domains, each of them appreciated these native assistants according to their performance in fulfilling the duties they were assigned. For this reason, the criterion used to determine whether a native belonged to the class of “*évolués*” varied from one colonist or from one missionary to another. For the missionary, an “*évolué*” had, above all, to be Christian.

As for the civil servant in colonial administration, the “*évolué*”, was a devoted and respectful clerk with high professional skills. For a territorial administrator, a harsh foreman qualified to be called “*évolué*” if he obtained impressive results through giving forced labor instructions. Finally, speaking the colonist’s language and wearing clothes which, by and large, resembled those of Europeans were features that characterized an “*évolué*”²⁸¹. The natives referred to as “*évolués*” were beyond the level of “backwardness”. They belonged to a very special class. In spite of this new social status, those who were promoted to this new class were not free. Their social status did not spare them from the discrimination of the colonial system. They could be arrested or imprisoned without any reason. There were shops, restaurants and public places where even the “*évolués*” could not go to because they belonged to a “black race”. Only a few

²⁸¹ Ndikubwimana I., *Les évolués et l'évolution socio-économique ad Rwanda (1945-1959)*, Mémoire de licence, UNR, Butare, 2000.

“*évolués*” who carried a “*civil merit card*” were exempted to visit these shops.

➤ **The decree of 17th May 1952 on registration of natives**

The decree of 17th May 1952 on registration of Congolese was also applicable in Ruanda-Urundi following the Ruanda-Urundi Ordinance-law No. 11/123 of 10th September, 1952²⁸². This registration was defined by Belgian colonial officials in the following terms: “It was an institution that assimilated some Congolese to become non-native people in terms of civil status, by placing them under our European civil law”.²⁸³ Owing to this act, the natives changed their status from being indigenous non-native to becoming “registered”. The latter were governed by the same laws like Whites and almost enjoyed similar rights with them. Nevertheless, they were not given Belgian citizenship. To obtain a registration card, the applicant had to fulfill the following conditions: “on top of his application, the candidate attached a birth certificate, a certificate of good conduct and behavior, all documents showing his/her academic qualifications; in the final analysis, he/she proposed a new name the candidate wished to have”²⁸⁴.

When the request was considered, the applicant was recognized as being registered. He/she was assimilated to Belgians ranks although he/she still kept his/her nationality. Becoming registered meant that the persons concerned, accepted their cultural inferiority. The registered person could be defined as a “native” who had reached his/ her perfect state of evolution. He/she was transformed from being primitive to an “*évolué*”.

By virtue of this evolution, he/she was transformed into a new “*évolué*” who possessed a civil card. He/she then changed into a “*registered*” person to reach the peak of his/ her evolution. It took 25 years of patience to reach the latter stage.

Whereas a civic merit card holder did not enjoy the same rights as Whites, the registered person was assimilated and admitted into the club of Whites. The assimilated people lived within a White neighborhood. Their children could go to schools meant

²⁸² Leroy, P. et J. Westhof, *Législation du Ruanda Urundi*, Bruxelles, 1954, p. 18.

²⁸³ Piron, P., *Codes et lois du Congo Belge*, Tome I, Bruxelles, 1954, p. 156.

²⁸⁴ Piron, P., *Codes et lois du Congo belge*, Tome I, Bruxelles, 1954, p. 17.

for Europeans. They could get loans from banks, etc. Such advantages made the “registered” people or (“*évolués*”) to become submissive before colonists in order to seek promotion to higher ranks.

In order to obtain a civil merit card, one had to completely change behavior. They had to get rid of all features of local culture and replace them with Western culture. The colonist’s objective was to create a class of “semi-White people”, that is, people in a black skin but with a White man’s mentality. Up to 1959, as far as the Belgians were concerned, none of the Ruanda-Urundi “*évolués*” had succeeded to obtain a registration card. On the other hand, 1,500 cards were given out in Belgian Congo. According to Belgians, Congolese were more qualified “*évolués*” than Ruanda-Urundi natives.

- **A typical example of “*évolués*”: Model Astridians (Indatwa)**

The “*Groupe Scolaire of Astrida*” (or Astrida Complex School) was founded by the Brothers of Charity in 1929, with its mother-institution in Gand (Belgium). This school aimed at training staff to support Belgian administration.

It opened its doors in 1932 and its first successful graduates received certificates in 1940. This school enrolled 50% of Rwandans and Burundians respectively each year. Apart from the 4 options of veterinary and medical Sciences, agriculture and administration, the school also offered science options that gave students a chance to go to university and teacher training colleges.

After their studies, medical, veterinary and agricultural assistants as well as graduates from the administration and option of ‘clerks’ and ‘chiefs-to-be’ made up Rwanda’s intellectual elite in 1959 together with tens of native priests belonging to the clergy. On graduating, they were told: “you are young people, and above all, members of an elite class because of exceptional favors bestowed on you; you are the first ones to enjoy benefits of the native clergy”²⁸⁵.

²⁸⁵ Excerpt from Chaplain’s speech during the meeting of the alumni of Groupe Scolaire

At the end of the school year in 1960-1961, i.e. one year prior to Rwanda and Burundi's independence, the 'Groupe Scolaire of Astrida' started issuing certificates from 1940. The graduates were classified into the following categories: 152 medical assistants, 73 veterinary assistants, 132 agricultural assistants and 58 administrative assistants²⁸⁶. These figures only included certificates from technical options; they did not include science and teacher training-oriented options.

The "Model-Astridians" enjoyed a professional qualification and earned a good salary that enabled them to lead a decent life. Moreover, they also had very comfortable accommodation. In actual fact, when a Model-Astridian was sent to work somewhere at the end of his studies, he was given a furnished house but mere seminary graduates who were also appointed by the Belgian administration were not eligible for such privileges. The Model-Astridian lived in a separate neighborhood known as "Astridian camps" which were scattered in all territories. These were well-built houses availed by the Belgian administration. They were well-furnished with arm-chairs, tables, wardrobes, beds, etc.

As said earlier, mere civil servants from the seminary were not given accommodation by government as was the case for Model-Astridians. Besides, the former had difficulty in finding jobs in administrative institutions because they lacked the required professional qualifications. As far as accommodation was concerned, they fended for themselves; their residential homes were inferior to those of Model Astridians'.

It is very easy to notice the aim of the Belgian administration in establishing homes for indigenous assistants in places isolated from others, in form of camps in free-cultural centers. On the one hand, it was done for prestigious purposes. Sure enough, for the Belgian administration, 'Model-Astridians' were looked at by their fellow compatriots as a colonial creation, that is, a group of "*civilized*" natives. This was done for a specific reason of getting collaborators. That is why pupils who were educated in Astrida "Preparatory School" named 'Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida' had to conform to a set of prescribed behavior. A teacher in

d'Astrida, on 10th November 1951, in *Servir*, n° 3, p. 314.

²⁸⁶ *Servir*, Astrida n° 24, 1961, p. 4.

Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida put much emphasis on cleanliness of clothes which every "Astridian" was supposed to display. This was expressed as follows: "You should bear in mind that Europeans judge you by your clothes at first sight because they depict the backward and ridiculous character of someone who wears them, or, quite often, can be a sign of congenital dirt"²⁸⁷. On the other hand, the creation of isolated residences for 'Model-Astridians' was for the Belgians a way of supervising their activities after work. In actual fact, it was in the interest of the Belgians to separate the intellectual elite from "non-évolués" to avoid instilling in the minds of the latter a feeling of revolt against colonists.

- **The image of "évolués" vis-à-vis natives and Whites**

The support staff for Belgian administration, catechists and any Rwandan who worked for White men were highly regarded by indigenous "non-évolués". The évolués were considered as the most privileged class because they were exempted from colonial abuses like forced labor and corporal punishment. Furthermore, the fact that most of them spoke the language of colonists and the fact that they put on clothes tailored in a European style elevated them above ordinary masses. This conferred upon them honor and respect. During inspection visits in "chieftaincies", the territorial staff was accompanied by *évolué* clerks as well as medical, veterinary and agricultural assistants. The "évolués" talked with their superiors in front of natives who had come either to get instructions, pay taxes or to do colonial forced labor. The "évolués" were always smart and expressed themselves in a language that was inaccessible to rural residents.

In each *chieftaincy*, there was at least one rental cottage reserved for colonial civil servants in the mission. Accommodation expenses were paid by taxpayers who were designated by the leader of the area. When they brought imposed gifts, taxpayers knew that foodstuffs were for both the White man, and his companions ("évolués"). The évolués enjoyed similar rights like his White masters. That is why the support staff in the Belgian administration could demand their due if they wanted to do so.

²⁸⁷ Bourgeois, R., *Cours de Déontologie et Politique Indigène à l'usage des candidats chefs et les candidats commis de la section administrative du Groupe scolaire d'Astrida*, Astrida, 1951, p. 11.

This sort of exploitation endured by natives was denounced by the Higher National Council (CSP): "...all those who take part in the colonial administration, from the clerk to the foreman who supervise road construction works, all of them exploit indigenous people and mistreat them by extorting gifts from them, they make illegal collection of money, and impose on them unpaid work"²⁸⁸.

The visits made by "*évolués*" to their places of birth were seen as a very important event by natives. The sub-chief of the area treated them with great respect and admiration because of their new acquired social status. They offered them chicken, eggs, milk, etc. As for the chief, he invited them and showered them with other gifts. It was in the interest of these indigenous authorities to please the "*évolués*" since the latter were consulted by any colonial civil servant for information on a given chief or sub-chief. In spite of their living standards which were by far superior to the average Rwandan, the educated staff was generally treated with contempt by Whites. There were places reserved for Whites but forbidden to Rwandan "*évolués*".

As far as the relationship between the "*évolués*" and uneducated traditional authorities was concerned (i.e. those who had not done post-primary studies), they were made of two distinct groups. On the one hand, there was a group of "*évolués*" made of "former seminarians and Model-Astridians". These looked down on "*non évolués*" and considered them as "backward". Some of them, like Bwanakweri, refused even to bow before the *King* whenever he met him. He underestimated his authority because he only recognized European authority. On the other hand, there was another group, the majority of which was made of chiefs and sub-chiefs from the "Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida". This group was also made of a small number of former seminarians. These held the king of Rwanda in high esteem. They considered him as the supreme authority of the land worthy of honour and respect. It was this group that founded the political party called "RANU" in 1959.

These Rwandan "*évolués*" were despised by colonists. They usually met the latter during circles and associations. Even though it was forbidden to hold political discussions, such contacts enabled them to exchange views on the future destiny

²⁸⁸ Meeting minutes of the CSP held in Nyanza, on 9 January 1956, p. 42

of their country. Latent nationalism was thus fermented during circles and associations. It was at this time that political parties started being formed.

- **Circles and associations of “*évolués*” in Rwanda from 1950**

By definition, circles for “*évolués*” were centers of cultural activities and mutual help projects and collaboration. They provided space for mentoring native elites to enhance closer collaborating with the colonial rule.²⁸⁹ In 1950, the number of “*évolués*” in Rwanda became so big that it threatened the colonial administration. In view of this, the latter collaborated with the Roman Catholic Church to create circles and later, associations for “*évolués*”. Circles for “*évolués*” were autonomous. Each of these circles had freedom of action. Its members met in missions or centers for meetings. They met in places like libraries, gymnasia, conference rooms, cinema halls, and sometimes playgrounds and canteens.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ Kayihure, M., Interview held on 10/02/1998 et de Mungarurire, P. J., Interview held on 12/02/1998, in Ndikumana, I., 2000, op. cit, p. 28.

²⁹⁰ Kamanzi, Th., Interview held on 20/02/1998 et de Muswahili P., Interview held on 4/3/1998, in Ndikumana, I. , 2000, op.cit, p. 29.

Table 5: List of circles for the “enlightened” or *évolués* in Rwanda in 1954

Names of circles	Address	Territory
Bigirumwami circle	Kigali	Kigali
Pie XII circle	Rwankuba	Kigali
Léopold II circle	Kisenyi	Kisenyi
Kiragutse circle	Byumba	Byumba
Résident Bourgeois circle	Shangugu	Shangugu
Circle for the “enlightened”	Rwinkwavu	Kibungu
Circle for studies	Nyarubuye	Kibungu
Résident Dessaint circle	Kibungu	Kibungu
Pie X circle	Rwaza	Ruhengeri
Social circle	Ruhengeri	Ruhengeri
Abasaveri circle	Runaba	Ruhengeri
Ababimburashyaka circle	Mubuga	Kibuye
Rudahigwa circle	Nyanza	Nyanza
Saint Paul circle	Nyakibanda	Astrida
Secundien circle	Astrida	Astrida
Albert I circle	Gitarama	Gitarama
Léon Classe circle	Kabgayi	Gitarama
Charles Lavigerie circle	Kabgayi	Kabgayi

Source: Anonyme, “Cercles et associations des évolués du Congo Belge et du Ruanda-Urundi, in *Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique*, 15 janvier 1956, pp. 3-4

Some centers like Kabgayi circle, Pie XII circle from Rwankuba, Pie X circle from Rwaza, and Abasaveri circle from Runaba were supervised by the Roman Catholic Church. The above mentioned circles were composed of practicing Christians under the supervision of the Church. They tried hard to help the Church in furthering its apostolic objectives. The circles’ objective was

twofold: ensuring individual sanctification of members as well as spreading the word of God in all its forms. Members of these circles had to be Roman Catholics, especially former seminarians of Zaza Teacher Training College and Byimana Teacher Training College. It is in this context that, in 1945, Saint Paul circle in Nyakibanda was created. Strictly speaking, it was not a circle for “*évolués*” like others. Rather, it was a circle of reflection that brought together some indigenous priests to defend Rwandese culture. In 1940, it gave birth to a movement that some people baptized “cultural revival”. According to the first publications by natives on pre-colonial Rwanda, this movement was given publicity in ecclesiastical communities.

Unlike former seminarians who joined their families with a strong position on acculturation due to their long stay in the seminary, some evangelists displayed special commitment to their culture. It is from Saint Paul circle that people like Father Kagame, Father Byusa, Father Kabarira and Father Sebakiga produced the first publications. It is within the same circle that members (who were all former students of the Major Seminary) started compiling proverbs, riddles, taboos, poems, etc., that praised ancient Rwanda²⁹¹. The ideas from Saint Paul circle started spreading among intellectuals through various publications with a tremendous impact²⁹². The White Fathers described this movement as xenophobic. Their optimistic report published in 1950 had an alarming tone in so far as it raised the issue of relationship between Whites and Natives. For the instigators of this movement, they had no choice but to move on because no sound progress was possible without a solid foundation. “What do we need to do in order to evolve in a rational way?” they asked. In other words, what attitude do we need to adopt in order to conveniently play our role? We should focus on the future, but also keep the good legacy of our past (...). Furthermore, the evolution of the “uprooted” people cannot stand the test of time²⁹³.

Apart from circles for “*évolués*” under church supervision, and whose membership was composed of Roman Catholics, there were other circles controlled by Belgians. These were all circles

²⁹¹ Muswahili, P., Entretien du 4/3/1998, in Ndikumana, I., 2000, op.cit., p. 32.

²⁹² Propos de Pierre Muzungu, B., Entretien du 12/1/2008.

²⁹³ Kagame, A., “Evolué du Rwanda et les ancêtres », in *La voix du Congolais*, n° 7, janvier-février 1946, p. 250, in Ndikumana, I., 2000 op.cit., p. 32.

from the territory headquarters (Nyanza, Astrida, Gitarama, etc.) and from other important centers like Rwinkwavu, Nyarubuye, Mubuga, etc. To become a member of such circles, one had to be an “*évolué*” although being a Catholic was not a pre-condition here. The aim of these circles was to develop the moral and intellectual capacity of members. Social problems were also handled in these circles; these included: improvement of living conditions, unemployment, children’s education, etc.

During World War II, Africans were mobilized to fight alongside colonists. After the war, the Africans demanded for improvement in their living conditions as a reward for their collaboration, and these claims later resulted in total independence. In order to avoid this kind of revolt in Belgian colonies and territories under the Trusteeship, Belgium tried to channel the ideas of “*évolués*” into rigorously controlled circles and associations. The “*évolués*” had views that were different from colonists. If you read a document written by the “*évolués*” at that time, you discover that they aspired to get a special status which would separate them from the masses. They also wanted to identify with Europeans. In their various demands, it is obvious that they were longing for a special status, but they also felt ashamed of distancing themselves from the masses. That is why it was very difficult to know exactly what their intention was. They were aware that it was necessary to speak but were hesitant, and none of them dared to express themselves because they were afraid of being denounced by their fellow “*évolués*” and consequently of being demoted or punished by their master.

Those who dared to write were afraid of offending their teachers and went out of their way to reproduce pieces of advice from the latter. Thus, in 1945, the editorial team of the journal called “*L’Ami*” (a French word that means friend) wrote the following statement: “(...) Do not get lost in dreams of independence. They are simple imaginations and have nothing to do with reason. Independence, as it is taught today, is sheer pride. Since pride leads to death, be submissive to God who leads all human societies with His divine providence (...)”²⁹⁴.

However, a separate group of “*évolués*” emerged. This one dared to exercise their responsibility differently. According to this

²⁹⁴ “Intentions du mois de septembre 1945” in *L’Ami*, no 8 et n° 9, août-septembre, 1945, p 82.

group, the most important thing was, not to favor aspirations of a tiny fraction of the population (“*évolués*”) to the detriment of the masses but to involve them courageously with the view of reforming the entire native society²⁹⁵. The European circles started to express a feeling of apprehension in the 1950s due to the fact that some “*évolués*” disobeyed the instructions given by their teachers and were interested in issues that did not please the colonial administration. The colonists gave them stern warning. Confronted with such a situation, the circles for “*évolués*” yielded to associations that colonists deemed appropriate to cater for the increasing interests and demands of the elites. However, circles continued to grow with new members joining them. Nevertheless, members discussed more sensitive issues outside circles.

The “*évolués*” attended circle meetings during their free time. For those who liked reading, there were books and journals. Others took a drink in the canteen. They also played in-door games such as playing cards, chess, table tennis, etc. As for conferences organized for “*évolués*”, they were presided over by European civil servants or priests. Films were also regularly shown. No one dared to discuss politics. They were always careful because among the “*évolués*”, there were some informers who disclosed to Europeans everything discussed in circles, especially the criticisms against colonial administration or the Roman Catholic Church. That is why circle members met beyond normal meetings hours. They gathered in families of their choice. Such meetings were frequently held and were always free. This gave them an opportunity to discuss routine issues on the country’s socio-political evolution, cases of social injustice and general misery, mistreatment, lack of understanding by colonial masters, aspirations that were brutally put down, timid claims, etc.²⁹⁶. In the end, circles did not meet the aspirations of those who had founded them and hence their political role became insignificant. The circle members had different educational backgrounds and that is why the associations of “*évolués*” or circles of former students became more dynamic because their membership belonged to a homogeneous group.

²⁹⁵ Karekezi, Th., 1982, op.cit., p. 50

²⁹⁶ Rukundo, E., *Elites et éveil socio-politique au Marangara (1945-1960)*, Mémoire de licence, U.N.R., Ruhengeri, 1987, p. 69.

➤ **Associations of “évolués”**

Association of former Astridians (ASSADA).

This association was created under the patronage of the Brothers of Charity in November 1951. Their goal was to improve scientific education and ethics for graduates from the ‘Groupe Scolaire of Astrida’. The Head office for this association was in Astrida. The association brought together all former students of the Groupe Scolaire of Astrida in Rwanda and Burundi. Being an alumni of ‘Groupe Scolaire of Astrida’ was not enough to qualify someone to become member of the association. In addition, one had to pay a membership fee or support the association and defend Christian values²⁹⁷.

ASSADA mainly dealt with problems of its members. These ranged from getting decent accommodation and jobs to securing a place for their children in boarding schools, etc. In addition, members discussed current political and social problems, especially their stand on the establishment of secular schools²⁹⁸. ASSADA faced serious problems. It was confronted with two antagonistic ideological trends. The first trend was characterized by nationalist ideas. They chose to collaborate with indigenous authority but recognized the need to transform traditional institutions according to democratic principles. The second trend, which comprised the majority of ASSADA members sided with Chief Bwanakweri. This trend recommended Euro-African collaboration while the masses militated in favor of a special status for the “évolués”.

It is not fair to say that the association of Astrida alumni was the cradle of Rwanda’s political protest. However, its founders knowingly or unknowingly kick-started the process that enabled some members to get rid of the Trusteeship regime which they considered to be authoritarian. The same evolution occurred within the association of former seminarians. The difference was that their former teachers had a clear vision of the country’s direction and they committed themselves to train a dynamic group which expressed a strong opposition against traditional institutions. Consequently, the traditional authority took over leadership of this dynamic group by recommending reforms even though many of these had been planned before.

²⁹⁷ Mungalurire P. J. et de Runuya, S., Entretien du 12/2/1998.

²⁹⁸ Bwanakweri, P., “Assada”, in *Temps nouveaux d’Afrique*, 5 décembre 1954, p. 3.

Association of Former Seminarians

This association was created on 31st January 1954. It was led by the Head of Kabgayi Junior Seminary. The association aimed at implementing a Christian way of living and behavior, ethically and professionally²⁹⁹. This association was very active. It addressed social problems of members and above all discussed political issues. Nevertheless, the association had specific problems. It harassed the colonial administration by asking for an immediate solution to their plight, namely low salaries and exclusion from obtaining certificates. This Association felt that they were cheated because their intellectual ability was not recognized. All members agreed that they were a learned people, but since they did not have any recognized certificates, this made them lag behind. That is why, with determination, they discussed the problems that kept them in such an inferior position in comparison with others who had a lower intellectual ability but held certificates. In their view, Former Seminarians were always against moderate solutions. It was from 1957 that they started scoring some tangible results.

As a matter of fact, following the request of 23rd March 1958 by the former seminarians who had much difficulty in finding jobs within the administrative institutions and schools, they got the following reply from J. P. Harroy: "(...) the government has strived to address the issue of former seminarians by allowing them to sit for secondary school examinations within the National Examination Board. Besides, the government has committed itself to pay all candidates' travelling expenses, including air travels to Leopoldville as well as accommodation expenses in that town for those who had been shortlisted for exams. These were considerable advantages offered by Belgium³⁰⁰.

The solution offered by the government only suited a minority of former seminarians since, in order to face the National Examination Board, they were supposed to have a secondary school certificate, and were also required to have completed six years. It did not solve the problem of those who left the seminary before completing their studies. They were supposed to be enrolled in other schools and the latter were not ready to take them on. The missionaries kept on encouraging and supporting such claims whenever necessary. Besides, for the clergy, the

²⁹⁹ Missionnaire d'Afrique centrale (Pères Blancs), *Rapport annuel, 1954-1955*, p. 634.

³⁰⁰ Cor Unum, Bulletin de l'Associations des Moniteurs du Rwanda, no 1, 1958, pp. 4-5.

injustice suffered by former seminarians was endured largely because of putting education in the hands of the state³⁰¹.

The Association of Former Seminarians was an association which certainly managed to operate systematically when it came to defending the interests of its members. The first group went to Kisantu in the school of administration. It is worth mentioning that the National Examination Board was not a barrier to the seminary alumni since many of these were among the first Rwandan university students. Other ideas emerged within ASSADA. In actual fact, most members were preoccupied with socio-political matters. That is why, since the association was created, there was a movement that operated openly with a solid foundation. The ideas which advocated the promotion of the masses were discussed, especially in the local press (for example in *Kinyamateka* newspaper). Other members gathered during association meetings and militated in favor of demands made by former seminarians. The articles written started on a trial and error basis, but later on, they became ruthless when it came to smashing “native authority”³⁰².

It should be remembered that the Association of Seminary Alumni came into existence a month before the activities of the Higher National Council (CSP) in 1954. This one became a target of some members of the association. The association became radical and split into two movements. On the one hand, there was a group of extremists who advocated for the improvement of the masses’ lot, stressing the Hutu factor. On the other hand, there was another group which advocated for the development of the masses in general. These two movements got support from the Roman Catholic missions. Most of the leaders of the above movements were mission employees and their writings were published by the Roman Catholic press. *L’Ami*, *Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique* and *Kinyamateka* competed in disseminating new ideas, especially the last two newspapers whose chief editors were members of the Seminary Alumni. These were: Aloys Munyangaju, Chief Editor of “*Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique*” in Usumbura and Grégoire Kayibanda who was the Chief Editor of “*Kinyamateka*” at Kabgayi for some time. There were several factors which contributed to the radicalization and triumph of this movement. These included: the missionaries’ advice,

³⁰¹ Alvoet, W., “J’en ai marre”, in *Cor Unum*, Kabgayi n° 1, 1958, p. 12.

³⁰² Kamanzi, Th. Interview held on 20/2/1998.

conspiracy of some Tutsis who were hostile to the king, support from the Belgian administration, etc.

- **Rwanda Teachers' Association, (AMR)**

The '*Association des Moniteurs du Rwanda*' translated into English as the 'Association of Rwandan Teachers' (AMR) was founded in 1951 under the initiative of the White Fathers. This association aimed at "defending the teachers' interests and their profession, fostering the promotion of its members and forging solidarity, establishing relationships between parents and teachers in the best interest of the children"³⁰³. In effect, it was a body that brought together all teachers, certificate holders and those who did not have them. It was also made of graduates from teacher training colleges, the association of former seminarians as well as those who had only completed primary education but who were serving as teachers (there were many of them at that time). In principle, all Rwandan teachers were members of this association. In 1958, the association had 3102 members from all over the country. It was divided into three regions, namely Kabgayi (where the association was founded), Nyundo and Kigali. Each of these had its own internal organization.

Some writers have argued that political education played an important role in AMR's meetings³⁰⁴. This is explained by the fact that, among the members of this association, many of them contributed to the founding of political parties at a later stage (1958-1961). Most of them adhered to the Muhutu Social Movement which advocated the ideals of PARMEHUTU.

During association meetings, the "teachers" discussed matters related to their profession such as salary increase, the state of education in general, etc. These meetings provided an opportunity for members to get together. The "*évolués*" who were members of AMR took advantage to share their ideas outside official meetings and to cement unity among what Kayibanda called the "*évolués* from the countryside". Without sounding like a protest-oriented movement, AMR served as an eye-opener which enabled teachers to play an active role in the country's political process. Teachers were the first to be sensitized on the political stakes of the country on the eve of independence, and in turn sensitized the rest of the population. Generally speaking,

³⁰³ Kamanzi, Th.: interview held on 20/2/1998.

³⁰⁴ Murego, D., 1975, op.cit., p. 683

the members from the above-mentioned circles and associations played an active role in the socio-political changes of the 1950s in Rwanda.

c. Protests by the Rwandan elite

Like everywhere on the African continent, whether the Rwandan elite enjoyed a privileged status by the colonial authority and missions or not, the former protested more and more against the existing political regime in the early 1950s. Their objective of obtaining sympathy from various members of the social stratum, especially among Rwanda's Roman Catholic Church leaders, persisted after World War II. The latter continuously stressed the need to exert influence on the "évolués" and to control ideologies they were advocating for³⁰⁵. As said earlier, the reforms introduced by the government decree of 14th July 1952 fermented the elite in terms of political matters. In principle, these reforms were encouraged to open a democratic space resulting from the population's representative bodies set up not only at national level but also at the level of sub-chieftaincies, chieftaincies and territory. These bodies ended up being monopolized by the Tutsi elite.

The 1956 amendments which included a universal adult suffrage made of able-bodied people at "sub-chieftaincy" level did not bring about any change. The Hutu elite got between 30 and 80% of the vote in sub-chieftaincy council elections. As for higher levels, no change was observed. The supporting authority was mainly controlled by Tutsi families within the administration and consultative bodies. The negative effects of such ill-conceived reforms by the supervision authority were put on the shoulders of the indigenous authorities who were exploited by Hutu politicians and their allies.

Grievencies of natives to the United Nations Organization (UNO)

At first, the protests and criticisms did not have any ethnic or racial leanings. All open-minded criticisms were found in the comments made on the contradictions of the colonial system. In 1946, Alex Kagame denounced the White man's contempt for the natives. In 1948, despite King Mutara III's efforts suppressed the claims made by the Rwandese before the UNO visiting mission.

³⁰⁵ Bishop Deprimoz, *Rapport annuel du vicariat*, 1945-1946, p. 216 ; *Théologie et Pastorale*, no 2, 1957, pp. 90-99 ; Ndikumana, I., 2000, op.cit.

However, some people managed to present these claims to the delegation. A petitioner who wished to remain anonymous, but who was knowledgeable about the difficult conditions people were living in, assessed the 32 years of Belgian oppressive regime in Rwanda. According to him, the regime was characterized by oppression and lack of progress. He noted that some achievements were only made by the missionaries. He stressed that while the latter were selfish, the Belgian civil servants only exploited the indigenous people and subjected them to corporal punishment and endless forced labor to the extent that the latter preferred to migrate to the British colonies in East-Africa. The petition was formulated as follows: "Since the end of war, the oppressed Rwandese waited impatiently for you, weak and feverish. Welcome! Take a good look at Rwanda; don't be absent-minded like the tourists who just pass by. Go down to the natives, have a look at their physical and moral destitution (...). The Belgians arrived in Rwanda in 1916. Since that time, they exploited the natives up to now. The road between Usumbura and Kigali was created in 1923. How was it done? With strokes of the whip on the workers' buttocks and without any pay whatsoever. It was sheer forced labor. The road was thus constructed free of charge (...) in 1923, the natives started fleeing to Uganda for the following reasons: 1) strokes of the cane; 2) forced labor; 3) poverty. This flight has continued up to now. This is the least I can say. If other European countries do not do anything to deliver us from the little Belgian, we will all flee from Ruanda to Uganda"³⁰⁶.

Joseph Habyarimana Gitera also stated that the natives were disappointed by the Belgian rule³⁰⁷. "The wellbeing of the inhabitants of the territories under the Trusteeship is at risk," he said, "because the Belgians do not care". The UNO is partly responsible for that because it asked Belgium which lacked means and capacity to take over the responsibility of the Trusteeship. Yet, another Rwandese added: "With this blatant exploitation, tiny Belgium has been annoying the natives from the word go, to the extent that, if he was asked to choose between the Belgians and the devil, the native would rather give himself up to the devil rather than stay under Belgium's Trusteeship. "Belgium is not bad as such, but incapable because it can not perform. Therefore, we beg the United Nations to come to our

³⁰⁶ Petition from a Rwandan citizen, 31st July 1948; and petition from Karekezi et al., 1950.

³⁰⁷ Petition from Joseph Habyarimana Gitera, Astrida, 25th May, 1953.

effective rescue by immediately placing us under a Trusteeship of a bigger nation. We wish to be relieved from the Mandatory Power, or we will be condemned to everlasting inferiority.

The Belgian has enriched himself with Ruanda's livestock and minerals at the expense of the native and against the country's interest. It is high time now that the Belgian gave way to a big nation with great and noble ideas for the development of our country. What has Belgium done for Ruanda's development? Not much and this is understandable: a tiny nation is tantamount to lesser ideas. We also demand that the exportation of the native in the Congo must cease. The Mining Union is currently training workers at Gatumba (in the North of Kabgayi (sic)) so that, after their training, thousands of these can be flown by air to Katanga (Congo) to work in the largest copper mine. They are exported by plane so that anyone who may wish to return to his home country (Rwanda) cannot find his way back. Should a people under the mandate be exported if this is not out of serious injustice? This is an injustice against the people placed under the mandate, a serious theft against nations which entrusted this country to Belgium. Negotiations should be made at the level of UNO before exporting the Banyarwanda."³⁰⁸ Since Belgium had no means to develop Rwanda, it would have been reasonable to place Ruanda-Urundi under the Trusteeship of a richer and more powerful country. "The nation is being deliberately exploited and this is understandable. As a poor country, how can Belgium be expected to enrich Ruanda-Urundi? Placing Ruanda under a Trusteeship of a tiny Belgium has forced the latter to exploit the natives. How can Belgium be self-sufficient? How can they suffice to manage a huge Congo and Ruanda-Urundi? That is impossible, and no one can do the impossible. If Belgium pretends to do the opposite, they are simply claiming too much against their ability"³⁰⁹.

This theme of changing the Trusteeship was later developed by nationalist political parties in later years from 1960-1962.

- **The education issue**

François Rukeba took advantage of the visit by the UNO visiting team to express the grievances of the natives. He resented the discrimination in schools using the following words: "I

³⁰⁸ Petition from a Rwandan citizen, 31st July, 1948.

³⁰⁹ Petition from a Rwandan citizen, 31st July, 1948; see also petition from Alexander Boateng, 7th April, 1953.

wonder why a young man, who has some money to spend on his education, who sat for an examination in the school of the Brothers of Charity but failed, cannot be allowed to sit for the exam for the second time, or why he is not allowed to pursue his studies if he can pay school fees (...). If the sons of chiefs sit for exams together with other children whose fathers are not chiefs, and if they all fail, it has been noticed that the sons of chiefs are readmitted in the school of Brothers of Charity. Why is this privilege only given to the sons of chiefs?”³¹⁰.

Generally speaking, petitioners raised the problem of inadequate schools. The few schools available admitted children from rich families. They noted that teachers were mistreated: “they are the most downtrodden (...); they have no value in the country although they are among the people who develop the country”³¹¹. In 1951, Father Rukeba said: “Particular attention should be paid to the education of girls as well as giving vocational training to pupils aged 18 years and above. We demand that young people be sent abroad to learn various trades”³¹². “The government should create public schools in order to put an end to the monopoly of the Roman Catholic Missions. The State should also compel Muslim parents to send their children to school. It should also cater for children born of native women and Europeans, namely people of mixed race that are neither recognized by government as Europeans, nor recognized by the natives as Rwandese. They are not recognized by the Roman Catholic Church since they are not ordained as priests, monks or nuns”³¹³.

- **The reforms in the judicial system**

The need to reform the judicial system was occasioned by its poor state. Like in all modern systems, the king was not supposed to handle judicial matters. In this connection François Rukeba had this to say: “We know that in other countries, both European and African, the king does not assume a judicial role because it is not his job. He looks into what is true and what is not true. In other countries, there are judges and Europeans who are charged with native matters. Why is the king the judge in Rwanda? Justice is not well done in this country. The king is not God. He cannot discover all the lies and can be misled by

³¹⁰ Petition by François Rukeba, 3rd August, 1948.

³¹¹ Petition by Kangabo J., teacher at Kamonyi, 4th August, 1951.

³¹² Petition by François Rukeba, 4th August, 1951.

³¹³ Petition by François Rukeba and Gitambaro Kizito, 1953.

liars. What will the plaintiff or defendant do if they are wronged by the king's decision? I think the king should not play the role of judge"³¹⁴.

In addition, the judicial reforms were also dictated by several cases of injustice and illegalities which were committed in public but went unpunished. This was petitioned by Gitera: "Barbaric acts of violence are inflicted by the White man on the defenseless natives"³¹⁵. As for Karekezi, he petitioned arbitrary arrests using the following words: "In prisons, people are tortured and arbitrarily imprisoned, and children live together with adults"³¹⁶. Another petition by François Rukeba dealt with the racial discrimination and land alienation: "(...) The European civil servants send away the ordinary folk to seek justice, and generally speaking, the way justice is done favors the Whites at the expense of the Black people. The Blacks are punished more severely than White people. They are given severe punishment without judgment. The native peoples' homes are violated. Their land is alienated by Europeans with impunity and without compensation, etc. All these factors discredit the State to the extent that we wonder. We wish to know whether we have our own government or whether the Europeans have their separate government in Ruanda-Urundi which grants them separation of laws (...)"³¹⁷.

Another question was asked by Father Rukeba and Gitambaro regarding the failure of Belgium to implement the Trusteeship statute: "Why do Belgians rule and punish us according to Congolese laws and yet we are not Congolese?"³¹⁸. It should be noted that contrary to the Trusteeship pact, the Belgians incorporated Ruanda-Urundi into Congolese administration and considered this territory as a province of Congo.

- **Request for political reforms**

In Rwanda, both the king and chiefs were not free. This point was petitioned by one Rwandese citizen as follows: "So far, the king of Ruanda is considered as a mere worker for the Belgians,

³¹⁴ Petition by François Rukeba, 3rd August, 1948.

³¹⁵ Petition by Habyarimana Gitera J., 25th May, 1953.

³¹⁶ Petition by Karekezi et al., see also petition by Habyarimana Gitera J., 25th May, 1953.

³¹⁷ Petition by François Rukeba and Gitambaro Kizito, 1955; see also Petition by Rukeba Fr., 4th August, 1951.

³¹⁸ Petition by François Rukeba and Gitambaro Kizito, 1955.

and chiefs are treated much less than that. In Astrida, Brother Secundien has inculcated among the youth “a revolutionary spirit against the king of Rwanda”³¹⁹. The chiefs work like civil servants, and very few of them understand the difficult situation the country was going through. They do not speak for those who were suffering; they were afraid of the colonial authority and ended up serving the later’s interests. To avoid any abuse of power by chiefs, the colonial administration has provided them with a fixed salary without any allowance on taxes levied in their chieftaincies and sub-chieftaincies³²⁰.

At national level, there was a “king’s council”. This was a body that surrounded the king. It consisted of some individuals made of high-ranking chiefs who were chosen by the king himself and proposed by the colonial administration. It was transformed into “a national council” with more representatives³²¹. The colonists wanted to control all decision-making organs by putting forward a racist argument that, as White men, they were endowed with an “advanced civilization”. They also claimed to have “better capacity to participate in the mature management of public matters”. As for Rwandan Black people, the Whites never saw their political contribution³²². François Rukeba denounced the municipal elections of 1956 which were organized at all levels (chieftaincy, sub-chieftaincy, territory and national levels). However, the colonial authorities hailed these elections as inroads into the process of democratization. Rukeba’s main concern was that the “elected persons” whom he referred to as “primitive *évolués*” only worked in the interests of the colonial government. In so doing, they plunged the country into retrogression.

- **Demands for freedom of expression**

François Rukeba was one of Rwanda’s rare petitioners who demanded for a free press. According to him, the natives were the only qualified people who could express themselves before the UNO representatives who had visited the country. However, those who dared to do it were considered as informers and were

³¹⁹ Petition by a Rwandan citizen, 1955.

³²⁰ Petition by François Rukeba, 4th August, 1951; see also petition by Father Rukeba and Gatambaro Kizito, 1955.

³²¹ Petition by François Rukeba, 4th August, 1951.

³²² Petition by M. Maus, President of the Union of colonists of Ruanda-Urundi, 8th December, 1951.

threatened with punishments in case they were discovered³²³. On this note, Gitera had this to say: “(...) The Trusteeship Council knows very well the risks taken by the people who allow themselves to get in touch with the UNO.”³²⁴

Jovite Nzamwita was another petitioner who became victim. After sending a petition to the UNO mission in 1948, he was obliged to resign from his post due to threats from colonial authority. He was treated roughly by the Police and was denied the right to get his merit card, although they had accepted to give it to him. Worse still, his father, who was a Sub-Chief, was forced to resign. He was convinced that such a decision had something to do with his son’s action³²⁵.

- **Economic grivences and proposals**

In the economic field, it was noticed that taxes were very high and the fees required for commercial licenses were incredibly high. This was done to discourage native traders. This point was also petitioned by François Rukeba: “The Belgians do not want us to be rich. That is why they impose high taxes to us so that the natives should get scared of taxes and give up doing business because they want us to remain poor”³²⁶.

There were discriminatory practices when it came to getting loans and land for agriculture. Foreigners like Arabs and Europeans enjoyed this privilege whereas Rwandan natives were excluded. There are even those who unjustly lost their property because of this policy on privileges. François Rukeba was categoric on this issue: “(...) if a native person has money, and wants to do business to buy a piece of land for his business, like the one given to the Arabs..., why is he denied this right? Whenever they wish, the Arabs and Hindus who do business get loans from the bank. They get this money thanks to the existence chieftaincy funds, and interests go into White people’s pockets (...) . If the money from chieftaincy funds cannot be used to help the natives do business, then what is it for? Why does someone, who goes out to work, comes back home to find his land given to someone else? So how come he loses his land if he has not sold it? (...) We are taught that the best land is one that has been left fallow in the bush, and we know it is true.

³²³ Petition by François Rukeba, 4th August, 1951

³²⁴ Petition by Habyarimana Gitera J., Astrida, 25th May, 1953.

³²⁵ Petition by Nzamwita Gaston Jovite, 17th March, 1951.

³²⁶ Petition by Fr. Rukeba and Gitambaro Kizito, 1955.

Why aren't we then allowed to settle there if we have the means (...)? Why is the European who wishes to buy pieces of land allowed to occupy it at the expense of the natives who are forced out of it and told to look for other plots of land? The native people cannot buy land back from the Europeans land that contains gold, tin, sand and clay used to make bricks³²⁷.

It is important to note that the abolition of *Ubuhake* impoverished and undermined some cattle keepers who earned their living on cows. They were left to fend for themselves. Moreover, rumors went round regarding the partial elimination of cattle. It was decided that these cows should be given identification and sold without the owner's consent. This practice led to big losses of capital³²⁸. In order to develop the country genuinely, Father Rukeba proposed the introduction of import substitution industries. These would produce items that were demanded locally but imported from abroad³²⁹.

Among the major themes that characterized the petitions against the colonists, the following can be cited: racism, exploitation, the black man's contemptuous treatment, abuse of power by civil servants against the colonized, etc. Regarding the abuses and mistreatment endured by the indigenous people, one petitioner had this to say: "We insist that we are treated like slaves and we are beaten up. We are flogged a lot"³³⁰. The educated natives were not well paid in comparison with the Whites and these did not even have an intermediate level education.

➤ **Demands with an ethnic leaning**

In February 1957, some members of the Higher National Council (CSP) published a document entitled, *Mise au Point* (Clarification). This document was directed towards the colonial authority and its demands are listed below: promoting a more developed educational system (with a university), giving more power to the king and the Higher National Council, establishing tangible

³²⁷ Petition by Fr. Rukeba, 3rd August, 1948.

³²⁸ Petition by Fr. Rukeba and Gitambaro Kizito, 1955. Rumours were based on real incidents; thus, in 1949, a hundred heads of cows belonging to a breeder from Rwamagana died of vaccination by an assistant veterinarian called Brixu. After an investigation, it turned out that the vaccine was harmful and the veterinary office was aware of that. This one went unpunished and the breeder got nothing (petition by Jean Kibibiro, Rwamagana, 15th January, 1958).

³²⁹ Petition by Fr. Rukeba, 4th August, 1951.

³³⁰ Petition by A, Ndababara, Munyinya, 1948.

economic and social development programs and abolishing racial discrimination between Whites and Blacks³³¹. The tone of this document was both conciliatory and moderate in so far as the powers of the ruling authorities were not questioned. This document only demanded that the colonial authority be modified, and it sought to prepare Rwandans for such changes. On 29th April 1959, a reception was organized by the Higher National Council task force. In his speech, King Mutara Rudahigwa reiterated the demands of the above-mentioned document: “I also hope, and I believe that it is the hope of all Rwandans, that the changes to be proposed to us will satisfy each one of us, and that their scope, their generous spirit and their progressive character will give this country, together with the modern structures it needs, a reinforced social tranquility and will lead the country towards more and more prosperity. I really assure you, Mr. President that Rwanda desires to fully participate in the management of its own affairs and take charge of its own destiny (...). I believe in this legitimate desire and wish that Belgium, which supported us enough, understands this and will help us to realize a brotherly and prosperous Rwanda.”

It can be said that on top of the ideas raised in the “*Mise au Point*”, the king’s speech triggered off a hostile environment with Belgium. The events that followed from 1959 onwards confirm this view.

The “*Mise au Point*” did not get any official response from the Belgian colonial administration to which it was addressed. The only reply came from a group of “*évolués*” known as “Hutu leaders”. On 24th March 1957, they published a document entitled “the ‘Bahutu Manifesto’: the social aspect of the indigenous racial problem in Rwanda”³³². This document focused on only one aspect of the colonial dispute, namely the relationship between the Hutu and Tutsi, or to put it simply, the exploitation of the Hutu by The Tutsi for centuries. It completely ignored the scores of political and socio-economic demands that the majority of the Rwandese were confronted with, especially the responsibility of the Trusteeship and the Roman Catholic Church in aggravating the relationships between the Hutu and Tutsi.

³³¹ Conseil Supérieur du Pays, “*Mise au point (1957)* », in *Document ONU*, T/402, Annexe II, New York, 1958.

³³² *Le manifeste des Bahutu. Note sur l’aspect social du problème racial indigène au Rwanda (24 mars 1957)*, Document ONU, T/1402, New York, 1958. Voir aussi dans les dossiers du CRISP, *Rwanda Politique*, p. 24

This document was composed of valid claims related to the political and socio-economic monopoly of the Tutsi aristocracy, the access of the Hutu to education (particularly the education that enabled people to work in administration), the promotion of professional and crafts education, the improvement of the living conditions of the peasantry, etc. Its limitations and dangers consisted of initiating a political debate charged with ethnicity which it intentionally provoked and supported. It is worth noting however that ethnic-oriented views were not characteristic of the Hutu “*évolués*” alone. All educated Rwandans were involved in these pseudo-scientific stereotypes about the ethnic composition of Rwandans and the social relationships (Hamitic and Bantu myths) between them. Some enlightened Hutus used these stereotypes to prove the discrimination they were subjected to and later on to exterminate the Tutsis. Some members of Tutsi aristocracy also did the same to justify the privileges they were enjoying³³³.

In spite of its limitations, the “*Bahutu Manifesto*” was extensively published in the media of the Roman Catholic Church. It had greater impact than the “*Mise au Point*” newspaper. Actually, the “*Bahutu Manifesto*” was somehow a response to the “*Mise au Point*” and appeared as an opposite version of the latter. The *Mise au Point* criticized the Trusteeship and belonged to the independence-driven movement, whereas the “*Hutu Manifesto*” praised the Trusteeship and viewed all existing problems along the criteria of Hutu-Tutsi divide.

This tactic successfully resulted into an ethnic movement and served as the foundation for the state which in turn led to the 1994 genocide and massacres. Lastly, the succession of the publication dates for these two documents and their content inevitably presupposed a certain degree of relationship between them. The *Mise Au Point* was published on 22nd February 1957 while the *Bahutu Manifesto* was published on 24th February 1957. The origin of the *Bahutu Manifesto* remains controversial. Some people simply attribute it to the missionaries. I. Linden greatly relied on sources and interpretations of a group of missionaries whom he called “socio-democrats” to conduct his research on the matter. He asserts that Canon Ernote and Father Dejemeppe

³³³ Read the two documents written in Nyanza, one on 17th and the other on 18th May, 1958: the former was signed by courtiers of the king, and the latter by 14 “Banyarwanda that were in Nyanza at that time”.

took part in writing the *Bahutu manifesto*.³³⁴ René Lemarchand maintains that the above-mentioned document could have been written by a Roman Catholic missionary³³⁵. Others like J. Kalibwami attribute it to its real signatories.³³⁶

Be that as it may, the majority of signatories were former seminarians who usually went to Kabgayi mission for professional and religious obligations. They came from Gitarama except two of them who came from Butare. These were Gitera and Isidore Nzeyimana. It is hard to believe that the Bishop and his close associates were not least informed about producing such a document, written by its employees and protected by the diocese³³⁷. Moreover, some of the terms used in this document were also found in several colonists' and missionaries' writings, especially in the 1959 lent guidelines by Bishop A. Perraudin whom we shall later talk about.

Therefore, it is fair to say that in 1959 two movements on the future of Rwanda confronted each other. The first movement was advocated by the Higher National Council (CSP) which bitterly criticized the way Belgium ruled Rwanda. It demanded for bold reforms to prepare the country for autonomy in the first place and independence thereafter. The second movement was made of some elites. It assumed an ethnic identity and praised the work done by Belgium and condemned all ill-treatment and injustice done against the Hutu by the Tutsi. These two movements demonstrated that with such contradictory aspirations, and with no adequate solutions to the problems raised, open conflict was bound to break out.

- **Reaction of the Tutsi elite**

In 1957, the colonial authority and missionaries were faced with two choices to make. The first one was to carry on with their old alliance with the Tutsi aristocracy, thereby assisting this aristocracy to lead the country to self rule first and later to independence. The second choice was to secure new safer alliances.

³³⁴ Linden, I., *Church and Revolution in Rwanda*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1978, p. 249. There is now a French version of this book (*Christianisme et pouvoir au Rwanda (1900-1900)*, Karthala, 1999).

³³⁵ Lemarchand R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, Washington, London. Praeger Publishers, 1970, p. 108.

³³⁶ Kalibwami, J., 1982, op.cit. pp. 375 and 386.

³³⁷ Lugan, B., *L'Histoire du Rwanda de la préhistoire à nos jours*, Bartillat, 1997, p. 374.

When the Hutu-Tutsi issue was presented for the first time to the Higher National Council during its sessional meeting of 13th-29th June 1956, it was rejected on the king's request. A motion was tabled to stop the use of terms like 'Muhutu', 'Mututsi' and 'Mutwa'. The purpose of the above motion was to stop dealing with "all those who, through their writings, wanted to imply and prove that the notion of 'Munyarwanda' did not really exist, and that only racial groups like Tutsi, Hutu and Twa existed". The motion in favor of the removal of ethnic vocabulary from official documents was worded as follows: "(...) Some people, who are ill-informed or not informed at all, keep on saying or writing deliberately that the Batutsi came as conquerors; they took the property that belonged to Bahutu by force and kept them in a low social status. Such an assertion results from the the insistence on the negative side of history. Those who formulated it are oblivious of the fact that some political and social organizational gaps between the Batutsi and Bahutu were caused by (...)”

From time immemorial, the Bahutu had an opportunity to acquire wealth and gain social status. As for political power, the Bahutu and some Batwa were appointed as chiefs by the king of Rwanda. If people lost sight of this fact, and if they believed that only the Tutsi were the ones who ruled the country, it means that alliances between the Bahutu and Batwa chiefs as well as the Batutsi families were formed early enough to iron out social and racial differences in such a way that it was impossible to make any distinction between them. All the same, under the existing regime, all people had equal chances to occupy vacant posts on merit. Rwanda was inhabited by a homogeneous group of people who enjoyed the same rights. On this issue, the CSP had this to say: "(...) Rwanda is not a ground for social strife between racial or social divisions. We request all Banyarwanda not to fall prey to this false theory that is splitting our community. We have a common goal to pursue, i.e. the development of the country in all its forms. The two great enemies to fight against are extreme poverty and anarchy. We must focus our efforts on a single objective which is referred to in our country's motto, namely unity for progress (*imbaga y'inyabutatu ijyambere*). Even the bible also reiterates this message: "every kingdom divided against itself will fall (...)"³³⁸.

³³⁸ Proceedings of the 14th session of the CSP

The issue of Hutu-Tutsi issue had been discussed in May 1956 in the Council of the Vice Governor by A. Maus who was a colonist and Chairman of the Euro-African Union³³⁹. He suggested that Rwandans and Burundians should be represented according to the Hutu/Tutsi/Twa “social classes”. He identified these classes as “castes”³⁴⁰. The Council unanimously refuted this suggestion, and both King Rudahigwa and Bishop Martin who was the Apostolic Vicar of Ngozi were especially opposed to it. King Rudahigwa said that there was no reliable criterion to accurately justify such identities given that Rwanda’s ethnic composition was brought about by intermarriage.

In March, 1958, the issue of Hutu-Tutsi divide was raised in the Higher National Council (CSP) at the request of King Rudahigwa together with the petitioners who had produced the *Bahutu Manifesto*. An *ad hoc* committee was set up. It was composed of Gitera, Mulindahabi, Niyonzima, Bendantunguka, Ndahayo and Bicamumpaka on petitioners’ side. This delegation met some members of the CSP. These were Bagirishya (Chairman of the committee), Bwanakweri, Gashugi, Mbanda, Rwagasana, Father Kagiraneza and Mungarulire who acted as secretary. This committee embarked on the mission it was assigned between late March and early April of 1958³⁴¹. Below is a summary of the historical debate on the HutuTutsi issue.

- **Representation of the Bahutu**

One of the principles on which the monarchy rotated was questioned by petitioners, namely that the king was neither Hutu, nor Tutsi nor Twa but was common to all racial groups. However, said petitioners, especially Gitera, who had a one-sided view: “the Bahindiro are likely to monopolize power”. Petitioners like Mulindahabi and Niyonzima demanded for the appointment of a Hutu representative to assist the king. This arrangement is what Mbanda referred to as “*institutional democratization*” which, during these debates, was confined to the “establishment of a

³³⁹ Minutes of sessions and meetings of members of the council held in Usumbura between 5th and 7th May, 1956, p. 10.

³⁴⁰ Letter from Mr. Maus to the Vice Governor written on 25th April 1956. It should be safely noted that Mr. Maus who had understood the facts and intentions of the Hutu camp in Burundi committed suicide when UPRONA was declared as winner of Parliamentary elections in Burundi. Similarly, Governor Harroy who had unreservedly supported the anti UPRONA movements decided to leave Burundi in January 1962.

³⁴¹ Comité d’étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, Rapport, Nyanza, mars-avril, 1958, p. 3.

Hutu representative next to the king”. In any case, it was a middle-way arrangement. The Batutsi had their own representatives, i.e. Tutsi chiefs and deputy chiefs, who directly and regularly dealt with the king on administrative matters. The Batwa were represented by Harerinka. The representative of the Bahutu was also supposed to represent other leaders before the king, i.e. chiefs and deputy chiefs. This suggestion was summarized as a triple representation of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa.

This idea of an official or unofficial representation of the Bahutu was refuted by Higher National Council members who replied that “a racial tripartite representation” would engender “a regrettable precedent for the future of our country”; Mungarulire said that “it is dangerous because such a representation based on racial groups will only result in destructive race-based antagonism³⁴²”; we need to remain united and shun “anything that is likely to bring about division.” Bwanakweri said that “it is also an ineffective solution because the arrangement of three representatives will not work together. Each one of them will strive to accumulate advantages in favor of his group; the redistribution of responsibilities can be done in a different way, for example through a democratic process, instead of resorting to a system which “is based neither on intelligence nor on any other abilities”; this method is “unfair (...) and anti-democratic”; it is a divisive move which is aimed at “creating division in one and the same country³⁴³.” Kayihura explained the consequences of that suggestion. He said that “it is a retrogressive suggestion because it is not based on merit, but on racial considerations. It will therefore bring about division and create divisions within the country. Thus, it is against modern, progressive and civilized ideas”³⁴⁴.

The issue of ethnic representation strongly held by petitioners provoked another debate on the meaning of the terms “Hutu”, “Tutsi” and “Twa”. To provide clarifications on these terms, Bicumumpaka said that the term “Gahutu” has a social meaning, and that a “Mututsi is similar to a Muhutu”³⁴⁵. Another petitioner made it clear that the Muhutu was “a poor man of lower status, and a Muhutu by race who was made Hamitic does not belong

³⁴² Comité d’étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, Rapport, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958.

³⁴³ Ibid. p. 3.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 21.

³⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 59.

here because for us, the Mututsi is supra-human, a superman who suffers from superiority complex, naughty and despises the Muhutu, whereas a sympathizing Mututsi who likes to identify with us does not qualify to be a Mututsi in our sense.” Bendantunguka also talked about a Muhutu in a genealogical sense! In reply, Chief Bwanakweri said that such a view was unfortunate and very dangerous. He said, “On the grounds of this racial basis, you will get involved in an impossible task. You seem to confine the discussion to one racial group while it is impossible to separate them from other people.” Another speaker regretted the terms expressed by Bwanakweri concerning a poor Mututsi. He said, “Leaving out a poor Mututsi is advocating for conflicts of class struggle. In my opinion, we need to abandon all these considerations and rely solely on social justice.”³⁴⁶ Chief Mungarulire was against names “Muhutu and Mututsi” because they were used by those who wanted to accentuate differences and create clan-based division.” Both groups including Gitera dismissed the ethnic representation factor and agreed on finding another solution. They realized that a Hutu representative was, after all, not necessary in reforming the system.

- **The Tutsi monopoly in administration and justice**

Another problem raised by petitioners was the Tutsi monopoly of both the administrative and judicial fields. Gitera stressed the fact that “the three ethnic groups did not enjoy the same advantages offered by their country, and that only one of the three had exclusive benefits.” The administration of the country is managed by only one group: the Tutsi. The few Hutu who are in the administration think that they are no longer Hutu. There is not a single Hutu worthy of his name who is a member of the indigenous administration”. The real Hutu is one who holds to his name, contrary to the CSP’s idea of removing such names. The CSP members also recognized the problem of the Tutsi monopoly in administrative institutions. Their argument was that such a situation was not created by the Tutsi.

In principle, there was no action that interfered with equal opportunities of the Hutu that prevented them from getting jobs within the administration. However, according to Mungarulire, facts spoke for themselves because there was no Hutu in the administration. He continued to say that “everyone will agree

³⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 60

with me that this situation of power monopoly did not exist in ancient Rwanda". After the occupation of Europeans, the king was obliged to choose native assistants from among those who had attended Nyanza School which admitted only the Tutsi as well as the "Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida" which had an option for future chiefs and was exclusively reserved for the Tutsi. The Tutsi were therefore the only ones destined to occupy the above-mentioned posts.

Gitera explained this situation by two supportive factors, namely the absence of the Hutu at the royal court and the inferiority complex of the Hutu. In Chief Mbanda's opinion, "the main cause of this state of affairs is neither from the king who makes appointments nor from tradition, but it lies in the obligation of the king to choose a group prepared to serve this purpose. The only criterion is education and, under the administration responsibility, this education was given only to the Batutsi"³⁴⁷. Gitera partly agreed with this analysis. But he went on to say that the king should have seen and rectified this unfair situation: "I cannot hold my tongue when I see that my service is inadequately managed." "The king cannot change anything", said Bwanakweri to Gitera. "His power on appointment is recent since it dates from 1943. Prior to this time, he only agreed to the appointments from the Governor. The Europeans could not abruptly change the system they found in place. That is why they favored the Batutsi. Indeed, sudden reforms could destabilize the country. Chief Gashugi pointed out the reason behind the absence of the Hutus in administrative circles such as their unwillingness to lead and the refusal by some Hutu leaders to occupy posts that were proposed to them such as Kayibanda, Petero Muzungu and Angelo.

Remedies to end the Tutsi monopoly in administration and to eliminate inequalities were suggested. Mulindahabi proposed the creation of an electoral committee at sub-chieftaincy level which would conduct the election of a Deputy Chief. The same thing could also be done at chieftaincy level. Elected candidates would be proposed to the king for approval. The elections at these levels would bring about frequent changes of leaders and undermine stability in leadership thereby diminishing the power of the King Bwanakweri had this to say: "We instead need to institute the supervision of indigenous authorities in a

³⁴⁷ Comité d'étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 6.

bid to prevent abuses, and this can be achieved through sub-chieftaincy and chieftaincy councils”. As for Gitera, he proposed general solutions which were accepted by more than half of the committee of 7 members. These included informing everybody about elections in order to encourage the potential Hutu candidates to run for responsibility posts, abolishing forced labor (*Akazi*) and assessing the best solutions so as to achieve democracy.

As to the question of Tutsi monopoly in the judicial system, Kayihura said that this was associated with the same causes pointed out in the administrative field. But Mulindahabi said that the blame could not be put on schools because there was nepotism towards those who were good at court statesmanship. Mungarulire insisted that these were exceptional cases that should not be generalized, adding that there was no rule that prevented the Hutu from becoming judges. A petitioner complained that concerning job interviews given to those who had applied for judicial posts (*candidats juges*), the Tutsi chiefs did not tell the Hutu the date for interviews or the Hutus were told when it was too late. Chief Gashugi provided another cause for the Tutsi monopoly in the judicial system. He said, “The Batutsi, including the uneducated ones, seem to have more expertise in the art of arbitration than our uneducated Hutu brothers”. The Bahutu always rely on Batutsi for settlement of their legal cases. The CSP members noted that the government had opposed the dismissal of old judges. Ordinance No. 348/A.I.M.O on indigenous jurisdiction provided that their supervision be entrusted to the Resident of Rwanda. This arrangement was rejected by the petitioners.

As a measure to end Tutsi monopoly, someone suggested that Chieftaincy Councils should propose a list of candidates for the posts of judges in chieftaincy courts. Chief Kayihura came up with other suggestions which received the approval of the majority of committee members, i.e. putting merit first, administering job interviews for posts, informing people about the date of interviews through newspapers, separating the executive and judicial powers in order to have an independent judicial system. He said that the problem was difficult to handle since responsibilities were exercised by both indigenous and Trusteeship authorities. The proposal to allow the Council to elect judges was rejected. Only four members were in favor of the motion.

- **Management of public funds**

Public funds referred to here were of two types: those managed by the king (CDP) and the chieftaincy funds (CAC). Petitioners like Niyonzima said that they did not know what these funds were used for; they only served Tutsi interests who had free access to them. He was told that no expenditure of these funds was made without the Resident's approval (estimates and expenditures). The Territory administrator approved CAC expenditures. No indigenous chief, except Chief Ncogoza, managed CAC funds. The 1952 decree conferred the power to manage funds on the king and chiefs who were assisted by the national or chieftaincy councils. The king managed CDP funds whereas chiefs managed CAC funds. In practice, the *King* only made estimates. How come that the chiefs did not manage these funds? There was a feeling of apprehension by the Trusteeship authority to the effect that chiefs were incompetent. Moreover, according to Kayihura, there were no administrative centers in most parts of the country, i.e. there were neither buildings nor safes to keep money, etc.

Citing the budget as an example, Mulindahabi criticized the way funds were managed at chieftaincy level. She said that members were presented with a *fait accompli* and forced to sign what had been prepared by the chief and approved by the administration. She also found that management of CDP was catastrophic. Loans were granted only to the Batutsi. For Gitera, the Europeans indirectly managed funds whereas the Batutsi managed them directly. According to him, the Batutsi earned wages, and were therefore the sole beneficiaries of these funds. He added that if chiefs did not manage CAC funds, then they could be blamed for signing what they did not approve of. With this behavior therefore, the chiefs were criticized as traitors of their country. They did not discharge their duties as required. Niyonzima pointed out that the chiefs were the ones who were to blame because the Europeans established a law but the chiefs failed to implement it³⁴⁸. Chief Mungarulire replied that such proposals were made by the CSP in 1955 and in the meetings held in 1956 but no action was taken.

Finally, the debate on this issue ended in deadlock. The petitioners put the blame on chiefs and CSP members. Gitera reacted by saying that the Bahutu did not care about funds

³⁴⁸ Comité d'étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 14.

because they did not benefit from them and that funds were useless for them”³⁴⁹. Several proposals on funds were put to vote. They included the full implementation of the decree, merging all COC funds into one fund (Kayihura, Mungarulire), and setting up a commission of enquiry composed of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. This one was charged with looking into the management and distribution of funds from CAC. However, the vote lacked sufficient quorum.

- **Management of education**

The question of education was examined by a committee in the meeting of April 9th 1958. It was alleged by the petitioners that the Batutsi monopolized primary, secondary (general and specialized) and higher education at the expense of the Bahutu. It was therefore necessary to determine the Bahutu and Batutsi proportions in schools. Gitera and Niyonzima said that segregation began in secondary school³⁵⁰. Other committee members such as Bwanakweri and Kagiraneza were keen to collect reliable and quantitative data from primary schools. The committee members were sent to the *Groupe scolaire d’Astrida* to collect data. They also visited the Girls’ Teacher Training College [*école des monitrices*] operated by the White Sisters. The headmistress of this school did not provide the needed information because she said that “their records did not mention race”. The *Groupe Scolaire* gave the same answer. A circular was sent to all schools in the entire country requesting for information on racial proportions. The issue was repeated in meetings held between 4th and 7th June. After assessing the responses given by head teachers, it turned out that, 29 out of 114 primary schools provided answers (i.e. 25%). The findings showed that 67.81% of the pupils were Bahutu, 31.70% were Batutsi, and 0.01% were Batwa. Bwanakweri noted, without disclosing his sources, that this data was not accurate. Even at primary school, he said, “The Batutsi outnumbered the Bahutu. Everyone rallied behind his opinion. In secondary schools, 29 out of 47 schools (i.e. 47%) provided information. The findings indicated that 39.20% of the pupils were Bahutu while 60-80% were Batutsi. However, there were no Batwa³⁵¹.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 19.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

³⁵¹ Comité d’étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 32.

Some head teachers expressed discomfort and were incapable of responding appropriately to the questions from the committee members regarding the number of Hutus, Tutsis and Twas in their schools. The head of Astrida Groupe Scolaire said that he was unable to take a decision on this issue. Most of them called themselves Tutsi just because they were proud of this name. “The management of Groupe Scolaire accepted no responsibility regarding the accuracy of students’ declarations as per their origin. For us, a pupil is a pupil, no matter whether he/she was a Munyarwanda or Murundi, Muhutu or Mututsi. We make no distinction on their disciplines. There is no racial discrimination.”

It was reported that the exams done for admission into the Groupe Scolaire were administered without any racial distinction and that only the state was responsible for that. The administration of the Groupe Scolaire did not intervene in any way in this area. They had this to say: “we see that there is no Muhutu in the ‘administration option’. Yet, each pupil completing the lower secondary school level is free to choose the option they wish to follow. The obvious conclusion is that the Bahutu are not interested in that option”³⁵². This explanation was refuted by the petitioners without any reason. Responses from the Apostolic Vicariate of Kabgayi also reported the same difficulty. The Priest in charge of schools said: “I do not understand how such information can solve the problem you are investigating. In any case, it would be impossible to give you the information you want (...). During the admissions of seminarians and novitiates, no one is asked about their race. The Church ignores the racial factor in choosing its clergy, and once they are admitted into the seminary or novitiate, God chooses those He wants. Nobody has ever been chassed because of their race”. Concerning the laymen who go abroad to study at the expenses of the Vicariate, we do not put such statistics into consideration: “I know their names but not their respective races. The Vicariate never asks them what their race is before sending them to study abroad, and nor is there any interest to know their races. They are all Banyarwanda”³⁵³.

The same is true of primary schools: “We accept anyone who comes, provided that they meet requirements established by the state in terms of age and regular attendance. In secondary

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Comité d’étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 3

schools, there are entry exams marked by inspectors and arrangements for admission are made according to this criterion³⁵⁴. The headmaster of Mushishiro Mission School sent the following testimony to the *ad hoc* committee:“(...) I must admit that this survey is impossible for us, since we never pay attention to the social class of our children. For us, all our students are Banyarwanda regardless of their race. In principle, we do not want to tackle this issue in our classes so that everyone without any discrimination should feel comfortable with us. In addition, the moral and intellectual abilities of the students are the only two-fold preconditions that we consider for promotion to higher classes or admission to secondary school (...)”³⁵⁵

During the debate about the causes of this Tutsi monopoly, petitioners called for comparisons of the Tutsi monopoly in the social, political and economic fields. It was noted that due to their social status, the Bututsi obtained a place for their children. Ndahayo and Mulindahabi said that the Tutsi children met all the requirements because their parents were rich and could pay the required fees. The King who was chairing the committee wished to know whether it was the rich and not the race that was the root cause of this monopoly. Using arguments from colonial political history, Father Kagiraneza was able to convince the majority of members. He said that the ethnic imbalance was due to several factors³⁵⁶. Since 1917, the native organizations based their argument on the last paragraph of Article 4 of the Legislative Order of April 6, 1917. The article stated: “under the direction of the Resident, chiefs exercise their judicial and political responsibilities following the norms and procedures set up by the native tradition and the royal Commander.” This option was reinforced by the Legislative Order No. 347/ A.I.M.O of October 4th 1943 and by the Decree of 14th July 1952 which recognized the established indigenous authority which was in the hands of the Batutsi and thus, the latter enjoyed advantages from the colonizer. The schools which trained indigenous leaders were state-owned. In the first place, these schools were in Nyanza, Ruhengeri and Cyangugu, and later in Astrida. These schools were reserved for children of chiefs and the Tutsi community who could afford to provide “*ingishywa*”

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 32.

³⁵⁶ Comité d'étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 27

and “*banyagihe*”³⁵⁷. Therefore, the Tutsi aspiration for education was on the increase whereas the Bahutu were not yet aware of the benefits of education.

For the Priest, the Tutsi monopoly in education was, first of all, caused by the political and administrative system in the previous regimes. Although it was relevant during its time, it was no longer the case. Secondly, there was the psychological factor that resulted from the system. The expected benefits of education led the Tutsi to realize the importance of education”³⁵⁸. The committee focused on the segregation perpetrated in the ‘administrative option’ in the *Groupe Scolaire d’Astrida* where the Hutu were not admitted. During the committee members’ visit to the *Groupe Scolaire*, the Principal of the school said that everyone had equal chances to be admitted into the administrative option. Those who knew the history of the school made it clear that, not only the Hutu, but also the ordinary Tutsi were not admitted to this option. Only the children of Hutu or Tutsi chiefs were admitted. By the time the debate was held, this option was no longer there. It had been replaced by a new administrative option whose structure was different from the former one. Mungarulire reported that the new option trained anyone for any administrative post but not exclusively the administration of the chieftaincy. The petitioners questioned the validity of the information given by the Principal of *Astrida Groupe Scolaire*, given that the Tutsi candidates in the new option were the majority. This was proof that nepotism still existed in this option.

Several solutions were suggested to rectify the imbalance that had disadvantaged the Hutu in schools. It was proposed that a thorough campaign be launched among Hutu children of school-going age to enroll for primary school. Bicamumpaka and Mulindahabi proposed that scholarships be granted to poor children at post-primary and higher levels of education. Kagiraneza proposed setting up a fund made up of private people. It was also proposed that nepotism should stop in the administrative option in the *Groupe Scolaire* of *Astrida*. Other proposals were made to sensitize teachers so that children do not drop out of primary school without completing the full cycle. It was also proposed that sufficient premises should be found to run compulsory education. No other proposal convinced the

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 28.

majority of the members than the principle of zero-tolerance on discrimination in school admissions.

Other topical issues were discussed without taking as much time as the previous ones. This was the case for the issue of representation which was challenged by petitioners because of its ethnic imbalance. According to Gitera, CSP was supposed to be formed in accordance with the decree of 1952, but this was not the case. It was exclusively composed of the Batutsi. A better, equitable and fair representation was therefore needed. That is why Gitera advocated for the Hutu representative to the king's court. The CSP members defended themselves that although they were Tutsi, they represented all Rwandans, and that they supported the interests of all Rwandans. The CSP members noted that many proposals and papers by CSP on institutional reorganization were never put before the Trusteeship authority. Yet, the situation needed a total overhaul in favor of a policy towards a constitutional monarchy. The *ad hoc* committee proposed a commission of enquiry to study the matter in all aspects³⁵⁹.

The members of the *ad hoc* committee also briefly talked about the abuses committed by chiefs and deputy chiefs. Letters were sent to the king and read during debating sessions; they outlined various abuses suffered by the Bahutu. The abuses included: extortion of gifts by chiefs on people who wanted to do deaths or births registrations, working for indigenous authorities without payment, premature payment of cattle taxes, punishments inflicted during soil erosion control projects, etc. Kagiraneza, one of the CSP members responded by highlighting the negative effects of forced labor (*Akazi*) whose abolition was proposed. The members were astonished to hear Gitera advocating for maintaining forced labor for some time. He said: "(...) We are people who are not accustomed to doing work. For this very reason, we need minimum amount of work and a minimum degree of freedom. We must therefore, in my opinion, allow some degree of forced labor (...)"³⁶⁰.

Chief Mungarulire said that he was outraged by Gitera's position because forced labor was the real source of public discontent and conflict between the authorities and the population. Many people

³⁵⁹ Comité d'étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 58.

³⁶⁰ Comité d'étude du problème Muhutu-Mututsi, *Rapport*, Nyanza, mars-avril 1958, p. 61.

believed that forced labor was instituted by the traditional Tutsi authority. Deputy Chief Bicamumpaka confirmed this by saying that, “The Batutsi are between the Bahutu and Europeans”, and that this was a constraint imposed by the Trusteeship authority³⁶¹. The *King* summarized the above points by reiterating the abuses of forced labor “*Akazi*” and the unresolved land issues. “The traditional authority cannot find answers to all the questions raised”. He added that misunderstanding affects various sectors of the country’s life, and that Rwanda was managed by the Trusteeship authority and by Christian Missions. Hence, both players should be invited to such debates. The king reported that he took the initiative to organize debates on the Hutu-Tutsi issue, but the colonial government boycotted them. He was not sure whether government could organize broader consultations.

It should be noted that apart from the debates within the CSP, in May and June 1958, the king received letters from the Bahutu in various regions expressing their loyalty to him. These letters were signed by residents from Mulamba, Buliza, Save, Astrida, Buganza Nord, Mugina, Mpara, Mwulire, Kabare, Ngoma, Ruhashya, Mbazi, and Shyogwe. It is likely that the signatories did so at instigation or under the pressure from chiefs and deputy-chiefs (Gitera also signed the letter), in reaction to articles which were published in the *Kinyamateka* of May 1958 attacking the king and the symbols of monarchy. The content of these signed letters can be summarized as follows:

- The signatories would like to distance themselves from Gitera’s argument that the Hutu are oppressed by the Tutsi;
- They want to make it clear that Gitera has not been delegated by the Hutu population, his statements were just speculations and imaginary and only expressed the views of a few individuals;
- There is no conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi: there has always been peace and peaceful coexistence among the Banyarwanda; thus Gitera’s purpose was seen as creating a divide between brothers from the same father (Gihanga’s children);
- Gitera was a dishonest person who did not pay his

³⁶¹ Ibid.

- debts, including paying those who had worked for him;
- The Bahutu did not wish to accede to power through deadly wars with the people in power;
 - The signatories thanked the king for all he had done for the country such as the abolition of feudalism, whipping, forced labor in collective fields (Shiku) and the acquisition of dairy cattle, etc.;
 - The King was hailed for always settling conflicts and disputes addressed to him fairly and justly: the King was reported as the foundation of the country;
 - They consented that abuses existed, but that the Batutsi were not entirely responsible for them; everyone had their fair share of responsibility;
 - Collaboration between authorities and subordinates was proposed as the only solution for a better future.

The debates on the Hutu-Tutsi issue in the CSP were held in an atmosphere of total freedom. They were open debates that had nothing to envy from debates held in developed countries. As one can realize, the ethnic issue in Rwanda is not theoretical. It cannot be conceived without addressing sectorial policies such as education, administration, financial management, exercise of power, etc. The debates presented two approaches and two sensitive issues. On the one hand, the petitioners wanted an immediate solution to their daily life problems. As for members of the CSP, they blamed the entire colonial system for being responsible for the multiple problems in the country and therefore proposed the needed for change. These two approaches were reconcilable. There were areas of agreement however. The debates established the premises on which dialogue could be built. Besides, the radicalization of identity awareness was limited to a few individuals. It was the duty of the Trusteeship government to extend this debate and provide solutions to the identified problems. However, the colonial government chose to distance itself from the debate on the ethnic issue though they acknowledged that it was fundamental in nation building.

➤ **Reaction from the Trusteeship authority**

The Trusteeship local authorities and the Deputy Governor General witnessed a social deterioration among the population but failed to take appropriate measures in time. R. Bourgeois warned the Ministry about the possible consequences of this situation. He said, “Given the big population of the Hutu, if we leave the precarious political situation to deteriorate, it will lead to devastating and unmanageable consequences”³⁶². In agreement with the Resident of Ruanda-Urundi, the Director of Political Affairs in the Governor General’s office made consultations on the future political organization of these two territories. The preliminary draft which served as the basis for discussions between the two Residents focused on the need for immediate reforms. The major points discussed after the project amendment noted that the Council’s opinion was still needed before appointing or dismissing any official of the native authority.

Members of the Council at the sub-chieftaincy level were to be directly elected through a universal male adult suffrage at chieftaincy level. The composition of the council at chieftaincy level was constituted in a more democratic manner because the number of elected members was doubled compared to ex-officio members. In addition, the Territorial Council was dissolved and members who constituted the Higher National Council were overhauled. The chosen or co-opted members of the CSP were composed of delegates from all chieftaincy councils, i.e. 1 chief, 1 deputy chief and 2 notables. The composition of a permanent representation was amended. The new structure was composed of 3 chiefs, 3 notables and 1 member from each category who was appointed by the king. The Council’s duties and responsibilities were categorically stated, particularly those on land and staff appointment.

The draft also included technical reforms on the statute governing indigenous cadres, management of funds in the chieftaincy as well as the king’s funds, the CSP’s powers, etc. The reformed bill was forwarded to Léopoldville in November 1957 with a special request from Usumbura to examine it without delay because the situation was deemed critical and urgent. This is what it stated: “(...) At a time like this when the peasants and Buhutu manifesto have expressed their requests, we have to lead the Territory towards a democratic regime which seeks the emancipation of individuals from feudal

³⁶² Bourgeois R. à Mr. Halleux, 9th September 1957.

bondage. The peasants have put their trust in us and if we wait indefinitely, it would be dangerous to see them turn their back on us and even listen to the advice of bad shepherds (...)"³⁶³.

The technical department of the Ministry of Colonies was also called upon to take action. For the Director General, the whole project took into consideration the evolution of ideas and shaped them thoroughly into political institutions. The Council reforms were considered to be conservative but adequate enough to temporarily meet the aspirations of the native public opinion supported by some Europeans. However, it recommended a clear position on the government's intentions to gain sympathy from the natives. The accuracy of the duties and powers of the Trusteeship authority were meant to decrease tensions between the two parallel administrative institutions. There was a comprehensive law which, on top of building wider institutional confidence of native authorities, firmly maintained the prerogatives of the administrative authority whose role became increasingly difficult³⁶⁴.

The objective of the above was not to be content with minor reforms but to reform the entire system of representation and the relationships between parallel administrations. Certainly, it was necessary to democratize more the native authority institutions in order to ensure a wider representation of the masses. Yet the Trusteeship was still indispensable³⁶⁵. The instruction remained unclear on the co-existence advocated for, namely between the Trusteeship authority and the democratic institutions thus established. The final document was approved in a meeting held on 28th January 1958. It was sent to the Colonial Secretary by the Office of the Governor General. It envisaged two possible scenarios: "either giving the country independence or self rule". The chosen course of action was a progressive transfer of power from the colonial administration by providing local elites with technical support especially in areas where they lacked expertise. The gradual integration of the natives into the colonial government was to be done in parallel. This was done by increasing the powers of the local government. Here, the native administration was subordinated to the colonial one, whereby the latter was supposed to control and supervise it.

³⁶³ Leroy p., Letter to the Governor General, 25 November 1957.

³⁶⁴ Paulus J.M., Note for the Minister, 21 janvier 1958.

³⁶⁵ Note de la 1^{ère} direction de la 2^e direction générale, 21 janvier 1958.

The reasons for the above decision were that in Ruanda-Urundi there was still lack of adequate political maturity to form an autonomous and effective administration and government. This was premised on the inadequacies experienced at both technical and economic levels. In this context, a gradual *africanization* of the general administration was seen as the only solution. The CSP's role was restricted to native affairs, while the Residence was to be assisted by a joint-council of members from the native and Trusteeship authorities to handle technical issues³⁶⁶. Governor General Pétillon accepted the proposed institutional reform on two conditions. First, they were not to lose sight of the issue of Hutu elevation. Secondly, the integration of the natives into the overall administrative structure was not to be exclusively left to the Batutsi. In other words, the Bahutu were to have their fair share, as much as possible. Henceforth, the policy which relied solely on the Batutsi dominant class was considered as outdated: "(...) We must encourage or support the efforts of the Hutu to by helping them achieve their political and social demands of emancipation. In this regard, we will get support from international bodies, high ecclesiastical authorities and active elements of the European population. However, at the beginning, we will have to be careful to avoid taking sides (...) ³⁶⁷".

The Governor General clarified his position *vis-à-vis* the Hutu movement. He said: "(...) I cannot end this letter without mentioning the need to fully support the Hutu emancipation movement, to guide and sometimes supervise it in order to prevent it from causing brutal social and political upheavals or get stuck in impartiality. The danger is, in particular, so serious that the reaction against numerous customary services required, more or less correctly by the Tutsi, could spread to all kinds of work required or directed by the administration in the interest of the nation, especially the farmers. It would be a big problem if excessive laxity degenerates into disorder (...) ³⁶⁸".

The instruction was clear. The local Trusteeship administration was to support claims and mentor the organizations of Hutu elites. Actually, this is what happened. The second condition suggested by the Governor General was to avoid the creation

³⁶⁶ La 1^{re} Direction de la 2^e Direction Générale ; undated document prepared by J.M.Paulus et J. Vanhove

³⁶⁷ Gouverneur général, Lettre du Vice Gouverneur Général, 7 mai 1958

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

of “tiny indigenous States that were economically unviable in the formation of infant nationalism”. In the absence of a unitary State composed of Rwanda and Burundi, it was wished that power devolution should not be narrowed down to “*parochialism*”. However, this wish was never realized. On the eve of 1959, there was a consensus on the need for fundamental reforms to adapt social, political and economic reforms. It is not true that indigenous elites were against this decision as some people asserted, saying that opposition to the reforms would come not from the elites but from the “evolved, evolving and the rural masses”. The Hutu and the most intelligent Tutsi sensed the imminence of the “*defeudalization* of the regime”.

A simple comparison between the recommendations from the meetings of the traditional elites and the projects of the Trusteeship helped to harmonize the convergent and divergent ideas. The outcome of these projects depended primarily on the determination of the Trusteeship authority. Was it willing to lead them to a “sincere dialogue with a valid representation of opinions from the Rwandese as proposed in the first arrangement? By promoting the ethnic divide in the political debate, all the advantages were short lived. An easy way was chosen which safeguarded the interests of the Trusteeship. But this was detrimental to the interests of the majority of Rwandans.

At the 10th session of the CSP which took place in June 1958 in the name of the Vice-Governor, the Provincial Director for Native Affairs declared that “there was nothing to fear either in the current state of our politics or in the co-existence between the Hutu and Tutsi. Concerning the Hutu leaders’ claims, he said: “This is a problem of poor people which is not a problem per se, but they just want to attribute dramatic connotations to it”³⁶⁹. We can say that, on that date, the Trusteeship had not yet changed its alliance with the Tutsi aristocracy. The change of alliance occurred on 3rd December 1958. Indeed, it is at that time that Vice-Governor J. P. Harroy officially denounced the social, political and administrative system previously supported by Belgium. This is what he said in his speech to the General Council: “The Tutsi-Hutu issue is an undeniable problem in this country which is characterized by inequalities (...). It is a fact, on the one hand, that the Tutsi social group occupies a

³⁶⁹ Declaration by M. before members of the CSP, in *Les Rapports du CSP*, Nyanza, 1957, p. 8. In this session, The Roman Catholic was represented by Father Verleye.

high percentage of official posts and whose holders are guilty of abuses and that, on the other hand, the Hutu group forms the vast majority of poor masses who are victims of these abuses.”³⁷⁰ In his memoirs, J. P. Harroy confessed that “this was a difficult decision to make since “it was Belgium that had rejected all the Mutara conclusions of June 1958”³⁷¹. Nevertheless, the Vice-Governor General did not mention the word “ethnic” or “race” in his speech. He talked of “Tutsi or Hutu as social groups”. He knew very well that the problem was not fundamentally ethnic and that it would be wrong to generalize and say that all the Tutsi were rich leaders who were guilty of committing abuses. He knew that a big number of Tutsis were poor³⁷².

He was also aware that not all Hutus were poor peasants, starting with the Hutu elite who consisted of “a marginal group among the Hutu composed of successful civil servants, artisans and teachers, the majority of whom were married to Tutsi women”³⁷³. There was also a large Hutu community in the north of the country which consisted of wealthy land owners known as “*Abakonde*”. In this way, the Vice-Governor General exonerated Belgium from its colonial action because he attributed abuses and errors to the traditional political and administrative organization. At the same time, the Trusteeship Authority renounced its arbitration role in initiating a process of decolonization negotiated by all competing political forces.

The Belgian circles which were concerned with the colonial problem shared opposed views. Some of them favored traditional authorities who, once they became masters of the country, they would necessarily seek Belgium’s support. Those who supported the Hutu elite’s ideas mainly came from the Labor movement of the Belgian Christian Social Party. These were the forces that convinced the Metropolitan Authority to change its tune. Otherwise nothing predestined the Belgian government’s

³⁷⁰ Nkundabagenzi, F., *op. cit.*, P.44

³⁷¹ Harroy J. P., *Rwanda. De la féodalité à la démocratie 1655-1962*, Bruxelles, Hayez, 1984, p. 248.

³⁷² On this note, J. P. Harroy said in his memoirs: “people forget that in the Hutu conflict, the disproportion was as follows: approximately two million Hutu against tens of thousands of Tutsi cadres, their real rulers and oppressors, which left or could have left out a group of more than 250,000 Tutsi peasants, without exorbitant privileges to defend, and often poor if not very poor.” (J. P. Harroy, *op.cit.*, p. 248.)

³⁷³ Ruzindana, A., *L’Eglise catholique missionnaire et les débuts de la crise ethnique au Rwanda : 1900-1973*, Mémoire, Université d’Ottawa, 2003, p. 151.

alliance with the local Hutu *petite-bourgeoisie* which was close to the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, the Ruanda-Urundi administrative authorities were at loggerheads with the Church on the issue of secularization of schools. In addition, Harroy was an anti-clerical who was often treated as a free-mason. He admitted that, even after defending the Hutu cause, it was not yet accepted because he was both liberal and anti-clerical.

In 1959, Grégoire Kayibanda took advantage of his first meeting with King Baudouin in Bujumbura to request him to replace Governor Harroy³⁷⁴ with a Roman Catholic Governor. The change of tune by the Belgian government was a strategy to protect their interests. The Hutu leaders were in fact an alternative authority. Contrary to the traditional authority, the Hutu were not against colonization. They did not denounce colonial exploitation which was a burden for both Hutu and Tutsi masses through forced labor, corporal punishments, taxes, economic exploitation, cultural alienation, etc. The “ethnicization” of the political debate was a convenient tool of achieving this objective since it sidelined crucial problems of the day and focused on scapegoats: “native colonization” by the Tutsi who were taken as a group of long-standing oppressors and foreigners. In this regard, the central committee of PARMEHUTU issued the following statement: “(...) the populations of Ruanda-Urundi want their independence (...) an independence from two types of colonization that history had superimposed on the populations: the Tutsi colonization and the colonization of the European Trusteeship. When the Tutsi say they represent Rwanda, it is exactly like the way the French represented their colonies before independence (...)”³⁷⁵.

During the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Rwanda’s independence, Kayibanda once again put the two types of “foreigners” in the same basket, namely the Tutsi and the Whites who had sucked the blood of Hutus³⁷⁶.

³⁷⁴ Harroy, J. P., op.cit., p. 341.

³⁷⁵ Appel pathétique du Rwanda (*Rwanda’s pathetic appeal*), May 8th 1960: it was signed by six leaders of the party, including Kayibanda.

³⁷⁶ Présidence de la République, *Ingongo z’ingenzi mu mateka y’u Rwanda. Imyaka icumi y’isabukuru y’ ubwigenge : 01-07-1962-01-07-1972, Ibiro by’amakuru muri presidansi ya Repubulika*, 1972, p. 3.

e. The position of the Catholic hierarchy

It would be unfair to generalize and say, like some people have done, that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church was in favor of the ethnic divide right from the word go. The church was divided on this issue. Only a small group of missionaries led by Bishop Perraudin initiated and propagated an ethnic-oriented stand. But this group was so active that it managed to submit its views to missionaries and colonial authorities. Colonel Logiest, the Vice Governor and the Colonial Secretary was at first hesitant but he later mobilized local and metropolitan media on the issue. As for the indigenous clergy, it was divided on the matter. Like King Rudahigwa, Bishop A. Bigirumwami, who was another Rwandan Bishop, was opposed to the ethnocentric approach of Rwandan issues on the ground. For him, the root cause of the problem was expressed as follows: “(...) given Rwanda’s evolution, the fact is that the Bahutu, Batutsi and certainly the Batwa would like to play an active and effective part in the political social and economic destiny of their country (...). We must consider these facts, and basing on these, come to a solution which is devoid of sentiments. The rapid change our country is going through cannot and must not blindfold us to the point of ignoring these realities on social and economic differences”³⁷⁷.

Such a social and dynamic analysis based on facts was opposed by the proponents of a racial-minded analysis. The latter always considered the Bishop of Nyundo as a Tutsi like any other who could not make an impartial analysis of the national issues at stake at that time. On the contrary, Bishop A. Perraudin and his colleagues claimed to champion the cause of the “Hutu Revolution” of 1959. At this delicate moment, the Vicar of Kabgayi issued a famous pastoral letter on 11th February 1959 in which he made the following statement on the issue of ethnicity: “(...) In Rwanda, there are actually several races with specific characteristics shared by each (...), both wealth, political and judicial powers are mainly in the hands of one race”³⁷⁸. It was this analysis which won and inspired political choices and practices

³⁷⁷ *Témoignage chrétien*, 5 septembre 1958.

³⁷⁸ To demonstrate the importance attached to his letter, an order was given to priests and teachers in the Vicariate to make comments on it in churches, in catechism sessions and in classes. This letter was the main reference for the development of a special lesson of church’s social-oriented education (circular of February 11th 1959 and April 15th 1959), this careful monitoring was not given to other documents of the local or universal magistratum.

of the Trusteeship Authority on the eve of independence and subsequent post-colonial regimes”³⁷⁹.

The views of Bishop Perraudin surprised many observers because of the close relationship he enjoyed with the king and the ruling aristocracy before 1959³⁸⁰. This partly explains the bitter attacks and threats he suffered from, not only by the royal court and the Rwanda National Union, (he was booed by crowds in Gahini), but also by religious rivals, especially the Muslims and Anglicans. In his speech, during the ceremony of Episcopal consecration, Bishop Perraudin did not sound revolutionary. However, he later did so through his missionary propaganda. He followed his predecessors’ steps in being faithful, loyal and intimate to the people in power. He said, “When the spiritual and political authorities are in harmony, the world is perfectly ruled; but on the contrary, if there is disagreement between them, matters can lamentably deteriorate³⁸¹. He was referring to the authority in place, but not the one he would help to build from 1959. How can we explain Bishop A. Perraudin’s radical change of heart? When did it start? These questions are difficult to answer due to lack of reliable information. However, it can be deduced that his approach was not original because the racial divide he used was also used by early missionaries who divided the Rwandese into “races” or “castes.”

The missionaries’ ethnocentric approach was proudly presented as an option for social justice in so far as it aimed at promoting and defending the “oppressed majority”³⁸² fighting for “equal rights for all Rwandans no matter what their social and ethnic origin was”³⁸³. Some compared it to the “movement for the poor” which was developed by Latino-American and Asian theologians in the 1980’s. But the truth is that it grossly simplified the

³⁷⁹ The influence of Bishop Perraudin is obvious in the collective letter by bishops from Ruanda-Urundi. It was issued on the eve of the violence outburst of November 1959. In this letter, the bishops analyzed the situation in the same way as he did: “the fact that Ruanda-Urundi would entrust a kind of monopoly to one group does not meet the standards of a healthy organization of society (Letter by the Apostolic Vicar of Ruanda-Urundi, August 25th 1959).

³⁸⁰ According to Kayihura M., King Rudahigwa who did not want a Belgian bishop, he might have backed the candidacy of a Swiss father, thinking that he would manage to distance himself from the Belgians. Curiously, Rwanda never had a bishop of Belgian nationality.

³⁸¹ *Théologie et Pastorale*, no , 1957, p. 122

³⁸² *Vivant univers*, no 416, 1995, p. 43

³⁸³ Kalibwami, J., 1982, op.cit. p.436

serious political and socio-economic problems of the day which the entire population experienced, but these problems were not shouldered by one ethnic group. The accusation by the influential members of the Clergy and the Trusteeship authority against the “native Tutsi colonialism” as exclusively responsible for all ills was a way of hiding the responsibilities of colonization and evangelization which were characterized by coercion. Holding a thorough debate would have required self-criticism from the Belgian missionaries and large Tutsi families, but none of the two groups was prepared to do this.

The missionaries’ preference for an ethnic-oriented approach is partly explained by the fact that the former were never given basic training in sociology or political science as this could have spared them some of their conceptual confusion. The concept of social class frightened them. This is also explained by the fact that the Flemish missionaries who were very active in this matter reproduced the Belgian racial pattern in Rwanda. They compared the Tutsi to the dominant majority in the same way they compared the French-speaking people in Belgium with the *Bourgeoisie*³⁸⁴.

But it was primarily the context of the Cold War which mostly influenced the choice of this ethnocentric approach. The ecclesiastical circles feared that Communism in Belgian territories would be spread through emergent nationalisms. The missionaries wanted to use one group of Rwanda’s educated elite as anti-nationalist or anti-communist. They achieved this goal because G. Kayibanda and his companions were a product of the missionaries. They were mentored by the Belgian Catholic Movement (the Youth Workers/ Catholic Workers’ Movement), the Catholic press and Belgian Christian Democrats. These Belgian catholic and missionary organizations made of educated people with representatives of “oppressed peoples” were willing to create a political party along the lines of “the Christian Democrats” to promote the interests of their masters. In 1959, the future of the missionaries was precarious because of the existing links between the Catholic Church and the colonial system. This shared responsibility was real. Real also were the benefits which the Church got from the colonial regime. Indeed,

³⁸⁴ Linard, A., « Rwanda : les deux erreurs de l’Eglise catholique », in *Coeli. No 83, 1995, p. 16*. The Flemish and Catholic administrative staff was systematically concentrated in Rwanda by Harroy (free mason), which gave rise to community disputes about Belgium.

these two institutions provided grants and other facilities for the construction of schools and health centers. Imminent changes were expected to lead to a situation of reforms which was difficult to accomplish. Thus, missionary work and Church influence were paramount issues in the process of searching for allies.

a. The 1959-1962 changes

The 1959-1962 events are still vivid in the minds of many Rwandans. For some, these were times mentioned with pride because they were a source of “liberation for the Hutu who had been exploited by the Tutsi for centuries”. That is why this event was given the name of “*Social revolution of 1959*”. This was the view held by leaders of the First and Second Republics, and indeed, it was endorsed in many writings³⁸⁵. However, from another view point, these events were characterized by suffering, injustice, homelessness, discrimination, and racist policies. For the latter, these events had nothing to do with the ‘social revolution’ mentioned above leading to improved governance and living conditions. These radically different views still exist even today. They still characterize the scientific literature, political speeches as well as the conversations among ordinary citizens. Experienced researchers equally share these opposed views. Thus J. P. Chrétien talks of an ethnic revolution that was characterized by a racist ideology. As for, C. Vidal, “we cannot talk of a “social revolution” because the main protagonists and their allies did not demonstrate a social concern of the people in their political programs and speeches. For the latter, it was a question of power confiscation by a small group of people³⁸⁶. Beyond this debate, we need to ask ourselves three questions: “who did what and for what reasons? what were the strategies used? who were victims, etc?”

➤ Death of King Mutara II Rudahigwa.

The year 1959 is very important in the history of Rwanda. It was from this time that many events which shaped the destiny of Rwanda took place. On 25th July, 1959, King Mutara II Rudahigwa died in mysterious circumstances in Bujumbura. The circumstances surrounding his death are still unknown. There are divergent official versions. Some said that the king died of a

³⁸⁵ The most famous is the Murego’s theory, already cited.

³⁸⁶ IRDP, 2006, op.cit.

“penicillin injection”³⁸⁷. Others talked of “cerebral hemorrhage”³⁸⁸ while others suggest the possibility of ritual suicide. For some Rwandans, this death was not natural. They contend that “it is the colonial authorities and Bishop Pérraudin, the Apostolic Vicar of Kabgayi, who plotted against the king and killed him”.

Whatever the actual reason for the king’s death may be, King Rudahigwa’s death plunged Rwanda’s political landscape into total chaos that led to a political vacuum in the country. It occurred at the time when the country was in the midst of reforms. Many people were expecting real reforms in the political arena. And, in addition, the relationship between King Rudahigwa and the Trusteeship authority had become sour. It was the end of an era of a collaborative regime between the Trusteeship authority and the *Nyiginya* monarchy. It marked the beginning of a new and eventful era which led to the introduction of important institutional, political as well as social reforms.

After the king’s death, many open consultations were made. The Hutu leaders gathered in Ruhengeri in a bid to set up a new political formula to be proposed to the Belgian Trusteeship authority³⁸⁹. The latter did the same in Nyanza. “The Resident of Rwanda held several consultative meetings with his staff”³⁹⁰. The pro-monarchy side also did the same. The Trusteeship authority envisaged a transitional period but not an immediate appointment of a successor. Before burying the late king, the court ritualist (*Umwiru*) declared the name of King Rudahigwa’s successor, Jean Baptiste Ndahindurwa who was to rule under the name of King Kigeli V. According to A. Kagame, it was Rudahigwa who revealed this plan³⁹¹. Some people considered Jean Baptiste

³⁸⁷ Harroy, J. P., op.cit. p. 261. This book is full of evidence that displays J. P. Harroy’s insufficient knowledge on Rwanda. The assertion of the king’s ritual suicide in Bujumbura is groundless: there was no war between the two countries and Rwanda had no intention of conquering Burundi.

³⁸⁸ Letter by the territory administrator in Astrida, H. Bovy, Astrida, July, 1959.

³⁸⁹ Paternostre de la Mairie, B. « *Le Rwanda, son effort de développement* », Bruxelles-Kigali, De Boeck-Edition rwandaise, 1972, p. 209.

³⁹⁰ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit., PP. 258-259.

³⁹¹ Letter by A. Kagame to Bishop Perraudin, July 27th, 1959. He clarified circumstances in which Rudahigwa told him his views. It was at Bougainvellié Hotel in Cyangugu territory (around February, 1959). Rudahigwa invited his brother Ndahindurwa and told him in front of Kagame: “I order you to go and see Father Kagame once a week, in order to learn about traditions, custom and literature of Rwanda.” He then told Kagame: “you have to initiate him into everything about Rwandan soul and teach him.” Kagame, who kept silent on this matter, interpreted this conversation as follows:

Ndahindurwa's appointment as a coup d'état (*the Mwima coup d'état*). On the other hand, others saw it as a procedure that restored the secular tradition. The evidence provided by the proponents of the first assertion was that the Belgian government was presented with a *fait accompli*. They could discuss political opportunities of the modalities chosen by the monarchists but could not question the legality of the act. Indeed, Article 15 of the 1952 decree which served as the reference text stated that: "the title of King is determined by the rules of the tradition. However, he can fulfill his duties only after being sworn-in by the Governor." This swearing-in ceremony took place on 9th October 1959 during which time the king took an oath and committed himself to rule as a constitutional monarch. However, there was lack of trust because the relationships between the court and the Trusteeship authority kept on deteriorating.

➤ **Birth of political parties**

On the basis of the Legislative order No. 11/234 of 8th May 1959 on political associations which was approved by the Ordinance R.U. No 111/105 of 15th June 1959, political parties were created in 1959 in preparation for elections that were to be held towards the end of year and in accordance with the 1952 decree. From September 1959 to May 1960, there were 20 political parties. Only four of them were mass parties that monopolized the political scene. The remaining 16 parties were regional parties or associations³⁹². The four major political parties were:

"I deduce that, in case he died childless, it was Ndahindurwa who would succeed him."

³⁹² Regional parties were: Alliance Bakiga (ABAKI) in short [*Bakiga alliance*]; Association des Bahutu Évoluant pour la Suppression des Castes (ABESK) [The Association of Bahutu who advocate the abolition of castes]; Association des cultivateurs du Rwanda (ACR) [*Association of Rwandan Farmers*]; Association du Parti Démocrate Chrétien (APADEC) [*Association of Christian Democratic Party*]; Association des Commerçants Indigènes (APROCOMIN) [*Association of Indigenous Traders*]; Association pour le Relèvement Démocratique des Batwa (AREDETWA) [*Association for the Democratic Rehabilitation of Batwa*]; Alliance du Ruanda-Urundi et du Congo (ARUCO) [*Alliance of Ruanda-Urundi and Congo*]; Association des Éleveurs du Rwanda (ASSERU) [*association of Rwandan breeders*]; Mouvement Monarchiste Rwandais (MOMOR) [*Rwandan Monarchist Movement*]; Mouvement pour l'Union Rwandaise (MUR) [*Rwandan Union Movement*]; Parti Monarchiste Progressiste (PAMOPRO) [*Progressive Monarchist Party*]; Parti social Chrétien du Rwanda (PSCR) [*Christian Social Party of Rwanda*]; Union des aborozi Africains du Rwanda (UAARU) [*Rwanda's African breeders' Union*]; Union des Masses Rwandaises (UMAR) [*Rwandan Masses Union*]; Union Afro-Européenne (UNAFREUROP) [*Afro-European Union*]; Union des intérêts communs de Kinyaga

- The “*Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse*” (APROSOMA): ‘Association for the Social Promotion of the Masses’. It was founded in November 1957. This association became a political party on 15th February 1959. Before confirming its Hutu leanings, APROSOMA tended to galvanize support from cadres, seminarians and teacher training colleges as well as the prestigious graduates from the ‘Astrida School’, regardless of their respective disciplines (i.e. administration, veterinary, medicine, etc.). The graduates from Astrida earned a better salary than others even though they did the same job. The President of APROSOMA was Joseph Habyarimana who was also known as Gitera. The latter centered his political campaign against the monarchy and its symbols.

Gitera was the first Hutu political leader to encourage the Hutu youth “to take machetes and exterminate the Tutsi” who were referred to as a “deep wound” (*Igisebe cy’umufunzo*), “a leech inside the body” and “a stomach cancer”. He once said to the Hutu youth: “Remember, he who kills rats does not pity those under gestation”³⁹³. The Rwandan Bishops resolved to warn their clergy against the Hutu socialist Party whose “speech revealed an anti-Christian spirit of race-based hatred”³⁹⁴. In any case, it was this anti-Christian spirit that was reflected in the speech by Joseph Habyarimana Gitera to his supporters in Astrida on 27th September 1959³⁹⁵.

- *The Union Nationale Rwandaise* (UNAR) [Rwanda National Union] was created in May 1959 and was officially inaugurated on 3rd September 1959. Its President was François Rukeba who presented several petitions to the UNO. Since its creation, UNAR (*Abashyirahamwe b’U Rwanda*) set out to “energetically fight against anything that stirred up conflicts against any division-oriented activities and any kind of provocation leading to racial hatred”. They condemned “any form of social

(UNINTERCOKI) [*Union for Common Interests of Kinyaga*].

³⁹³ Murego, D., 1975, op.cit. p. 897; these were the main themes found in the newspaper called *Ijwi rya Rubanda rugufi* (*the voice of the voiceless*), developed by Gitera.

³⁹⁴ Circular of October 11th, 1959

³⁹⁵ Gitera Habyarimana, J., Umunsi mukuru wi ibohorwa rya Abahutu ku ngoyi yu ubuja bwa Batutsi mu Rwanda, Astrida, 27/9/1959.

discrimination between the Black and White people and among the Rwandese themselves”. UNAR insisted that, it was a nationalist movement which was not driven by hatred but by fraternity and justice.

They declared themselves as enemies of chauvinism and sectarianism³⁹⁶. They wanted to recruit all Rwandans regardless of their race, social status and religion. There were other parties as well.

- The *Rassemblement Démocratique Rwandais* (RADER) [Rwanda Democratic Assembly] was created by Prosper Bwanakwari on 14th September 1959. He was the chief of Rusenyezi chieftaincy (Kibuye territory). This party was formed with the help of some colonists and missionaries. Bwanakwari wanted it to form a centrist party bringing together UNAR and the Hutu parties. According to A. Kagame, “in comparison with other political parties, RADER was fictitious because, from the beginning, it brought together office clerks working for Belgian administrators who were opposed to UNAR in an effort to divide the Batutsi monarchists”³⁹⁷. Even Colonel Logiest did not believe the strength of this party. “Obviously,” he said, “this party was not rooted among the people”. The discrete but obvious scheme of the colonial administration was not made to attract the masses and it became skeptical as to the actual weight carried by this party in the political struggles ahead”³⁹⁸. From the violence of November, RADER entered a phase of confusion and tugging, condemning both UNAR and the Belgian officials who ruled Rwanda as instigators of violence.

- The “*Parti du mouvement de l’Emancipation des Bahutu*” (PARMEHUTU) [The Bahutu Emancipation Movement] was founded on 9th October 1959. It was officially recognized as a political party on 18th October 1959. Since its inception, this party took advantage of Europeans, settlers and missionaries. It harbored hatred against the Tutsi ethnic group. PARMEHUTU attacked the Tutsi

³⁹⁶ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit. pp. 99. 101.

³⁹⁷ Kagame, A., 1972, op.cit. PP. 265-266.

³⁹⁸ Logiest, G., « *Mission au Rwanda. Un Blanc dans la bagarre Tutsi-Hutu* », Bruxelles, Didier-Hatier, 1988, p. 101.

ethnic group which they wanted to come to an end before acceding to independence. That was the meaning they associated with independence, hence, the slogan “democracy first, independence later”. The Hutu-Bantu leaders demanded that “the Trusteeship authority’s last act should be to take radical and immediate measures needed for decolonization”³⁹⁹.

In 1960, PARMEHUTU declared that the republican form of government was the best system to ensure freedom and equality before the law and that it was the best representative power-sharing arrangement. The transition from “feudal, colonialist and racist monarchy to a constitutional monarchy had become impossible. In addition, it was stated by PARMEHUTU that the liberation of Hutu-Bantu groups from Tutsi colonialism required the abolition of the *King* form of government and all its feudal and racist myths”⁴⁰⁰.

To solve the problem of Hutu-Tutsi divide, MDR PARMEHUTU suggested the formation of a confederation of two separate regions for the two groups, namely “the Hutu and Tutsi separate regions”. This was a similar arrangement organized between the Flemish and Walloons in Belgium⁴⁰¹. This proposal was submitted to the UN. It was justified that the proposed separation would lead to: “(...) national progress and democratic life, the common good as well as tranquility of the two groups”⁴⁰². They proposed a demarcation of areas suitable for the development of each ethnic group. The justification for this proposal was based on “the insurmountable difference between the Hutu and Tutsi groups” as well as the divergent political opinions held by the two groups. The Tutsi advocated for a balance between autonomy and independence from 1960 to 1962 whereas the Hutu wanted a “preservation of an active Trusteeship for a reasonable period of time”. The Tutsi wanted to prolong war (continuation of the November 1959 unrest) while the Hutu wanted to get back to work. The Tutsi wanted to hold on to their hegemony. Finally, “despite the false illusion of living and working together and some cases of mixed marriage, the Tutsi and Hutu lived as two

³⁹⁹ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit., p. 250.

⁴⁰⁰ MDR Parmehutu’s declaration, June 6th, 1960.

⁴⁰¹ Jya mbere, n° 3, November 27th, 1959, Jya mbere, n° 5, January 3rd 1960.

⁴⁰² Jya mbere no 3 November 27th, 1959, p.2.

states within one State”⁴⁰³. The coexistence and collaboration between the Hutu and Tutsi required an “establishment of two zones, otherwise one ethnic group would disappear in favor of the other”⁴⁰⁴. The Hutu-Tutsi dialogue was impossible to achieve. The UNAR-minded fanaticism was strong and everlasting. It was better to determine the regions for this confederation.

The advocates of this separate confederation noted that separate regions did not mean segregation like the one perpetrated by the “Hamite” monopoly in schools and social life. “We do not want to rectify segregation by instituting another one, but this is the most realistic method to ensure social peace and free development for all the groups to live harmoniously in the country. The creation of separate regions is better than traditionalism”⁴⁰⁵. Leaving each group the possibility to develop its own aspirations would lead to a genuine decentralization policy. The proposed regions for the Tutsi were Bugesera, Rukaryi, Baganza (in Kigali territory), Kibungo and Mutara territories.

All in all, a comparative analysis of the political parties’ programs⁴⁰⁶ shows that most parties were similar. Their difference however lay in the question of internal autonomy and independence. UNAR wanted immediate and unconditional independence. It rejected any idea of internal autonomy which implied “collaboration” with the Belgians and was compared to a perpetual cold war. It would lead to a series of assassinations and divisions among Rwandans. The other three parties wanted to first “democratize the country”⁴⁰⁷. Gitera presented independence as synonymous with “witch-hunting the Whites” and “reintroducing forced labor, exploitation and tyranny of the Tutsi”⁴⁰⁸.

After the approval of the multiparty system, political parties started campaigning. UNAR was anti-colonialist. During the political meetings held at Nyamirambo on 13th September 1959, UNAR leaders talked about national unity, autonomy and

⁴⁰³ Reference is made to the text by twelve servants of the royal court which denies the existence of fraternity between the Hutu and Tutsi. The letter was refuted by some individuals but not by the CSP and yet it was addressed to the latter.

⁴⁰⁴ Jya mbere, no 3, November 27th, 1959, p. 2.

⁴⁰⁵ Jya mbere, no 3 November 17th, 1959, p. 3

⁴⁰⁶ Reyntjens F., 9185, op.cit., p. 255.

⁴⁰⁷ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit., p. 93.

⁴⁰⁸ Meeting of September 27th, 1959.

independence⁴⁰⁹. Initially, UNAR enjoyed real success because of its discourse and the fact that the majority of chiefs and deputy-chiefs had joined the party. According to R. Lemarchand, UNAR's success was due to the fact that it had a nationalist-orientated discourse which aimed at uniting all Rwandans for progress in all areas⁴¹⁰.

Nonetheless, UNAR met a strong opposition from the Trusteeship administration and partly from the Catholic Church. The administration used all means to destabilize this party. For example, there was an unfair transfer of three chiefs who were influential in UNAR. These were: M. Kayihura, P. Mungarulire, and C. Rwangombwa. They were reprimanded for having attended a meeting organised by UNAR despite the fact that they were civil servants⁴¹¹. Before silencing UNAR leaders and before smashing the party's popular base, a lot of anger was used by the Trusteeship authority to sabotage the activities of this party during their campaigns. Even the Catholic Church leaders like Bishop A. Bigirumwami and Bishop A. Perraudin warned Catholics against UNAR because it was accused of monopolizing patriotism in its favor. UNAR said that those who were not with them were against the country⁴¹². They demanded immediate independence and broke ties with the Metropolitan power. They were accused of being in contact with other African nationalists and this was proof for their affinity with Communism.

On the other hand, PARMEHUTU got support from the Trusteeship Government and partly from the Catholic Church whose plan was to help this party to accede to power by winning elections. Initially, it was only known within the immediate neighborhood of Kabgayi and Rwaza missions. Lemarchand talked of the assistance given to PARMEHUTU in minimizing its weaknesses: "(...) yet the PARMEHUTU remained rather weak and ineffectively organized, thus failing to mobilize grassroots support in areas other than Gitarama and Kabgayi. The main asset of the Hutu leadership was the utmost unconditional support they received from the Catholic Church, which enabled them, among other

⁴⁰⁹ Read minutes of this meeting by Ndazaro, L.

⁴¹⁰ Lemarchand, R., 1970, *op.cit.*, P. 158.

⁴¹¹ Resident's letter to the three chiefs, September 24th, 1959; see also letter of protest by UNAR committee to the Vice-Governor General, October 16th, 1959.

⁴¹² Circular of September 24th, 1959.

things, to gain control over their vernacular press and their use of the daily newspaper “*Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique*” published in Bujumbura. It served as a vehicle for disseminating their ideas among Europeans and literate Africans”⁴¹³.

G. Kayibanda had ties with many associations which had good working relations with the Catholic Church and scattered throughout the country⁴¹⁴. He proved effective in spreading PARMEHUTU slogans and messages⁴¹⁵.

➤ **The ethnic and political violence of November 1959**

The ethnic and political violence that took place in the first half of November 1959 occurred in a social-political climate that was tense. The Trusteeship government could no longer get along with the native assistants and the royal court. During their campaigns, political parties used an abusive language and held inflammatory leaflets that considered opponents as enemies. The antagonism between UNAR and other political parties made the situation acquire a more explosive stance. There was aggression between the young UNAR militants and PARMEHUTU. D. Mbonyumutwa, a PARMEHUTU deputy chief was allegedly victimized at Byimana and this added insult to injury. Rumors of his death spread throughout the Ndiza⁴¹⁶. At first, the groups of the Hutu youth conducted a hunt for the Tutsi in the Central and north-western regions of the country. Then, there was a monarchists’ counter-offensive led by UNAR members in the south (see Map 12 below):

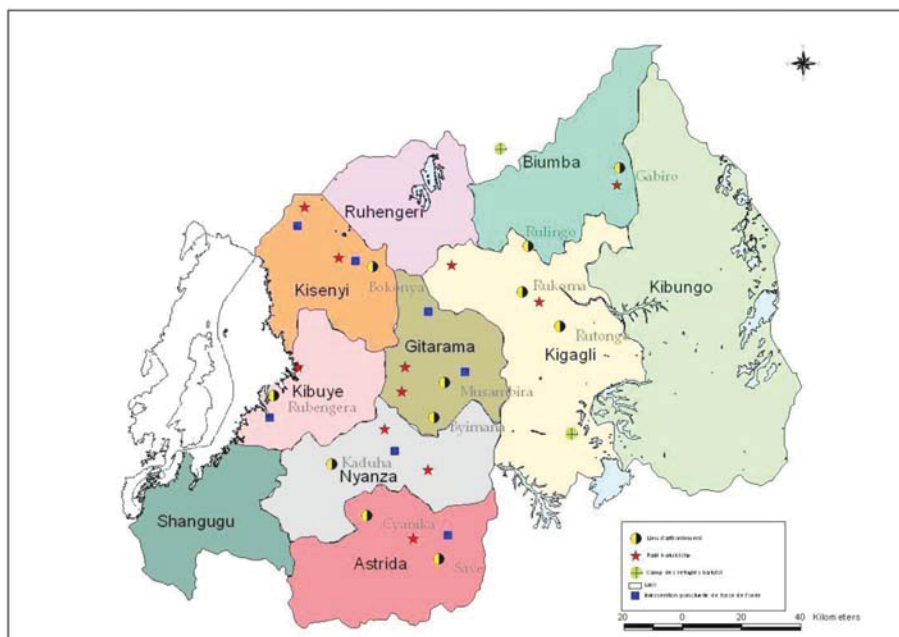
⁴¹³ Lemarchand, R., 1970, op.cit., p. 161.

⁴¹⁴ For instance mutual assistance groups, Legio Mariae, association of teachers and seminary alumni, associations of former pupils, cultural circles, cooperatives, Sacred heart leagues, teachers’ or pupils’ choirs, Eucharistic crusades, etc.

⁴¹⁵ Musangamfura S., *La propagande du MDR PARMEHUTU*, Mémoire de Licence, UNR Ruhengeri, 1987, pp. 27-36.

⁴¹⁶ Up to now there is no study that deals with the part played by Belgian administration in spreading rumors and disinformation in order to manipulate Rwandan propagandists.

Map 12: Ethnic and political violence between 1959 and 1962



Source: Map by Lugan, B., *Vers l'indépendance du Rwanda: Evénements politiques de 1959-1962*, Edition M.D.I., St. Germain-en-Laye, France, 1975.

During the violence, the Belgian administrative authorities were absent. They justified their absence by the structure of the terrain and the limited number of military personnel at their disposal. For the royal court, the silence of the Belgian authorities implied support to the uprising of Hutu parties. Indeed, it was an established fact that Belgian officials supported the spread of disorder. The Trusteeship administration's support for Hutu leaders was strengthened by the arrival of Colonel Logiest on 9th November 1959. He took over the command of Belgo-Congolese troops and later, took over the leadership of Rwanda as a special Resident who was directly responsible to the Colonial Office (but not to Governor General). The Colonel had all the powers and used them as he pleased. His action was decisive for PARMEHUTU in acceding to power. He declared President Habyarimana on 5th July 1962 as a "God-given man".

Colonel Logiest quickly stopped the political line he was supposed to follow. In preparation for the visit of De Schrijver, the Minister of Colonies, Colonel Logiest collaborated with Major Louis Merlière

(Chief of Staff) from the FP Headquarters in Léopoldville. He was a specialist in “guerilla operations and revolutionary warfare”. On 20th November 1959, he prepared a paper on the situation and proposed a line of action to be followed in the near future. This document was very interesting. It outlined the plans to be used in solving Rwanda’s political unrest at that time.

According to this document, “the monarchy which was made of 15% of the population could no longer be reformed. The majority of people preferred a democratic regime and a constitutional monarchy. “We have to meet the needs of the majority and give them part of the power they deserve. UNAR has to be neutralized through fighting its armed gangs as well as the king because of his symbolic value⁴¹⁷”. “King Kigeli V will always be an obstacle to the process of democratization”, said Colonel Logiest. “His education is based on anti-democratic beliefs. He is surrounded by UNAR extremists”. The colonel was aware of the plan that the “king might flee” to Uganda. And, he was also aware that the Tutsi could flee to this country and organize terrorist counter attacks. This would oblige Belgium to occupy the country militarily, thus undermining its credibility before the UN.

Why was Colonel Logiest biased against UNAR? According to him, “this party was seeking support from the Congolese political parties and the UN in order to influence the international opinion in their favor. He also felt that UNAR had a plan of neutralizing other political parties through intimidation, and this would stir up, according to him, an anti-Belgian uprising⁴¹⁸”. Colonel Logiest wanted to recover the traditional authority of the king in his plan. He used the following means: propaganda statements, confining the king to Kigali, and making him understand that any opposition to the Trusteeship authority was a suicidal move. He continued with the policy of replacing chiefs and deputy-chiefs by people who were favorable to the Trusteeship authority; he conducted a harsh crackdown against any sort of intimidation as well as purging traditional institutions of UNAR sympathizers; he provided financial, political and organizational assistance to other political parties (other than UNAR); he set up a real propaganda department supervised by a specialized staff which influenced the public through radio, newspapers, cinema,

⁴¹⁷ Lefèvre P. et J.N., *Les militaires belges et le Rwanda (1916-2006)*, Bruxelles, Editions Racines, 2006, pp. 52-53.

⁴¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 53.

leaflets, brochures, mobile groups, photos, etc. Colonel Logiest also sought to contact the Colonial Office personally in order to establish diplomatic ties through Uganda and Tanganyika and the British Colonial Authorities. This would make the latter change their position and attitude *vis-à-vis* Belgium because these countries could serve as a base for extremists. The Belgian diplomatic staff in these countries therefore needed to be strengthened. We shall see how this plan was pursued and executed in its entirety.

In addition, Colonel Logiest hosted the Colonial Minister in Kigali. The latter was amazed by the policy used. Following this visit, Colonel Logiest was sent to Rwanda for a short period of six months to exercise the functions of a civilian administrator with a title of “Special Civil Resident”. He enjoyed exceptional and unlimited powers. To achieve his objective, several measures were taken to eliminate UNAR from the political scene. He used all the means at his disposal to keep the Tutsi away from the new state machinery. The first step in the long process of PARMEHUTU’s access to power was the dismissal of a big number of chiefs and deputy-chiefs. They were replaced by members of PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA. As a result, after the violence of November, 23 chiefs out of 45 and 158 deputy-chiefs out of 489 no longer exercised their functions because they were arrested under the pretext that they had fermented violence in their constituencies. Some fled the country; others were killed, yet others had their property destroyed or got imprisoned. In his message to Rwandans on 23rd November 1959, Colonel Logiest explained the reason for these reforms as follows: “(...) in several territories, Hutu chiefs and deputy-chiefs were appointed to replace Tutsi chiefs and deputy-chiefs who were dismissed. However, this has not been done to harm the Tutsi. It has been done for the good of the Hutu majority living in those territories, i.e. those who have been demanding to be governed by their fellow Hutu”)⁴¹⁹.

The king protested against this decision which he described as illegal but all was in vain. Article 17 of the 1952 decree gave Col. Logiest the powers to appoint chiefs and deputy-chiefs. This decision was a milestone in the evolution of the country. On the strength of this decision, the colonial administration made new appointments and gave funds to the new authorities and their

⁴¹⁹ Itangazo rya bwana Perezida spécial w’u Rwanda no 4, ritangiwe I Kigali, ku wa 23 décembre 1959.

parties to expand geographically. Without these means, this expansion would have been impossible.

➤ **Government declaration of 10th November 1959**

Before the violence of 16th April 1959, the Belgian government sent a working team to Ruanda-Urundi to conduct an investigation on local aspirations within the Territory. The report on this investigation was filed on 2nd September 1959. The declaration of 10th November 1959 was based on the report which proposed deeper political and administrative reforms. The Belgian government called for a reform agenda in two stages. The first stage involved the establishment of local governments with progressive autonomy. The second stage proposed the restriction of the territorial administrative union to a monetary and customs union as well as some technical matters. Accordingly, chieftaincies were to become administrative units and not political units. The expanded sub-chieftaincies were to become “*communes*” [*municipalities*]. The king was to remain a constitutional head. He was outside government and was above parties. He was to exercise legislative power jointly with the Higher National Council. It was proposed that there should be a fusion of traditional and colonial administration, and many responsibility posts were to be granted to nationals⁴²⁰.

At first glance, the government’s declaration suggested that autonomy and independence were envisaged in the near future. However, Belgium set one condition: she was not ready to withdraw as long as Rwanda and Burundi were still economically backward. UNAR reacted negatively to this statement because of lack of a set timetable for independence. As for Hutu parties, the declaration put an end to what they called ‘Tutsi feudalism’ and ‘racial discrimination’⁴²¹. In reality, the declaration aimed at calming the people down. However, this decision was made too late because enough damage had already been done by the Trusteeship authority which had taken sides with PARMEHUTU.

After assigning chieftaincies and sub-chieftaincies to PARMEHUTU, the Trusteeship authority proceeded with other reforms. The Higher National Council was replaced with a *Provisional Special Council*. The trusteeship organized elections

⁴²⁰ Ministère des Colonies, *Déclaration du gouvernement sur la politique de la Belgique au Ruanda-Urundi, prononcée devant les Chambres*, le 10 novembre 1959.

⁴²¹ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit., pp. 121-123

despite the protests made by UNAR. Members of the *Provisional Special Council* were appointed in accordance with Ordinance No. 221/51 of 6th February 1960. Their number was increased to 8 to allow a wider representation of national parties by two members. The king was represented by his brother Ruzibiza. The debates were chaired by Bovy who was the administrator at that time. The *Provisional Special Council* was charged with monitoring the kings' activities and replacing his authority. That is why the king rejected its proposals. This marked the separation between the king and the united forum that was composed of PARMEHUTU, APROSOMA and RADER.

➤ **Local council elections**

The local council elections were planned under the framework of the decree of 14th July 1952 and the declaration of 10th November 1959. UNAR requested for a three-month withdrawal from the *Provisional Special Council* due to the November violence and the state of emergency which was declared in the country. The UN Mission report also made a similar proposal. This was refuted by the Trusteeship authority which proposed that the elections would take place in June 1960. In response, UNAR withdrew from the *Provisional Special Council* and decided to boycott the elections⁴²². Local council elections were preceded by a campaign in which the Trusteeship administration took an open stand in favor of PARMEHUTU, warning the population against UNAR. The Special Resident issued a statement in which he said: "I would like to tell you about PARMEHUTU which is a spotless party. It is a party that defends the rights of the Hutu⁴²³. The dream of the Belgian administration came true through the suppression of the forces that were against these elections. An atmosphere of extreme tension characterized Rwanda's Residence. There were acts of violence which, in most cases, targeted UNAR and its sympathizers.

UNAR was regarded as a party of feudalists who owned all the land, and who abused their *bagaragu* (*servants/vassals*) and their *bagererwa*. It was accused of operating a system of corrupt chiefs and deputy chiefs who only saw their mandate as a way of exploiting the masses⁴²⁴. There was a crackdown on RADER

⁴²² Rudipresse, n° 173, 4 juin 1960, P. 6.

⁴²³ Communiqué n° 7 du Résident spécial du Rwanda, du 8 février 1960.

⁴²⁴ Circular to the residents of Astrida Territory, 2 July 1960, pp. 1-2.

which prompted the latter to withdraw from the united front on the eve of elections. The local council elections took place between 28th June and 30th July 1960. The results turned out that 229 *Burgomasters* (Mayors) and 2,896 Local councilors were elected. PARMEHUTU won 70.4% of the seats. The abstention rate was estimated at 21.8%. PARMEHUTU thus took control of almost all municipalities in the country thereby monopolizing both political and administrative power at local level. Some observers believed that this party would not have achieved this much if UNAR had participated in these elections. The Trusteeship authority did not provide conditions for a level playing field between the parties. Hence, the elections were considered as undemocratic.

In the same year on 18th October 1960, the Special Resident issued an order No. 221/275 which established a Council of 48 members and an interim government. The *Provisional Special Council* was dissolved. Grégoire Kayibanda was asked by the Special Resident to form an interim government. The government was composed of 10 Ministers and 11 State Ministers, with 10 Europeans and 11 Rwandans. There was therefore no barrier that prevented the colonial power from ushering PARMEHUTU into high-ranking government positions. From the legal perspective, the situation thus created became more confusing than it had originally appeared. Indeed, the government formed was in favor of the king, while the latter had always been against the illegality of the process involved. The king was forced to leave the country in June 1960⁴²⁵.

➤ **Discussions on Parliamentary elections**

The elections were preceded by several initiatives intended to amicably settle the Rwandan crisis. Many meetings were organized by Rwandan Police officers, the Trusteeship representatives and the UN visiting team. They organized a symposium and conference in Gisenyi and Ostend respectively. The UN passed several resolutions, but these initiatives resulted in the “Gitarama coup d’état.”

The symposium held in Gisenyi from 7th to 14th December 1960 brought together 6 representatives of the interim government and 13 representatives of political parties: 7 members were from PARMEHUTU, 2 from APROSOMA, 2 from RADER and 2

⁴²⁵ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit., p. 322.

from UNAR. Its objective was twofold: to organize parliamentary elections and establish structures within the context of internal autonomy. The symposium was of advisory nature. The Trusteeship had the option of taking the results achieved into account or not. The date for elections was subject to differing views. UNAR and RADER requested for the postponement of these elections beyond 15th January 1961. However, PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA insisted on the date of 15th January 1961. The problem of representation was discussed but not resolved. Considering that their representation in the symposium was insufficient, UNAR, APROSOMA and RADER, suggested that even small political parties should be represented. Nonetheless, PARMEHUTU rejected this proposal. In response, UNAR and RADER left the symposium and the symposium proceedings were compiled during their absence.

The resolutions reached, included the future establishment of structures for an internal government and the adoption of the principle of a unitary parliament and establishing the criteria for eligibility. However, the symposium failed to resolve the issues which were raised. And this suited the Trusteeship authority which was ready to intervene so as to avoid chaos. The Rwandan case was discussed during the 15th session of the UN General Assembly. On the eve of the meeting, UNAR, RADER and King Kigeli V filed a series of petitions and a memorandum to the commission to examine the question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi. They demanded, among other things, that the mandate of the Trusteeship be taken from Belgium and be given to a special UN Commission. They demanded that the territorial guards and Belgian paratroopers be withdrawn and replaced by UN peacekeepers. They also demanded for the abolition of King Kigeli V's house arrest. Finally they demanded for a general and unconditional amnesty for all political prisoners⁴²⁶.

The political parties which got support from the Trusteeship administration resented these requests. After a heated debate, the UN General assembly adopted two resolutions. First, it was decided that a conference be organized before elections. During this forum, all political parties were to be represented. Secondly, it was also decided to organize a referendum on the king and the monarchy. The UN resolutions frustrated the Trusteeship authorities. That is why they did everything to

⁴²⁶ Rudipresse, no 186, 27 août 1960, p. 1.

make them fail. They had the advantage of being on the ground. To give an impression that they were complying with the UN recommendations, Belgium organized a symposium in Ostende from 7th to 12th January under the auspices of the UN in 1961. The symposium brought together representatives of political parties from Rwanda and Burundi. Three items hit the agenda: (1) the date for parliamentary elections (2) common services in Rwanda and Burundi (3) reconciliation in Rwanda. Accordingly, PERMEHUTU, APROSOMA and the interim government were all opposed to the postponement of the elections beyond January. As for the question of reconciliation in Rwanda, there was no report by the group of representatives who had earlier discussed the problem at Gisenyi because they had found no solution. The United Nations Commission was disappointed to see that the organizers of this conference had fixed ideas. "In the organizers' mind," reported the commission, "the conference was primarily designed to convince the UN Commission that the vast majority of Rwandans was opposed to the postponement of elections in either Rwanda or Burundi. And also, with regard to Rwanda, the fact that conference members demanded an abolition of kingship, there was no compromise on this issue"⁴²⁷. Like in the first meeting, the Ostende meeting also ended in a deadlock. Nevertheless, contrary to government opposition, it was decided that parliamentary elections be postponed until 1961.

➤ **Gitarama coup d'état**

On return from the Ostende conference, the Special Resident granted internal autonomy to Rwanda as per Ordinance No. 02/16 dated 25th January 1961. So, all negotiations had no more purpose to continue, since only the National Council and the interim government dominated by PARMEHUTU had a stronger voice.

Following the plan agreed upon by Hutu leaders and the Special Resident, Colonel Logiest and the Minister of the Interior, Jean Baptiste Rwasibo, summoned all the *burgomasters* and councilors to a meeting on 28th January 1961. Transport was availed by the Resident and the *Prefectures*. A squad of paratroopers took charge of security. According to the official program of the meeting, the participants were supposed to deal with public order. But under the instigation of PARMEHUTU

⁴²⁷ Nkundabagenzi, F., 1962, op.cit., pp. 375-377.

and APROSOMA top leaders, the meeting took a different turn. The participants proclaimed Rwanda as a Republic and set up corresponding institutions: the post of president which was occupied by D. Mbonyumutwa, a legislature that was composed of 44 seats which was chaired by Gitera, a government that was formed by G. Kayibanda, a constitution which was simply symbolic in nature was enacted. This constitution was symbolic because it was neither published in the Official Gazette nor was it recognized by the Trusteeship authority. In addition, a Supreme Court chaired by Isidore Nzeyimana started operating after independence.

The UN investigation mission turned into a commission of information. It recognized the complicity of the Belgian local authorities with Hutu parties. Under resolution No. 1605 dated 27th March 1961, the UN general Assembly condemned Belgium's policy on the implementation of mandatory powers. It fixed the election date for August 1961 and demanded for the formation of a transitional broad-based government as well as the dismissal of all interim authorities. However, all this was not done.

What happened at Gitarama cannot be isolated from the process that brought PARMEHUTU to power. The Trusteeship authorities who were overseeing the operation ignored the UN resolutions which were against their plan. That is why it is wrong to speak of a *coup d'état* since the Tutsi chiefs and deputy-chiefs were driven away and replaced with interim authorities and the king was forced into exile. The power remained in the hands of Trusteeship authority. The failure of the United Nations in Rwanda was followed by many other failures which culminated in the appalling management crisis of April-July 1994.

➤ **Parliamentary elections and the referendum of 1961**

These elections contributed to another important step that enabled PARMEHUTU to take control of the highest organs of state. According to the UN resolution, the interim authorities were to be replaced by a government of national unity in which all political parties were to be represented. The activities of government and the National Assembly formed at Gitarama were theoretically suspended until the legislative elections. However, the neutralization of these institutions was only a formality. The Ministers retained the instruments of power. The Mayors also kept their posts and continued to work for their parties.

The electoral campaigns for Parliamentary elections and referendum were characterized, like the preceding ones, by many acts of violence and intimidation. In most cases, PARMEHUTU supporters and officials committed acts of violence against UNAR members and the Tutsi at local council level. There were many deaths, many refugees and many disaster victims. Huts were torched. Assassinations and violence committed by UNAR sympathizers were strongly repressed. However, acts of violence committed by PARMEHUTU and UNAR sympathizers went unpunished⁴²⁸. The open declaration of political choices characterized by show of party colors during campaigns fuelled a lot of polarization and intimidation. Ballot papers with candidates' names were replaced with ballot papers with party colors⁴²⁹. For the referendum vote, there was an envelope which contained two colors: white and black. The white color was for a 'Yes' vote in favor of the Monarchy and Kigeli V. The black color represented a 'No' vote. The Trusteeship administration openly refused the king's participation in the electoral campaign. According to them, this was a measure intended to bring "political stability".

It was this precarious situation which pushed the UN Visiting Mission to say in March 1961 that "a racist party dictatorship was being set up with the consequence that a retrogressive regime was replaced by another"⁴³⁰. No comments were made by the UN regarding this statement. Out of the 44 seats available in the Legislative Assembly, PARMEHUTU obtained 35 seats; UNAR got 7 seats and APROSOMA 2 seats. As for the referendum, the results confirmed the conclusions reached during the Gitarama convention, that is 80% of voters were against the monarchy. King Kigeli V asked the UN to declare the referendum and parliamentary elections results null and void. Hence, numerous petitions from UNAR members and refugees were sent to the UN. They asked for the nullification these elections. They also called for an end to the Belgian Trusteeship and a more direct involvement of the UN.

⁴²⁸ In 1963, the government gave a general amnesty for all wrongdoers in the revolutionary camp who committed atrocities. This promoted the culture of impunity for the crimes committed against the Tutsi. This later facilitated the involvement of large masses of the Hutu population in perpetrating genocide and atrocities committed until 1994.

⁴²⁹ PARMEHUTU: red; UNAR; white; APROSOMA: green; RADER: blue

⁴³⁰ Rapport intermédiaire de la commission pour le Ruanda-Urundi, p. 51.

The UN observers said that, despite some irregularities, these elections were properly and peacefully held and that they respected the principle of secret ballot. According to them, the main criticism against these elections was the partiality of pro-Hutu 'Mayors' and the reluctance of the Trusteeship authority's to enforce disciplinary action against those who had contravened the electoral code. According to one American diplomat, the observers were obliged to accept the elections results because if they nullified them, this would lead Rwandans to a social explosion with consequences of a big magnitude of refugees, deaths and many victims. Thus, the approach used in these elections invalidated its results. A big number of voters were forced to leave their *communes* on the eve of the elections. The assessment made by the military after the unrest of August 1961 reported 133 Tutsi and 78 Hutu who were killed, 130 Tutsi and 100 Hutu who were wounded, 2,000 huts that were torched, 12,000 refugees, 213 Tutsi and 161 Hutu who were arrested.⁴³¹

Such were the reasons that made political parties and groups of refugees to reject the Parliamentary elections results. They resented the atmosphere of terror in which they were held; they proclaimed their firm and unshakeable loyalty to King Kigeli V and demanded for other elections to be organized under the UN supervision⁴³². One section of UNAR remained in the country. It recognized the formed government. Some of its members were elected including Ex-Chief Rwangombwa. In a document signed by Rutsindintwarane (chairman) and Rwagasana (secretary)⁴³³ they recognized and accepted the results of the referendum of monarchy and the new government in place. This document partially read: "(...) As nationalists and democrats, our party accepts the democratic regime put in place and unreservedly recognizes the accruing democratic institutions. The party reiterates its readiness to collaborate with national authorities in order to achieve the deep-seated aspirations of the people (...)".

⁴³¹ Notes of 6th August 1962.

⁴³² Many petitions on this issue were filed to the UN by associations and groups of refugees, among whom were: petitions from Rwandans and Burundians, Abadahemuka on 5th November 1961 and 13th November 1961; there were also petitions from a group of refugees in Goma, on 20th September 1961; and petitions by M. Munyakazi of 30th September 1961; as well as petitions by Union Nationale Rwandaise of 9th October 1961.

⁴³³ Document entitled « Prise de position de l'UNAR Rwandaise face aux questions d'actualité, s.d » [*Position of the Rwanda-based UNAR vis-à-vis current issues*].

Refuges were called upon to adopt and put national interests above everything else. They were asked to “support the established authorities in a bid to realize the return of other refugees.” UNAR distanced itself from *Inyenzi* group of rebels. “The party condemns any criminal acts and the motives that drove them to commit them. Any rebels in the party are considered as criminals, and the party condemns all terrorist acts. UNAR promises its full support to government in the fight against terrorism”⁴³⁴. Many refugee associations condemned this position. Consequently, the Kivu Refugee Committee lashed out at Rwagasana and Rutsindintwarane. They dismissed them from the top leadership of UNAR because they had recognized the government which was a culmination of “rigged” elections. To them, Rwagasana and Rutsindintwarane had made a “shameful surrender”⁴³⁵.

These associations and groups kept demanding for the restoration of the King because he was the source of unity and peace. They reiterated that “no Munyarwanda will ever recognize or respect the government which is not headed by King Kigeli V”⁴³⁶. The refugees were not ready to return to the country without the king. Even Gitera who had spoken in favor of those elections was disappointed. He denounced the BELGO-PARMEHUTU neo-colonialism. He insisted that these elections were characterized by serious fraud. He called upon the UN to cancel them. In the meantime however, Gitera founded another political party called “Rwanda Royalist Democratic Movement”⁴³⁷.

A final attempt for reconciliation was made in New York by the Danish representative to the UN. He was supported by the Guinean delegate who sought to reconcile the Rwandan government and the UNAR hardliners who were operating from neighboring countries. The Rwandan government was represented by O. Rusingizandekwe, A. Rugira and C. Habamenshi while UNAR was represented by M. Rwagasana, M. Kayihura and A. Butera⁴³⁸. UNAR demanded that opposition parties should share both

⁴³⁴ Ibid

⁴³⁵ Petition of the Committee of Kivu Refugees, 12th May 1962; See also the Petition of Rwandan refugees in Congo, 6th July 1962.

⁴³⁶ The Abadahemuka Petition, 30th May 1962; See also U. Kimonyo et al’s Petition of May 1962.

⁴³⁷ The Petition of the “*Mouvement démocratique royaliste rwandais*”, of 1st January 1962.

⁴³⁸ Minutes of the conversation between the representatives of the Government of Rwanda and the representatives of opposition party, UNAR, January 26th, 1962.

administrative and political posts. In terms of this power sharing arrangement at *prefecture* level, the government did not have any problem. However, at ministerial level, the government noted that UNAR had refused ministerial posts given to them. As for the external branch of UNAR, they never made any serious proposals. UNAR challenged the validity of the elections. However, they were ready to recognize them under certain conditions especially at municipality level. In short, UNAR wanted to strike a deal of a power-sharing arrangement for the posts for 'Mayors' and 'Local Councilors'. As far as the government was concerned, the appointments for these posts had already been made. Any changes would therefore be illegal because the incumbents for these posts were elected by the people. It was therefore "impossible to replace them without resorting to other elections". Another proposal consisted of timetabling local council elections before independence. But even this was rejected by government delegates.

The objective of UNAR was clearly expressed by Kayihura in the following terms: "government structures are not systematically designed. We propose that decisions should start from the grassroots to the top and, after some time, popular consultations can be held in better conditions"⁴³⁹. However, this proposal was never bought⁴⁴⁰. Other meetings were held on January 26th and 29th but even these were also fruitless.

➤ **The road to independence**

On 26th October 1961, a new government was formed. This was after the legislative elections that were endorsed by the new National Assembly. Grégoire Kayibanda was elected as President of the Republic. In principle, Belgium retained the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prevent the government from coming in contact with the Communist Bloc. The new republic aimed at defending Rwanda's territorial integrity, maintaining internal peace and public order as well as supervising the management of finances⁴⁴¹. Later on 14th January 1962, Governor J. P. Harroy

⁴³⁹ Minutes of the conversation between representatives of the Government of Rwanda and representatives of opposition party, UNAR, January 26th, 1962.

⁴⁴⁰ In a statement by UNAR (internal branch) on February 26th, 1962, this is an agreement between the Government of Rwanda and delegates of UNAR without anyone knowing what was on the agreement.

⁴⁴¹ See the protocol signed by Pau-Henri Spaak and Grégoire Kayibanda, on December 21th, 1961.

left the country. On the request made by Grégoire Kayibanda, Logiest stayed in Kigali as a Senior Belgian representative. In addition, Régnier was appointed as Minister for Foreign Affairs. When J. P. Harroy left, Logiest no longer had any protection. Etienne Davignon, the Chief of Staff in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs openly disapproved of Logiest's action. For him: "(...) there could have been another political and social solution for Rwanda. Like in Urundi, the monarchy could have been maintained because it was part of tradition. Similarly, an acceptable social regime for the Hutu could have been established (...)"⁴⁴².

But this was too late because enough damage had already been done. After the failure of heated debates on the political, economic and administrative union of Ruanda-Urundi, which was a UN preoccupation until 1962, the General Assembly voted a new Resolution No. 1746 of 27th June 1962. Its decisions were stated as follows: "In agreement with the administrative authority to repeal the Trusteeship agreement of 13/12/1946 on Ruanda-Urundi, it has been decided that 1st July 1962 be the date for Ruanda and Urundi to become two independent and sovereign states". It was later reported by UNAR that the final road to independence was marked by a resurgence of ethnic violence in the territories of Kibungo, Gisenyi and Kibuye. The acts of violence were attributed to the Belgian army and PARMEHUTU⁴⁴³. That is why this independence was referred to as "smuggled independence"⁴⁴⁴.

During the process that led PARMEHUTU to power, the Belgian administration played a decisive role. First, they did this by gradually destroying and neutralizing all actual and potential sources of resistance. Secondly, they created new institutions through which future changes were to take place. Was this a democratic process? Sensing that independence was now inevitable, the colonial power chose its allies without worry and organized a neo-colonial transition. It should be noted that the Belgian national interests took precedence over democratic values. The political party that was asked to form government was not expecting independence soon. The Trusteeship authority itself had set a timetable deadline which was difficult to respect. The inspection report of 1954 summarised the situation in these words: "(...) the Governor General considers that, if the

⁴⁴² Lefebvre, P. and J.N., 2006, op.cit., P. 104.

⁴⁴³ Petition by UNAR, June 12th, 1962.

⁴⁴⁴ UNAR, Télégramme à l'ONU, 20 juin 1962

inhabitants of this territory can socialize well with other societies, in three or four generations to come, it will play an important role in governing their country (...)"

Rwanda was thus free from the monarchy which was described as "Tutsi-based". Nevertheless, the country embraced a Republic that was also seen as "Hutu-based". Independence ended the Trusteeship rule. Both actors and structures changed. However, the divisive ideology or the exclusive political system established under the collaboration of the Trusteeship authority remained. Indeed, this independence was "trapped" within a divisive ideology and within an exclusive political system advocated by the Trusteeship rule. The leaders and supporters of PARMEHUTU embarked on what they called a "social revolution of 1959". This was a process planned from the beginning, guided and executed by Hutu leaders in total ideological and organizational conspiracy⁴⁴⁵. We cannot deny the existence of Hutu consciousness among some intellectual Hutu or their determination to put an end to colonization and the monarchy. But it became increasingly clear that the process that led to the republic had passed through several stages.

Thus, it should be remembered that Buganza region did not experience ethnic violence at the same time with the northern and central regions. This was not accidental because conditions and propagandist activities of PARMEHUTU did not take place in these regions. The explosion of violence in the first half of November 1959 surprised all propagandists, including the Hutu leaders themselves. Nobody predicted its outcome. In actual fact, this "peasant uprising" was directed against the authority of chiefs and deputy-chiefs and the rumors that the king had ordered them out, but it was not against the legitimacy of monarchical power. Besides, up to 1960, even PARMEHUTU was in favor of a constitutional monarchy. It was after November that requests for reform turned into targets for radical change in the sociopolitical structure of the country with ethnic-minded views. When the revolt broke out, inter-ethnic relationships were still normal, at least among the masses. There was no expression of hatred, animosity or any feeling of physical elimination⁴⁴⁶. The reaction of the protagonists had an impact on the events that followed the "peasants' uprising". First, there was the Tutsi

⁴⁴⁵ Dialogue, n° 137, 1989, pp. 56-58 and 86-96.

⁴⁴⁶ IRDP, Enquête à Rubengera, 19/11/2004.

aristocracy which collaborated with the colonial power. Instead of seriously considering legitimate demands of the social strata who had suffered most from the wrath of colonization and who were unaware of the geo-strategic colonial position in the sub-region, the Tutsi aristocracy chose to preserve their interests which were threatened by internal dissent. It is worth noting that there was lack of political maturity and experience in national leadership. Belgium's motto in this regard was clear: "*no elite, no problems*". Later, the leaders of the Hutu-based parties focused their political agenda on ethnic inequalities. However, as Bugarama (Cyangugu) residents put it, the ethnic issue was only a pretext. It camouflaged a lot of political, economic and social issues that were not given appropriate solutions⁴⁴⁷.

Finally, despite the means of intervention and the necessary authority at their disposal, the Trusteeship administration failed to steer the country towards the desired reform. They decided to perpetrate a one-sided propaganda. The November violence was a manifestation of the "Hutu people's discontent" against "Tutsi colonialism" which gave "Hutu masses" a common view and a degree of consciousness they did not have before. Later, the "uprising" ceased to be chaotic. It turned to be a motion propelled by a racist ideology camouflaged under a discourse that promised equality, freedom and social justice. Peaceful coexistence between the Hutu and Tutsi was reported to be impossible. We have seen how Kayibanda's PARMEHUTU suggested the creation of two separate zones belonging to one federation⁴⁴⁸. Hence, the hunt for the Tutsi community, and not just for a few individuals, became manifest.

It would be naive to accept another argument of the supporters of the "1959 social revolution" which contended that the Hutu knew about the exploitation of the "masses" (*rubanda rugufi*) under the Tutsi colonization and, that they participated in the protest movement in total unity and agreement. Frustrated by the social imbalance created by the double standards of the colonial system, and by their legitimate aspirations for social advancement, the first Hutu leaders aimed at ending the monopoly of the Tutsi aristocracy in all sectors of administration and economy. For the rest, they were as divided like Tutsi leaders

⁴⁴⁷ IRDP, Entretien avec Bugarama F. G., 11/11/2004.

⁴⁴⁸ Tabara, P., *Afrique: la face cachée*, La pensée universelle, Paris, 1992, cité par Sebasoni S., *La crise de la société rwandaise (1957-2004)*, juillet 2005.

concerning their vision, orientation and political achievement. In short, we can say that two types of protests co-existed among the Hutu elite during this process of rapid changes.

The first type of protest can be described as the xenophobic and conservative protest of the Hutu leaders from the North. Here, the protest gradually focused on the antagonism between two types of patronage systems: the patronage system by Tutsi chiefs which gave birth to a new category of clients: the 'political clients' or the "*Bagererwa*" and 'traditional clients' referred to as the "*Bagererwa*" who depended on the "*Bakonde landlords*." The Hutu leaders from the North mainly came from major clans made of local *abakonde* who were nostalgic about the pre-Tutsi past. By using their clan or lineage to mobilize the peasantry against the Tutsi chiefs, the goal of these northern leaders was not different from the colonial burdens imposed on the masses, namely forced labor, taxes, etc. and the preference of the traditional regional specificity of a new policy, i.e. the rehabilitation of clan tradition, lineage hierarchy and the return to the social order that existed before the Tutsi power. It is no coincidence that the reaction against the Tutsi authority became accentuated from November 1959 when mass expulsions of the Tutsi from their land were ordered.

The second type of protest was the egalitarian-minded protest which was associated with the monarchical structure. It was especially entrenched among the Hutu from central and southern Rwanda. As mentioned earlier, the two trends focused on their commitment to eliminate the Tutsi from all positions of influence. The task was facilitated by the negative attitude of the Tutsi elite *vis-à-vis* the demands for reform made by some Hutu politicians and attacks by supporters of UNAR (*Ingabo z'umwami* (*king's army*)) who mainly targeted Hutu leaders (APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU) and killed many of them. This made the Hutu of different political affiliations more cohesive, at least temporarily. On the other hand, it is inaccurate to present the political reforms of 1959-1962 as an expression of protest by the Hutu peasantry. The concept of 'peasantry' is not interchangeable with that of the Hutu. The fact that the majority of the Tutsi ethnic group also belonged to the peasantry has been stated above. Group members who collaborated with the colonists and therefore obtained material benefits were not more than a thousand people. Upon the outbreak of the revolt in November

1959, there were several categories of people who existed among both the Hutu and Tutsi. These included peasants, petty land owners, landlords, and squatters of wealthy land owners. Some lived entirely on agriculture, others on livestock, or, quite often, combined both activities.

Given the above-mentioned disparities, the conditions that influenced the peasants' behavior varied from one region to another. The most politicized regions were the north, central and south where economic and missionary activities brought about rapid socioeconomic and cultural changes even among the peasantry. It should be noted that the entire peasantry suffered most from the repressive colonial regime in form of taxes, forced labor, corporal punishments, etc. We cannot talk about the exploitation of the Hutu masses and ignore the exploitation of the Tutsi herdsmen and farmers who, contrary to PARMEHUTU propaganda⁴⁴⁹, did not benefit materially from the political advantages of Tutsi chiefs and deputy-chiefs. However, these were violently targeted by revolters who were dissatisfied with the burdens that took place at the beginning of November. They were considered as intermediaries between that population and the European administration and that their roles and functions had been radically transformed.

Although there was uncontrolled tension that transformed itself into a popular uprising in the early November of 1959, the personal relationships and traditional ties among the people were still strong. The so-called "Hutu mass" had no group consciousness as such. It was on gradual basis that this sense of identity was shaped under the action of the leaders of "Hutu" political parties. The latter enjoyed a social status and they had ambitions which were different from that of ordinary peasants. These leaders transformed real feelings of discontent and frustration of Hutu peasants into anti-Tutsi sentiments. The ethnic view to national problems enabled PARMEHUTU to mobilize the illiterate masses without freeing them from socio-economic exploitation, let alone colonial exploitation. Ethnic roots covered the ambitions of a new educated stratum so that they could control the future state. The main losers in this ethnic radicalization were the peasant masses of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa alike who served as vehicles for candidates to power.

⁴⁴⁹ Bagaragaza, T., « Une révolution sociopolitique et non ethnique », in *Dialogue*, n° 137, pp. 13-14; Sebasoni, S., *Les origines du Rwanda*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2000.

The Tutsi peasants shared the fate of the Tutsi aristocracy without tasting any power-sharing deal with them. Consequently, a gap continued to separate Hutu peasants from the Hutu elite in power since 1960. It would be naive to say that all Hutus controlled power as it is equally wrong to say that all Tutsis controlled power. The two minority groups competing for power were opposed to each other, with the masses hanging between the leaders and the Trusteeship authority. Part of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church played the middleman's role of the referee-player situation. From 1959, the changes in structures and political actors started being manifest. No one can deny this historical fact. But it was not exclusively enough to give rise to a new system which was more democratic and beneficial to the masses as proponents of the social revolution have always said. We have just seen the calculations of the main protagonists. From the word go, the image of the new regime was tarnished by sowing seeds of division and violence. So, there were splits and continuities in the process of social regression, which culminated into the First Republic. Social strife was further radicalized during the Second Republic.

V
**V. RWANDA UNDER THE FIRST AND SECOND REPUBLICS
(1962-1994)**

By Joseph JYONI WA KAREGA

Prior to the period of colonization, Rwanda had been in existence and was organized for many centuries. It was a Nation-State that was jealous of safeguarding its sovereignty. This country was doubted by neighboring kingdoms as a result of its ambitious policy of territorial annexation and aggrandizement. Rwanda got her independence on 1st July 1962.

5.1. The First Republic (1962-1973)

The First Republic resulted from a series of contradictions and delays which characterized the end of the Belgian colonial rule. Rwanda inherited from the Belgians an ideological and administration model of neocolonial character.

5.1.1. The new political and institutional framework

Among the changes made after independence, the country got a constitution for the first time. It also got a government at the top of which was a President and Parliament. How then did these institutions function in a country that was torn apart by internal conflicts whose aim was to gain power?

a. The constitution

To begin with, one important fact should be pointed out about Rwanda under the Republican form of government, namely that

the country acceded to independence without a constitution. On 28th January 1961, during the “Gitarama coup”, PARMEHUTU leaders prepared something that had a semblance of a constitution but which did not qualify to be considered as such because this text was neither published in the Official Gazette of Ruanda- Urundi, nor was it published in Rwanda’s Official Journal. In addition, the colonial administration further continued to legislate on behalf of the new authorities. Lastly, the text was never considered as obligatory: this is proved by the fact that when the Legislative Assembly was asked to propose a draft constitution, it did not revise the “Gitarama text” but simply embarked on designing a new project¹.

To avoid a constitutional vacuum, the National Assembly constituted itself into a Constituent Assembly (CA) and studied a draft constitution submitted by both PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA. This was put to vote during the session of 23rd November 1962. It obtained 33 votes in favor of the motion, but got no vote against it. There were 4 abstentions (3 from UNAR and 1 from APROSOMA). The final text was signed on the following day, i.e. on 24th November 1962- by 40 Members of Parliament.

In the first place, the Constitution of 24th November 1961 which was prepared with the support of Belgian jurists demonstrated a clear willingness of parting from the past by endorsing, once and for all, a Republican system of government. Article 2 of this constitution stipulated that “the Mwami’s regime and its dynasty are stripped of their royal prerogatives”. This was a way of confirming through constitutional means the results of the referendum. Article 3 specified that “the Republic assures equality of its citizens without distinction of race, origin, sex or religion”. At the time when this constitution was promulgated, a group of Rwandese was denied ownership of their property on ethnic the grounds! Article 16 evoked the same principal. Article 17 also stated that “the privileges based on the cast system are abolished and shall not be restored. They cannot be restored again in whatever form that may be. Article 25 said that “all forms of slavery are abolished and cannot be restored”. This article referred to the “*Ubugake*” system. This statement was superfluous because King Rudahigwa had already abolished “*Ubugake*” in 1954. In any case, identifying *Ubugake* with a form

¹ Reyntjens, F., *Pouvoir et droit au Rwanda*, Tervuren, M.R.A.C., 1985, p. 292.

of slavery was overtly an abuse of language. At that time, anything that could soil the name of the monarchy was considered not abnormal.

The 1962 Constitution was characterized by bias in favor of Christianity at the expense of other religious denominations. It also favored the Capitalist camp. It supported the abolition of polygamy (art. 29), the declaration of equality between private-subsidized schools monopolized by the Catholic Church and the Public education (art. 32), and outlawed “any Communist activities and propaganda” (art. 37).

The last characteristic of this constitution that should be kept in mind is that it dealt with the separation of powers. For some specialists, the separation of powers was clearly stated² whereas for others, this was not the case. “Although the Constitution stipulates that the powers of the Executive should be exercised by the President of the Republic and Cabinet Ministers, the Head of State wilds solely the judicial powers”³. For this reason, the Kayibanda’s regime was considered as a monarchical presidency (a kind of King/ President) in the sense that all powers were concentrated, at the top, in the hands of the President. The former enjoyed power from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy with the help of civil servants that he himself had appointed. This arrangement was not different from the former system of chieftaincy under the monarchy⁴

b. The President of the Republic and the Government

According to the Constitution, the powers of government were in the hands of the president who was at the same time the Head of State and Head of Ministers whom he himself had appointed. (Art. 51). At the beginning of every term, the President was elected directly by simple majority through adult universal suffrage and (art. 52). In conformity with this article, the position of President Kayibanda did not respect the law since he had been elected by the National Assembly on 26th October 1961. This explains why, on the basis of a letter addressed to the Speaker of the National Assembly on 7th June 1963, Kayibanda tendered his

² Paternostre de la Mairieu, B., *Le Rwanda Son effort de développement ; antécédents historiques et conquêtes de la révolution rwandaise*, Kigali, 1972, p. 248.

³ Reyntjens F., 1985, op. cit., p. 355.

⁴ Lemrachand R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, London, Pall Mall, 1970, p.116

resignation as Head of State and Government. It was thereafter that the National Assembly decided that he should present his candidature for the polls.

In addition, according to the Constitution, the President was supposed to appoint and disappoint any of the Cabinet Ministers and later inform the National Assembly about the matter (art. 56). In practice, the President communicated the composition of government to the National Assembly which took note of the decision without subjecting the matter to vote. It should be noted that the level of education of the MPs and Cabinet Ministers as well as their experience in politics did not allow them to understand their prerogatives, leave alone using them judiciously.

Under the First Republic, eight governments succeeded one another. The first one, formed after independence in May 1962, consisted of a coalition government which was composed of the UNAR party (2 ministers), PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA following the New York accord. On 6th February 1963, there was a ministerial reshuffle and all cabinet ministers from UNAR were dismissed, ostensibly owing to budgetary constraints⁵ according to Grégoire Kayibanda. However, in actual fact, the reason behind was to oust opposition political parties which later ceased to be part of government from 1963.

c. The National Assembly and the Supreme Court

In principle, the National Assembly was supposed to check the powers of the President and his government (art. 73). Under the First Republic, there were three legislative terms in 1961, 1965, and 1969 respectively up to the dissolution of Parliament following the *coup d'état* of 5th July 1973. During the first legislative mandate, MDR-PAPMEHUTU was a dominant party (with 35 seats), but there were also UNAR MPs (7) as well as MPs from APOSOM (2). In the Assembly that was constituted after the elections of 3rd October 1965, all opposition parties were no longer represented. All MPs originated from MDR-PAPMEHUTU. The Supreme Court was supported by the text within the Constitution (art. 98, 99, 102) to the effect that some commentators could not avoid to consider the regime as “ a

⁵ Présidence de la République, *L'organisation de l'administration centrale rwandaise de 1960 à nos jours*, Kigali juillet 1983, p. 19

government of judges” or “a dictatorship of the Supreme Court” capable of paralyzing state action and powers⁶. In reality, the Supreme Court was non-existent. It could not refuse a law which the President wished to pass. Thus, in 1973, when President Kayibanda wanted to stand for another term, he modified some articles of the constitution. Since the latter did not confer any independence to the judges, the latter were fearful of being dismissed. This led to the paralysis of the judicial system through intrigue and arbitrary decisions by the judges.

5.1.2. Eliminating the Opposition

The 1962 Constitution enshrined the multiparty system in article 10 by stating that: “The political groups fulfilling the legal conditions are free to compete in the poll. They are free to constitute themselves and carry out their activities freely on condition that they respected democratic principles and on condition that they do not undermine the Republican nature of the state, national territorial integrity and state security”. But MDR- PARMEHUTU became a de-facto single party from 1963 after eliminating opposition political parties (Hutu and Tutsi). During the presidential elections of 1965, President Kayibanda was elected with 98% of votes. In 1969, he was reelected by the same overwhelming majority.

The plan to remove opposition parties was still visible on the eve of independence in the manipulations that aimed at destabilizing the country. On the occasion of the first independence anniversary, President Kayibanda indicated his preference for “a majority party, of overwhelming majority, flanked by the minority”. He added by saying that “a proliferation of political parties distracted the population, rendering the progress of the country incoherent and caused a detrimental retardation to the Nation”⁷. During the tenth anniversary, President Kayibanda consciously gave an erroneous version of facts by stating triumphantly that: “the local council elections of 1963 had never convinced the Tutsi that they were no longer supposed to nurture the hope of governing (...). It was on this day that the MDR- PARMMEHUTU removed all other parties which, hitherto did not want to understand the

⁶Ruhashyankiko N., « Le contrôle de la constitutionnalité des lois et règlements au Rwanda », in *L'informateur*, n° 4, 1968, p. 21

⁷Présidence de la République, *Le Président Kayibanda vous parle : Discours prononcés en diverses circonstances*, s.l. , 1963, pp83-84.

democratic dispensation. It was the only solution for Rwanda and its inhabitants”⁸.

Other internal factors within the opposition parties facilitated MDR- PARMMEHUTU in its plan to suppress the opposition. Thus, APROSOMA became victim of its founder, Mr. Habyarimana Joseph Gitera. The latter was unpredictable and versatile; he was a mediocre in terms of organizational skills and lacked a stable political direction. On several occasions, he changed the name and manifesto of his party. Thus, on the eve of the 1960 elections, his party was called the ‘*Union des Hutus du Rwanda*’ (UHURU): translated as: Union of the Rwandan Hutus). APROSOMA was faced with internal divisions which weakened it⁹. Finally, APROSOMA’s popularity in some regions worried PARMEHUTU. For example, during the grass-roots elections of 1963, PARMEHUTU obtained 237 seats compared to 223 by APROSOMA in Butare Province. PARMEHUTU¹⁰ put a lot of pressure and made several threats on APROSOMA leadership, as a result.

UNAR was persecuted by the Trusteeship administration and the Catholic hierarchy (especially some missionaries) because of its national ideology as well as its links with countries of the Socialist Block. The latter sympathized with all anti-colonialist and national movements. After participating in the legislative elections of 1961 and in a coalition government from February 1962 to February 1963, UNAR never presented any candidates at all neither in 1965 nor after. It should be noted that following the repression suffered by UNAR, this political party was also hampered by its division into two wings, i.e. the internal and external wings. In turn, the UNAR external wing split up into several factions.

The political and physical terrorism perpetrated by PARMEHUTU which was intended to destroy UNAR reached its climax in December 1963. This happened during the incursion of the Inyenzi in Bugesera. The UNAR and RADER leaders were arrested on the very day of the attack. They were executed by the national

⁸ Ibiro by’amakuru muri Prezidansi ya Republika, Imyaka 10 y’isabukuru y’ubwigenge, Kigali, 1978, p. 80.

⁹ In September 1961, while Gitera was campaigning for his new party (APROSOMA RWANDA-UNION), his colleagues Munyagaju and Gasigwa remained in the former party. The party sympathizers refused the new changes.

¹⁰ Gitera was put in prison from August 1962 to February 1963.

police in Ruhengeri under the orders of a Belgian military officer known as “Pilate”¹¹. This was done without any trial of any kind, Moreover, the internal wing of UNAR had condemned the “Inyenzi terrorism” following their raid launched on 4th July 1962¹². In the local council elections of 1960, RADER got 6.6% of the votes. In the legislative elections of 1961, it got 0.3% of the votes. Ever since, its political role became inexistent. Its members either joined PARMEHUTUS or UNAR. As it has been pointed out, the coup de grace was delivered during the December 1963 repression.

In principle, PARMEHUTU did not need all these procedures to muzzle an opposition already weakened by internal conflicts as well as hard conditions. It enjoyed an uncontested political monopoly. It would even have taken advantage of the situation to become more cohesive. This did not happen because of the pressures by some PARMEHUTU leaders to confiscate all power as well as the hatred and the ideology of exclusion in which they were brought up.

5.1.3 Armed opposition of the Inyenzi (1961-1968)

The violence which started in November 1959 forced many Rwandese to leave the country and settle in the neighboring countries. From 1961, young Rwandese known as “Inyenzi”, who had refused to go into exile made several raids against Rwanda from neighboring countries.

The origin of the term “Inyenzi” is difficult to trace. In addition, before it came into use, other groups with other names were in existence¹³.

In 1960, the idea of creating an army was born among young Rwandese refugees in Kizinga and Kamwenge in Uganda near the border with Rwanda. Their objective was to launch a struggle against the Belgians and the new PERMEHUTU leaders. Upon the failure of UNAR to convince the international community to change the course of events in Rwanda, these young refugees decided that there was no other alternative other than taking

¹¹ The assassinated UNAR leaders were; Afrika, Burabyo, Rutsindintwarane, Gisimba, Ndahiro, Mpirikanyi. RADER leaders killed were Bwanakweri, Ndazaro, Karinda.

¹² Unité, No 12-13, 15 July 1962 and Unité, No 14, 1st August 1962.

¹³ Groups of different names such as: Intare, Ingwe, Ingangurarugo, Imbaragasa, Indamage, Urubambye ingwe had existed.

up arms. UNAR did not create the Inyenzi. At the time of its creation, the leadership of the external wing of UNAR was busy with diplomatic activities at the UN. Some UNAR leaders such as Fr. Rukeba, who joined the Inyenzi movement, did it on their own. They never got party approval. From its inception, the Inyenzi movement was made up of different groups. These were created on different dates in countries neighboring Rwanda, i.e. Uganda, Burundi, Congo and Tanzania.

Three types of raids were carried out by the Inyenzi. They carried out commando-type of operations which required fewer fighters targeting specific objectives inside the country. For instance, there was the 21st December 1961 attack from Uganda via Kinigi which was targeting some individuals in Ruhengeri, Kigali and Gitarama territories¹⁴. In April 1962, another attack from Uganda targeted some localities in the eastern part of the country¹⁵.

From 1961, small-scale attacks were also carried out along the Rwandese borders especially in Byumba Province. But all these attacks were not necessarily carried out by the Inyenzi. Other groups of individuals made incursions in the country to steal cattle or money. It was in Byumba territory that reprisal attacks against the Tutsis were carried out by the government of Rwanda for the first time, after the Inyenzi had attacked. In March 1962, nearly a thousand Tutsis and Hutu members of UNAR were killed under such conditions. It was also at the same time that the Ministry of Interior and the National Guard developed and tried the idea of self defense for the population. This was done by ordering the population to denounce suspicious people and to carry out night patrols. Fire arms were also distributed to some individuals living near the border. These practices were repeatedly done until 1964.

Large scale attacks which involved a big number of fighters aimed at gaining territory from which the Inyenzi could launch attacks against the government of Rwanda in order to pressurize

¹⁴ Of the attacks carried out in 1961, the following can be mentioned: Ngarama (19/03/1961), Tovu (25-26/3/1961), Shonga (30/3/1961), Muhura (12/6/1961), Nyagatare (20/7/1961), Murambi (9/9/1961), Kinjojo (10/10/1961), Murambi (18/10/1961) and (1/11/1961) and Nyagatare (19/11/1961). In all those incursions there were 34 dead, 104 houses burnt and looted.

¹⁵ the attacks carried out in 1962 were: Gabiro (10/1/1962, Mugina (22-23/2/1962), Gatumba and Karama (24/2/1962), Rubirizi (10/3/1962), Cyungo and Nkana (25/3/1962), Gakenke (3/4/1962).

it. Among the attacks of that nature was first of all the attack in the north-west volcanoes which started in the night of 3rd -4th July 1962, two days after independence. That attack started in Goma and was made of around 80 to 100 Inyenzi. The Kigali government was aware of the attack. On 5th July 1962, the assailants were taken by surprise by the Rwandese government troops. They were beaten without difficulty and a big number of fighters died in the battle field. Four of the Inyenzi captured as prisoners were executed in Ruhengeri.

On 21st December 1963, another big attack took place in Bugesera. It originated from Burundi, via Nemba (Kirundo). After some limited success, the Inyenzi were stopped and beaten by the National Guard under the command of two Belgian military officers known as Dubois and Florquin. This happened a few kilometers from the capital city, Kigali.

Like in the previous case, the government of Rwanda was already aware of the imminent attack. The government got information from different sources. The Inyenzi did not keep their plans secret. They discussed them in bars of Bujumbura and some of them even bid farewell to their families.

The Belgian military advisors who trained the Burundian army informed Kigali, where the security services were under the control of a Belgian officer called major Tulpin. Some Hutu soldiers in the Burundian army, private citizens, traders and the clergy etc or even the refugees themselves were also among the informers of the government of Rwanda.

The Bugesera attack of 1963-1964 had many negative repercussions on the Tutsis inside the country. The government and the local administration orchestrated a very big campaign of repression against Tutsis of every age in all provinces of Rwanda. Many houses were put on fire and properties were stolen etc. Any person in a position of responsibility of whatever category could arrest Tutsis and do whatever he liked without any fear of punishment. Ministers were deployed in all provinces to supervise the operation. The repression was nation wide.

Bugesera was obviously one of the most affected regions. As else where, the administrative authorities compiled lists of Tutsis who were considered to be “bad” or “undesirable”. Generally, these

were teachers, former chiefs and assistant chiefs, traders etc. After reprisal attacks, Hutu families, especially from Ruhengeri and Gisenyi were settled in Bugesera by the government in order to contain the Inyenzi attacks and control the survivors.

Gikongoro province also faced the same problem. It was this province that registered the highest number of victims. They are estimated to be between 8,000 and 10,000. A Catholic missionary who was in a parish in the same region made the following remark: “the massacre seems to have been organized by the government itself and it was perhaps the most sinister event of Kayibanda’s government”¹⁶. The governor who coordinated those operations won legislative elections in his constituency thanks to his performance during the period of the massacres. The total number of victims was estimated to be around 25,000 and 35,000 dead. Foreign observers, such as Vaillemin, a Swiss and Luc de Heusch, a Belgian and even radio Vatican talked of “genocide”.

No political, administrative or military authorities were charged of participating in the massacres of the Tutsis. The government exonerated itself by saying that the repression was carried out by grass-root leaders, Members of Parliament and civil servants. According to the government, such behavior was due to fear because among the Tutsis, especially the civil servants, there were accomplices of the Inyenzi. Nevertheless, no malice of the Tutsis against Hutus was ever proved while they were still in power¹⁷, as if all Tutsis were in power. After the Bugesera attack, President Kayibanda warned the Inyenzi that if they ever attacked again “it would be the quickest and final end of the Tutsi race”¹⁸.

After Bugesera, the last large scale attack of the Inyenzi took place in Cyangugu province Bugarama in 1964, in Nshili and Bweyeye in 1966. Other raids were in Kibungo especially, in Butama in 1966. From 1967, there were no more Inyenzi raids but until 1972 there were still rumors of possible attacks even though the government knew very well that the Inyenzi movement had

¹⁶ Father Jamblin of Cyanika Mission (Mugesera A., *Imibereho y’abatutsi Kuri Republikaya mbere n’iya Kibili (1959-1999)*, Kigali, 2004, p.171): Also Read Willame J.C, *Aux sources de l’hétacombre rwandaise*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 1995, pp.74-75.

¹⁷ Read the White Paper published by the government entitled: “Toute la vérité sur le terrorisme des INYENZI au Rwanda,” February, 1964.

¹⁸ Speech of President of the Republic of Rwanda, 11th March, 1964.

completely crumbled. There were very many reasons why the Inyenzi were defeated. The most important among which were, first of all, that the Inyenzi did not have a unified leadership or a clear political line. The Inyenzi were not an emanation of UNAR. This political party which was divided into internal and external wings no longer had political monopoly in refugee camps since the advent of new political parties¹⁹.

King Kigeli was never a chief of the Inyenzi even if some groups appealed to him to become one. The Inyenzi did not have the same understanding of the role the monarchy. Some of them had opted for the republic. The second reason was that the Inyenzi were not a united military force, but rather scattered groups spread here and there with their own leaders such as Mudandi, Ngurumba, Kayitare, Sebyeza and Hamud.

The third reason was that the Inyenzi never had sufficient military equipment apart from the arms they had obtained from Belgian Congo. No country provided military aid to that movement.

Burundi gave shelter to the movement, allowed it to recruit and train but never armed it. As for Uganda, since 1962, Obote's government had warned the Inyenzi not to attack Rwanda from its territory. President Mobutu fought the Inyenzi because they supported the *Mulelists*. In August 1963, they even expelled some UNAR leaders including King Kigeli V. The Rwandese refugees were faced with violence in Goma and Bukavu. In 1964, around 800 Rwandese refugees were expelled from these two towns and they were settled in Tanzania. Before its independence Tanzania collaborated with the Rwandese government. The Tanzanian government even extradited the Inyenzi who were wanted by Kigali. But after independence, Tanzania helped UNAR leaders by accommodating them, and facilitated their movement by sending some youth abroad for military training.

Finally, there were conflicts and misunderstandings among the Inyenzi military chiefs during their operations. That is what happened between Mr. Mudandi and Mr. Ngurumba during the Nshili and Bweyeye raids. Mr. Mudandi retreated without first warning his brothers in arms.

¹⁹ For Example "The Rwandese Liberation Front" of Gakwaya and Munana and Sebyeza's Rwandese Socialist Party

5.1.4. Development efforts and economic dependence

a. Relationship with neighboring countries

Under the 1st Republic, G. Kayibanda's regime was confronted with problems of opening up the country and integrating it regionally and internationally. Regionally, diplomatic action was aimed at opening up land-locked Rwanda as it was situated very far from the Indian Ocean. Rwanda also wanted to establish good relations with her neighbors where Rwandese refugees were scattered. These included Burundi, Congo, Tanzania and Uganda.

The first diplomatic activities were directed towards East Africa for communication and security reasons. These diplomatic endeavors were concretized in January 1965 by a mission of good neighborliness led Mr. B. Bicomumpaka, the Interior and Works Minister. He went to the three East African states. With Tanzania, two important arrangements were finalized, notably the revival of the extradition treaty of "criminal fugitives" and the opening of a direct commercial route between the two countries. These arrangements were followed by the accreditation of a Rwandese ambassador to Dar-es-salaam. On 11th August, 1966, during the second good neighborliness mission, an agreement which provided for the construction of a bridge at Rusumo on the Akagera River was signed. It was also agreed to construct a hydro-electric dam at the same spot as they also proposed to open up an air-line which would link Kigali and Dar-es-Salaam.

The good relations that existed between Rwanda and Tanzania were strengthened by reciprocal presidential visits. In December 1967, President Kayibanda visited Tanzania and in July 1968, President Julius Nyerere visited Rwanda. During these visits, various projects of common interest were discussed. They covered different domains such as energy, commerce, health, tourism, etc.

The problem of the Rwandese refugees who made incursions in Rwanda and the role of Uganda in the transportation of materials towards or from East Africa necessitated opening diplomatic relations and cooperation with Uganda. It was for that reason that in 1963, Rwanda opened an embassy in Kampala. Then the Minister of Planning and Community Development visited

Rwanda in September 1964. The purpose of the visit was to “broaden economic cooperation between the two countries”²⁰. That time round, in August 1966, Rwandese envoys were well received by President Milton Obote. Among the issues discussed during that mission were the drainage of the Mulindi marsh and the reconstruction of the Kigali-Gatuna-Kampala highway. Afterwards, the Rwandese-Uganda cooperation was extended to telecommunications and the establishment of a radio relay system as well as in the fields of customs cooperation and commerce.

Diplomatic relations between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) started in 1963 when Rwanda opened an embassy in Leopoldville and the DRC opened theirs in Kigali in 1964. These relations were also strengthened by a “friendship mission” that was accomplished by Mr. Otto Rusingizandekwe, The Minister of Posts, Tele-communications and Transport at the time. During this mission, conventions related to justice; public health, commerce etc were signed. These good relations encouraged the DRC and Rwanda together with Burundi to create a “common organization for the purpose of promoting economic, financial, cultural, social, judicial and other types of cooperation within the three States”²¹. That was at the end of a conference held in August 1966 in Leopoldville. The Leopoldville conference was followed by another one which took place in Goma on 20th March 1967 in order to strengthen the above project. But the project was frozen because of the problem of mercenaries and Katangese ex-gendarmes which exploded and interrupted the relations between Congo-Leopoldville and Rwanda for a year.

When the problem of mercenaries was solved, the idea of setting up an organization linking Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC was tabled again through a series of ministerial meetings. In 1969, in Bujumbura, during a conference of Foreign Affairs Ministers, the DRC suggested the creation of an “Organization of Economic Cooperation in Central Africa”. The Gisenyi summit held from 18th to 19th December 1964 mandated the Foreign Affairs Ministries to prepare joint projects that were to be executed. After the “Tripartite Commission of Coordination” meeting held in Bujumbura and the Tripartite Conference of Foreign Affairs Ministers held in April 1971, a text relating to the “creation of

²⁰ Paternostre de la Maireu B, 1972, op. cit, p.301.

²¹ Ibid, p.305

a permanent committee of cooperation”²² was submitted to the Heads of states of Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda. That was how the “Economic Community for the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL)” was born.

When Rwanda got independence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the Trusteeship Ministry charged with international cooperation. Eventually, it became the Ministry of International Cooperation. According to the constitution, it is the President of the Republic who negotiated and concluded treaties, agreements and conventions but they came into force after ratification by the National Assembly. It was on 24th January that the National Assembly ratified for a period of five years, the first five agreements and conventions.

b. Structure and performance of the economy

When Rwanda got independence, the economy was essentially made of subsistence agriculture and animal rearing. It was subsidiary in nature with a weak export base depending on the sole production of coffee and some negligible mineral activities.

The advent of independence required structural needs related to the establishment of a modern administration. The changes in demand were experienced by the population whose tastes changed in favor of durable consumer goods. The inadequacy of the national economy to satisfy the needs of the population justified the increase of external aid and international cooperation between 1962 and 1972. This situation was a fundamental feature of Rwanda’s economic dependence.

The three classic sectors of the economy differed in their importance and dynamism. Thus, the primary sector remained largely predominant in the composition of the GDP all along the 1960-1970 decade whereas the growth rate of the GDP between 1967 and 1971 in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors was more consistent in the secondary sector than other sectors as it shown in the table below.

²² Final Communiqué of the Bujumbura Conference, 18th April 1971.

Table 6: Growth of GDP components

Sector	% Growth rate 1967/1971
Primary	39.8
Secondary	83.3
Tertiary	39.4
Total	43.0
(%) Growth rate	4.6

Source: BNR, Annual report 1967-1971

An examination of the above table shows that the secondary sector grew more than all the other sectors (83.5%). The growth of that sector was mainly due to the industrial production of some basic necessities which were previously imported from Belgian Congo or Burundi and which were circulated in the whole economic life of Belgian Congo and Rwanda-Burundi. The first available data illustrated that reality for the years 1970-1980. The table below speaks volumes in as far as the importance of industrial output is concerned.

Table 7: Trend of production output of manufactured products

PRODUCT	UNIT	1971	1972	1973
Primus beer	Bottle (thousands)	22,492.6	23,856.6	26,683.2
Lemonade/ Mineral water	Bottle (thousands)	412.5	503.9	512.6
Soap	Ton	1,000	3,000	3,000
Sugar	Ton	290	352	400

Source: BNR, Annual report, 1967-1974

The above table clearly shows the importance of industrial output. The analyses of that period pertinently show that “electricity consumption remained relatively stable from 1970” which “reflected a slow pace of urbanization and industrialization”²³. Also, the predominance of the primary sector was characterized by subsistence agriculture which formed 66% and 68% of the GDP in 1967 and 1967 respectively.

²³ BNR, Bulletin Industriel, n°1, Juin 1975, p.9

The agricultural products are shown in the table below. It indicates the changes in production of main food crops between 1964 and 1967 in thousands of metric tons:

Table 8: Agricultural production between 1964 and 1967 in thousands of metric tons

	1964	1965	1966	1967
Bananas	1.033	1.202	1.452	1.560
Beans	70	95	131	132
Peas	38	39	59	52
Ground nuts	5	20	4	16
Sorghum	147	131	143	145
Maize	21	43	49	53
Wheat	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3
Rice	-	-	-	0.2
Sweet potatoes	239	203	258	360
Irish potatoes	30	43	57	107
Cassava	174	177	198	230

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and animal husbandry, 1964-1967

Food crops were mainly produced to meet the subsistence needs of the families concerned. Production for commercial purposes never went beyond 20% during the period under review. It was just at 16% in 1971. According to the BNR report, “food crops contributed more or less 50% of the GNP. In 1971, this rose to 56%”²⁴ and this was due to the increase in cultivated areas as indicated in table 8 below:

Table 9: Allocation of land for food crops (unit: hectare)

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Sorghum	1.39	130.0	132.0	129.0	125.0
Millet	3.7	3.0	2.0	1.8	2.7
Rice	-	-	-	0.3	0.4
Wheat	0.6	0.1	0.4	0.7	1.0
Maize	23.2	48.9	53.2	53.2	41.3
Irish potatoes	14.4	9.5	16.5	17.5	17.2
Sweet potatoes	58.1	36.8	48.0	52.5	60.7
Cassava	14.8	19.8	23.0	26.0	28.3
Beans	126.9	154.0	155.0	156.3	162.4
Peas	48.2	74.0	64.5	65.4	72.9
Ground nuts	8.5	6.0	21.0	14.8	7.2
Bananas	100.2	121.0	130.0	134.5	136.5

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and animal husbandry, 1965-1969
This table shows that cultivated areas obviously increased for

²⁴ Banque Nationale du Rwanda, Annual report 1964 -1971, Kigali, 1973

almost all crops. On the contrary, the yields per hectare increased for a limited number of crops like irish and sweet potatoes as indicated in the following table on the yield of main food crops.

Table 10: Yields of major food crops (Unit: metric ton/ hectare)

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Sorghum	1.39	1.10	1.10	0.95	1.00
Millet	0.56	0.60	0.66	0.44	0.52
Wheat	0.83	1.00	0.75	0.85	0.80
Rice	-	-	-	-	-
Maize	1.89	1.00	1.00	0.80	1.00
Irish potatoes	3.00	6.03	6.50	4.50	7.50
Sweet potatoes	3.49	6.98	7.50	7.00	5.34
Cassava	12.00	10.00	10.00	8.97	9.98
Beans	0.69	0.84	0.85	0.74	0.89
Peas	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.70	0.83
Ground Nuts	2.32	0.75	0.75	0.81	0.80
Bananas	11.99	9.97	12.00	11.83	12.00

Source: Ministry Agriculture and animal husbandry, 1965-1969

This table indicates that yields for most of the main food crops reduced during the 1965-69 period up to 1974. Poor food production was therefore attributed to the reduction in arable land owing to migrations from more populated areas to less populated ones.

Between 1962 and 1970 there were migrants who mainly came from the northern and southern provinces of the country (Ruhengeri, Byumba, Gikongoro and especially Butare). They moved towards the center and east (Gitamara, Kigali-Ngali and Kibungo). They were looking for unoccupied spaces to grow the same food crops that they were used to in order to ensure food security. Most of them were however trained by the administration to improve farming methods. The administration allocated plots to them (from 1.5 to 2 hectares each family) and obliged them to spare part of the plot for the growth of coffee.

The main causes of migration from their provinces of origin were land pressure and insufficient production. This was attributed to over exploitation of land as well as soil erosion. The same phenomena appeared in new destinations of migrant families.

Thus, by the end of the 1960s food crop production faced many problems as far as production of resources was concerned in most of the provinces. This was due to limited space for agriculture. On the other hand, the cultivation of coffee, pyrethrum and bark-cloth tree was characterized by climatic hazards, price fluctuation on the international market as well as some sort of laxity in producing for export during the period under review. That is why, as far as coffee was concerned, BNR made the following remarks between 1962-1972: "(...) poor climatic conditions and neglected treatment of coffee trees²⁵. There was a decline in agricultural exports which worsened Rwanda's economic dependence on foreign aid.

The 1962-1970 period witnessed an increasing trade deficit especially from 1964-1969. This was mainly due to the low prices of exports on the world market which could not cover imports. 1970 had a deficit of 429.2 million RWF compared to 938.9 million RWF in 1969. This was mainly due to the good performance of exports which rose from 1423.5 million RWF in 1969 to 2480.7 million RWF in 1970 following an increase in prices on the international market and good climatic conditions which stimulated production.

Both multilateral and bilateral foreign aid compensated for deficiencies in domestic trade as far as financing the economy was concerned. In 1962, when the country got independence, it was the end of the 1st Yaoundé Convention in the frame work of which the European Economic Community had organized the 1st European Fund for Development (EFD) intended for territories that depended on member states for funding.

For this first EFD, the entire Congo-Rwanda-Burundi that depended on Belgium for support and represented 34% of the population of associated territories received 5% of the funds i.e. US \$ 30 million out of US \$ 581 million²⁶. Immediately after independence, still within the frame work of the Yaoundé convection, the Second EFD was launched for a period of five years i.e. 1963-1968. This fund was used to boost four major areas, namely investment, production, diversification and

²⁵ BNR, Bulletin Trimestriel, n°1, Juin 1975, p.5

²⁶ Libois, G, « L'aide extérieure à la République du Congo », in *Etudes Congolaises*, July – August 1968. C.E.E. Situation semestrielle des projets du 2^{ème} FED en exécution, Brussels, 31 March 1967.

technical assistance. Actually, in terms of investment, Rwanda received aid up to US \$ 979,000 to finance two projects²⁷.

Like other newly independent countries, Rwanda first received contributions from Belgium the former colonial power. These were in form of bilateral aid. But with time, other countries and international organizations especially the IMF got involved in providing aid to Rwanda.

Thus, in the course of 1962-1972, Belgium gave aid to Rwanda that was specifically meant to balance the budget and guarantee contractual obligations from financial borrowing before independence. These were funds borrowed from the World Bank to the whole Belgium-Congo-Ruanda-Urundi.

During the same period, Switzerland supported at least five projects²⁸ through bilateral aid. From 1963, these included support to the main Rwandese group of consumer and production cooperatives. From 1964, Switzerland financed a program of integrated rural development in Kibuye province as well as the 'Collège officiel de Kigali'. Different forest management programs were also financed from 1969. The financing and implementation of most of those projects lasted for three decades.

c. Maximum growth and development

Despite the external assistance received, the GDP growth slowed down during the 1960-70 period. It fell from 7.4% in 1969 to 4.6% in 1971. A number of indicators confirmed this trend. First of all, there was a fall in yields of food crops, and then there was budgetary deficits and finally inadequacy of the capacity to absorb external aid.

Agricultural methods and practices remained the same. Increase in food crop production was mainly based on the extension of arable land. This was made possible because of migration of farmers from overpopulated zones towards unoccupied land. As the unoccupied land reduced, the downward trend in terms of yields was solved at the expense of fluctuations in terms of GDP.

²⁷ C.E.E, Situation semestrielle des projets du 2^{ème} F.E.D en exécution, Brussels, 31st March, 1976.

²⁸ Uvin P., *L'aide complice. Coopération Internationale et Violence au Rwanda*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1999.

The needs linked to the functioning of a newly independent state increased tremendously whereas the necessary revenues increased very slowly. This resulted in an ever increasing budgetary deficit on annual basis up to the end of the PARMEHUTU regime. Financing of budgetary deficit was regularly assured by assistance from Belgium. Likewise, the development budget was mainly financed by foreign aid. The Rwandan economy was characterized by inadequate absorption capacity

The main foreign capital received by Rwanda consisted of the 1st and 2nd EFD programs. An analysis of the progress of the 2nd EFD program, three years after its effective implementation in 1963-1964 showed that the percentage of credits that were taken was relatively modest. Indeed, on 31st March 1967, this percentage was 10.20 in the field of investment, 4.30 for diversification and 22.08 for technical assistance linked to the aid²⁹. Thus all economic and social realities were such that even external aid was used to meet the simple needs of consumption.

In summary at independence in 1962, Rwanda inherited a weak economy which was dominated by less diversified farming practices depending mainly on coffee, the first foreign exchange earner of the country at the time. Rwanda was a country without industrial development and without enough financial capacity for it to take off economically. In this country where exports could not cover the imports, there were chronic deficits in the balance of trade and budgetary provisions become the order of the day.

Under the First Republic (1962 – 1973), the economic situation did not fundamentally change and many observers remarked that during this period, the economy was characterized by stagnation. During that period, many areas were reclaimed by pastoralists for cultivation. This did not however increase the volume of agricultural products for export as they remained low. Thus, Rwanda was not in a position to meet her coffee quota allocated to her at international level.

The country's economic stagnation did not permit people to improve their living conditions and it blocked prospects for social progress during the decolonization period. There were material deprivations which provoked deep frustration in some circles.

²⁹ C.E.E, Situation semestrielle des projets du 2^{ème} F.E.D en exécution, Brussels, 31st March, 1976.

5.1.5 Social and cultural politics

Despite the fact that Christian colonial education had been entrenched in the country for half a century in Rwanda, it is surprising to note that, at independence, the country had very few national cadres who were adequately trained to assume new roles in the development process.

a. New Practices in National Education

In the 1962 Constitution, and according to the education policy of 1966, the general basic principle was to make primary education compulsory and free for all children up to the age of 15 in order to “benefit as many children possible with basic education that was solid and sustainable”³⁰. Following this arrangement, new orientations were introduced in the organization of primary education for boys and girls, as well as in secondary and higher institutions of learning.

A “double-intake” system was introduced in primary schools. This system meant that every teacher had two groups of pupils to teach: one group in the morning and the other in the afternoon. The system increased the total enrollment in primary schools as shown in the table below³¹:

Table 11: Trend of student enrolment admitted to primary school

A c a d e m i c year	Total number of pupils	Observation
1960-1961	160,000	Low intake with regard to children of school-going age.
1961-1962	217,000	29% of school children were girls
1964-1965	280,000	
1969-1970	409,000	Increase of 61% Girls represented 43%
1972-1973	425,000	Increase of 63% of which 45% were girls

Source: Paternostre de la Mairieu, B., op.cit.p.344.

³⁰ Simpenzwe G., *Epitomé de l'enseignement libre subsidié au Rwanda*, Kigali, 1988, p.29

³¹ Paternostre de la Mairieu, 1972, op.cit., p.344.

However, the increase in intake for pupils resulting from the double-session program had problems. These included inadequate teaching staff who were not well qualified, poor teaching content which was not appropriate to the realities on the ground and finally, there was lack of school materials such as books, chalk, brushes. Even the state of school buildings was appalling.

In order to overcome the above problems, the government took action:

- As early as 1963, more qualified teachers were urgently trained by putting in place a training period of two years for trainers of trainers;
- A “pedagogic training center” was set up in order to improve the quality of head teachers who were destined to become inspectors after six months of internship. This was done in the perspective of reorganized primary education at provincial level in various sectors;
- Opening of 12 audio–visual centers by the Gitarama Radio School in favor of radio teaching programs for uneducated rural children in a 4 years program.
- Creation of a special post- primary cycle for girls to replace the 8 former post primary domestic training colleges (3 years in boarding school) for “privileged” young girls.
- Training of headmistresses and female teachers in women technical schools (2 years’ terminal cycle after ordinary level) in Nyanza, Mubuga and Remera;
- From 1964, with the help of non commissioned officers of the national guard, the government set up civic education programs for youth volunteers aged 15- 19 years in order to train a versatile disciplined work force (cf Mayange and Gitagata);
- In 1970, there was a pilot project of rural education and handcraft centers for boys who did not have access to secondary; Just before Rwanda’s independence, secondary school education was not well developed and consisted of only 24 establishments dominated

by 14 lower teacher – training colleges. Under the First Republic, secondary education did not only diversify but it also expanded. A limited number of candidates could be trained for higher university education;

- In 1971 - 72, the number of secondary schools increased from 24 to 63;
- For boys, some of those schools offered ordinary level orientation, diversified upper levels, technical secondary studies in agriculture, veterinary, medical training, etc. lower teacher – training education and finally professional education;
- As for girls, who had been marginalized for a long time in terms of education, a common cycle of orientation, diversified upper levels, lower teacher–training education, middle education and social, medical and domestic training were introduced.

Between 1970 and 1977, even if Rwanda had almost no qualified secondary school teachers at independence, it was able to produce 883 graduates, 283 of whom were in the field of humanities, 393 in teacher education, 169 in professional education and 38 in technical education.

As for higher and university education, the idea of setting up a college to produce candidates for higher education dates back to King Mutara III Rudahingwa’s Jubilee of 1956 /1957. He made significant contributions to the jubilee to set up the “Mutara III Fund” that allowed young successful candidates in humanities to go for higher education in Europe³². The idea was sabotaged by colonial policy which recommended that it was not good to give further education to the colonized people because they would get rid of the colonialists. When a college planned in Gitarama was under construction, one high colonial official said: “Teach them and they will soon drive you out”³³.

The initiative to establish higher education finally was born during the First Republic. In November 1963, the *Université Nationale du Rwanda* (UNR) opened its doors. It had 4 faculties

³² Kagame, A., op.cit. pp. 233-234.

³³ Ibid, p. 234.

(Arts, Economics and social Sciences, Sciences and Medicine. It also operated a Practical School of Modern Languages (EPLM) and a Higher School for Nursing. On 17th October 1971, after eight years of sustained hard work, UNR had 471 students, 250 of whom 18 had graded as doctors in medicine. This was a big achievement for UNR.

Despite this progress, the educational system at that time suffered from several shortcomings among which were:

- Like under colonial rule, the education system was not adapted to national problems on the ground because “it gave privilege to general training that was not linked to production. It therefore led to rural underdevelopment”³⁴;
- The school was perceived as “an open door towards a bright future whereas it was not the case and this led to rural–urban migration”³⁵;
- The standard of teaching was poor. Books were less adapted to the Rwandese situation and there were no qualified teachers³⁶;
- The schooling rate hardly reached 50% for boys in Primary school. It remained particularly low for girls in both primary and secondary schools. It was almost zero for both sexes at higher education levels

c. Strong influence of the Catholic Church

Like in the colonial past, under the First Republic, the education system was dominated by the Catholic Church. This gave it significant influence on institutions and leaders of the country. Without the necessary capacity to support itself, the young Republic needed Church support to back it up. The political leadership relied on missionaries for advice. This relationship was interpreted to mean an acknowledgement of the Catholic church by the new leaders of Rwanda who were products of the seminary, a relationship that made the catholic church to be termed as the “parent” of the revolution. Besides, the government of the First Republic was called a “Christian” regime because of the close collaboration and influence of the

³⁴ Simpenzwe, G. 1988.op.cit, p. 31.

³⁵ Ibid., p.31.

³⁶ Ibid., p..31.

Church in the politics of the country³⁷.

The 1961 constitution which resulted from the Gitarama coup and the 1962 constitution prepared at independence gave a considerable position to the Christian religion. In the preamble of the 24th November 1962 constitution, it is stated that: “the trust of the National Assembly is put in the Almighty God”. Other articles abound in these constitutions regarding the religious character of the Rwandan state at that time. Article 8 of the Gitarama Constitution and article 39 of the 1962 constitution forbid communism as well as communist activities and propaganda. Article 75 of the 1961 constitution forbids divorce. The public schools run by the government and private schools managed by religious denominations were put on equal footing by article 32 of the 1962 Constitution. This meant that they were given the same grants.

Education remained under church control, hence the latter influenced government decisions in education matters. Thus a general policy on education was enacted to allow religious denominations to manage schools in the country. Indeed, from 1966, the State removed education from the ecclesiastic sphere”. The promulgation of the School law of 1966 and the general statute on Rwandese education of 1967 broke the monopoly on education by the Church by effectively giving school management to the secular State³⁸. Ethnic reasons played an important role in the promulgation of those laws. In fact, the political authorities said that the number of Tutsis in schools as well as Tutsi priests in charge of schools was still very high.

The Catholic Church was happy to collaborate with a Christian Head of State, aligned to the west whereas many states of the South and the sub - region claimed to belong to the Socialist Block. They also belonged to the Third World and Non-alignment Block.

Rwanda's case was taken as an ideal model in many areas notably in terms of political stability, development and social cohesion (insisting on solidarity and absence of open conflicts).

³⁷ Reyntjens, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en crise. Rwanda, Burundi: 1988-1994*, Paris, Karthala, 1994, p.166.

³⁸ Republic of Rwanda. Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, *Dynamique des équilibres ethnique et régional dans l'enseignement secondaire rwandais. Fondements, évolution et perspective d'avenir*, May 1986, p.20.

The Catholic Church believed that it had found in Rwanda a privileged ground to prove that a “Christian society” was possible.

Catholicism was practically Rwanda’s state religion that enjoyed considerable privileges. Such privileges included a quasi-monopoly in the education sector, great audience in the corridors of power, possession of vast properties, some of which were unexploited, exemptions in the fiscal domain, etc.

Under the First Republic, not only was PARMEHUTU which was the ruling party, merged with the State but it had connections with the Catholic Church as well. In other words, there was neither separation of power nor separation of the State and the Church. The President himself used this principal to rule. In his speeches he always referred to the principles of his Christian faith. In his speech on Labor Day on 1st May 1970 when he invited people to increase productivity, he had this to say: “without forgetting the fera of God (...) let us increase our passion for work”³⁹.

For President Kayibanda, the Catholic Church and its various structures played a very important role in the in the fields of nation’s political management and civic education. Thus, for example, while addressing the people of Tambwe during the ceremonies of the 10th anniversary of the “revolution”, he declared: “In your district of Tambwe, you have many important things which are close to one another. You have a district office here (...) and over there, you have a parish. Whoever wants to know God’s will, must know how to behave and must know his commandments and how to respect them, should go to the parish, which is not far”⁴⁰.

Finally, it should be noted that the ceremony of the President’s patronage ceremony referred to as “the holy Grégoire” was celebrated on 3rd September and was declared a national holiday. People had to attend mass and later participate in festivals where state authorities were introduced. After celebrating a mass service that brought together congregations of very many

³⁹ “Ijambo rya Perezida Kayibanda ku muni w’abakozi”, in *Kinyamateka*, n°17, mai 1970, p.1.

⁴⁰ “Komini ya Tambwe yibutse imyaka 10 u Rwanda rumaze rwigoboye ingoyi ya gihake Ijambo rya Prezida wa Republika muri ibyo birori”, in *Kinyamateka*, no. 18, July 1970, p.2.

people, the President gave a speech in which religion, politics and administration were all mixed up: “what I request you to do is to always respect your conscience, and yours religious principles (...) thus, nobody should be misled in doing things which you don’t know, but you should have genuine religious références... I encourage you to relentlessly follow our commitments in this field, which are also in line with the principles of PARMEHUTU party and those of your government”⁴¹ .

The Catholic Church was very close to the First Republic. Mgr Perrandin played a crucial role in this initiative. First, he made close links with influential leaders of PARMEHUTU. Although the First Republic considered Mgr. Bigirumwami as “feudal and reactionary,” and subjected him to constant harassment, it presented Mgr. Perrandin as both “democratic and progressive.” Then, his European origin and his status as a missionary Bishop favored him within the International missionary system. Compared with Rwandese Bishops, Mgr. Perrandin enjoyed by far a privileged position. In other words, he was very close to the center of power and the county’s finances. Mgr. Perrandin was able to impose himself and he indeed restructured the Church of Rwanda.

There were alarming hidden economic and socio-political motives in official speeches of politicians and ecclesiastic leaders as well as their foreign partners. That regime which was highly cherished by the West and the Catholic Church physically eliminated Hutu and Tutsi opposition members. This was done after instituting a single party system which was later transformed into a mono-ethnic power arrangement. There was excessive concentration of power in the hands of a small group of people hailing from Gitarama. It was also during this period that the first genocide practices became manifest.

5.1.6. End of the First Republic

The fall of Gregoire Kayibanda’s regime seems to have been announced and preceded by a series of internal crises which he did not survive.

⁴¹“Taliki ya 3 y’ukwa 9-1970. Uyumunsi itwibutsa ki? Grégoire”, in *Kinyamateka*, n°27, septembre 1970, p.3.

a. Regionalism and centralization of power

Once the objective of PARMEHUTU's accession to power was achieved, the party no longer had a program to present. It became a de-facto single party before being declared a "national party" in its Congress of 23rd October, 1966. Prior to that date, it was enshrined in the state structures. The President of the Republic was at the same time the President of the party. Half of the ministers played significant roles within the central organs of the party. The influential Members of Parliament were members of party organs at regional level.

PARMEHUTU demonstrated that it lacked clear objectives when its "common enemy," namely UNAR and Inyenzi Movement no longer posed a threat to it. When these two political opposition movements vanished from the political scene, several contradictions of Kayibanda's regime started emerging in broad day light.

In 1964, an unpublished report of the parliamentary commission sponsored by the President of the Republic gave a somber image of the country's mismanagement by PARMEHUTU. It noted many cases of illegal detentions, sluggishness of the judicial system, politicization of regional administration and the judiciary, ethnicity, lack of collaboration between different administrative territorial institutions, conflicts of interest, lack of internal organization and democratization within the party, etc.⁴² The report was not submitted to the National Assembly for debate. In 1967, during the meeting of the Legislative Assembly, one MP declared: "It is as if there is a big wound in the party"⁴³. Another parliamentarian agreed with him entirely. He said: "The direction that we are giving this country is very confusing. We are moving away from democracy and now, we are heading towards a regime that is dominated by a small group of people"⁴⁴ .

On 23rd October, 1966, a national Congress of the PARMEHUTU was held. Its objective was to analyze problems which were in the party. The congress cited major problems as follows: lack of vitality, regionalism, subversion, corruption, embezzlement, opportunism, etc. The party President described these problems

⁴² The Parliamentary visiting mission report Kigali 19th September 1964

⁴³ Hon. Banzi, in *Kinyamateka*, n° 32, Nzeli 1967, p.1.

⁴⁴ Hon. Sentama, in *Kinyamateka*, n°36, Ukuboza 1968, p.2.

in the following terms:“ the members of PARMEHUTU became carefree and later started quarrelling amongst themselves”⁴⁵. Several resolutions were proposed with the view of stopping “deviant disciplinary behavior” within the party but all was in vain.

On 4th July 1968, on the initiative of the National Assembly, an adhoc Parliamentary Commission made of 6 MPs was created. An alarming report was issued by the commission. Everywhere the PARMEHUTU leadership was divided into the old and new administrative authorities. There were regional conflicts: the North was against South, Butare versus Gitarama, and Ruhengeri against Gisenyi, etc. There were also clans, religious and personal conflicts. In brief, “the ideals of the Hutu regime diminished by the day”⁴⁶. The authors of that report together with their sympathizers (14 MPs) were accused of deviation (*guta umurongo*) and they were punished. Having denounced that regional sectarianism, the Catholic monthly known as *Kinyamateka* was sanctioned. Its Editor in chief, Father Maida was deported. A Rwandese journalist, Semusambi, was also imprisoned and the monthly was suspended for some days.

Those conflicts which were tearing the political class apart were aggravated by President Kayibanda’s plan to appoint himself as President for life. His speeches of “Socialist inclination” alienated his support of foreigners, especially the Catholic missionaries.

As concentration of power in the hands of a small clique from Gitarama continued to concretize, it reached its climax in 1972. The geographical support base of PARMEHUTU started reducing. At the beginning, it was concentrated along the Butare-Gitarama – Ruhengeri axis. Other provinces played a marginal political role. At the end of the First Republic, PARMEHUTU relied on only a small group of people from Gitarama who were among President Kayibanda’s faithful friends. In the last government that he formed on 21st February 1972, out of 18 members, 6 were from Gitarama i.e. a third of the entire government. This inequality in cabinet representation sharpened feelings of frustration especially within the military ranks from the North.

⁴⁵ “*Umurengwe waba ugiye guca ibintu mu ba Parmehutu*”, in *Kinyamateka* , n^o 36, Ugushyingo 1966,p.1.

⁴⁶ Parliamentary Commission report, Kigali 29th October 1968

b. Massacre of the Tutsi in 1973

In 1972, President Kayibanda took the initiative again and met his closest friends in order to execute his divisive plan. This plan consisted of chasing Tutsis from schools and higher institutions as well as from all public and private establishments. He said that this was intended to achieve the objectives of the 1959 revolution. The same slogan was used again in 1994 before and during genocide.

To that effect, Kayibanda and his friends put in place “committees of national interest” to execute the plan. Members of those committees were administrative agents, provincial governors, security agents and army officers. Kayibanda used the Burundi crisis which began on 29th April 1972 as an opportunity and pretext to realize his project. Mugesera tried to work out the chronology of events and made an inventory of names of pupils / students and civil servants who were removed in all Rwanda’s provinces⁴⁷.

In February 1973, the massacre of the Tutsis was organized and coordinated by Kayibanda’s government. Evidence to prove the above assertion is abundant, the most important of which is as follows:

- Names of “undesirable “ Tutsi civil servants were hung on notice boards on the same day, in the night of 26th and 27th February 1973;
- Orders for Tutsis to leave establishments were formulated everywhere in the same manner;
- No province was spared and all Tutsis were affected;
- There was no government leader, or head of school, state or parastatal institution who approved the above act. Everybody kept silent.

The government and its sympathizers argued that the Hutu could no longer tolerate to be a minority in schools and other establishments when they were demographically the majority. In connection with that, the Rwandese Ambassador to Belgium said: “more than ten years after the Hutu revolution (...), enterprises

⁴⁷ See the chronology of events and the inventory of names of pupils/ students and Tutsi State officials who were classed, Mugesera, A. 2004, op. cit., pp. 227-263.

employ only Tutsis. In universities, 65% of the students are Tutsis. The majority of the teaching staff is Tutsi. In government, almost all high level civil servants are Tutsis. The majority of the clergy are Tutsi priests. All this shows that the government has never pursued an aggressive policy against Tutsis⁴⁸.

Nevertheless, according to a study conducted by the Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education, the percentage of Tutsi students in secondary schools dropped from 36.3% in 1962 – 1963 and later to 11% in 1972 – 1973. In higher institutions of learning, Tutsi students were 8.5% at UNR, 6% at NPI and 3% studied in foreign countries. Nevertheless, fictitious figures were published during the period of persecution. According to these figures, Tutsi students were between 50 % and 70%. These were mere fantasies which did not correspond to reality. Lying was one of the weapons used by the Kayibanda regime and its allies.

The real causes of the 1972-73 events were within Kayibanda's regime itself. He provoked these events with the view of reconstituting the unity of his party, PARMEHUTU. The Tutsis who were portrayed as the real enemies of the Hutu was just a scapegoat.

The 1972-73 events led to the coup d'Etat of 5th July 1973 which was carried out by the Defense Minister, J. Habyarimana. The northern group that he represented and which was very influential in the army did not want Kayibanda's friends to carry out operations of persecuting Tutsis. Some authors have come up with a theory according to which the military was against the hunt of Tutsis. But it is obvious that the military command was aware of everything and was involved in the campaign, otherwise it could never have taken place. The military took control of the operations the very moment it wanted to control the country. However, no study specifies the role played by the army in these events. From the end of February 1973, President Kayibanda did have no more control. He was a victim of sectarianism and divisions within his PARMEHUTU. The fact that he was witch-hunting Tutsis did not help him to survive.

Just before the end of his presidential term in May 1973, President Kayibanda and his confidants did not want to leave power. They provoked another political crisis when they amended the

⁴⁸ La Libre Belgique, 8th March, 1973.

constitution to the discontent of their opponents as well as other politicians and the military. The presidential term was changed from 4 to 5 years with unlimited eligibility.

When the regime was overthrown in the *coup d'état* of 5th July 1973, the First Republic was already exhausted by many years of infighting. PARMEHUTU was completely tired and exhausted. And to say the least, it was not overthrown but “rather picked like a rotten fruit.”⁴⁹

5.2 The Second Republic (1973-1994)

On 5th July 1973, the high command of the National Guard made a national declaration to the population. This declaration had the following points:

- Mr. Kayibanda is discharged of his duties as president of the Republic.
- Major general Juvénal Habyarimana will assume the constitutional prerogative of head of state.
- The government has been forced to retire and is temporarily replaced by a “committee for peace and national unity” composed of 11 officers and presided over by Major General J. Habyarimana, until total re-establishment of peace in the country.
- The national assembly is dissolved.
- Political activities are forbidden throughout the entire territory of the Republic. The various organs of the party are dissolved.
- Rights and liberties are guaranteed by the 24th November constitution, with the exception of 16 articles which have been suspended.

This communiqué was signed by Major General Habyarimana, Lieutenant-Colonel Kanyarengwe, Major Nsekaliye, Major Benda, Major Rushashya, Major Gahimano, Major Munyandekwe, Major Serubuga, Major Buregeya, Major Ntubitura and Major Simba. That team, called “Comrades of the 5th July” was composed of members who hailed from Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, apart from Major Aloys Simba from Gikongoro and Major Jean Nepomuscène

⁴⁹ Reyntjens, F., *Afrique des Grands Lacs en crise, Rwanda, Burundi, 1988-1994*, Paris, Karthala, 1994, p.29; P.29; Mpfizi, C., *Les lignes de faite du Rwanda indépendant*, Kigali, ORINFOR, 1983, p.50.

Munyandekwe. That composition portrayed the existence of a north/ south conflict especially in the army. The above conflict was the underlying factor for the *coup d'état*.

On the occasion of that coup which was inspired by sectarianism, members of the committee justified their initiative in the following terms: “The higher authorities of the National Guard realized that internal peace was compromised and that national unity was seriously threatened.” It was for that reason that the coup was described as a “moral revolution”.

In fact, national unity which was a matter of concern in several speeches at that time was first all about regional considerations, but the unity between the Hutu and Tutsi was significantly ignored. As far as many Tutsis were concerned, Kayibanda and PARMEHUTU was considered as absolutely evil, Habyarimana's speech was full of hope. Nobody imagined that he was going to inherit the Kayibanda and PARMEHUTU's ideology and the policies associated with it.

5.2.1 Creation and institutionalization of MRND

Two years after the coup d'état, President Juvénal Habyarimana created the “*Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*” (MRND). It was set up in order to fill the vacuum created by the dissolution of PARMEHUTU government on 5th July 1975. MRND was structured in the image of the “*Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution*” (M.P.R) of President Mobutu of Zaire. President Habyarimana justified the creation of MRND in these terms: “(...) We have decided to create a popular movement which is authentically revolutionary and democratic that brings together all national forces in the country without exclusion i.e. without any discrimination in terms of sex, religion, ethnicity, origin, profession or social condition”⁵⁰.

According to the MRND statute voted on 29th June 1983 by the National Congress, article 1 stipulates that: “there is only one political movement called “*Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*” (MRND). Article 2 defined goals that were to be pursued as follows: “to bring together the entire Rwandese people with the aim of organizing them politically in the best way possible, to unite, stimulate and intensify efforts of the

⁵⁰ President Juvénal Habyarimana's speech, 04/07/1974.

Rwandese with the view of achieving development in the context of peace and unity in accordance with the program set in the movement's manifesto"⁵¹.

Article 9 obliged all Rwandese to be members of MRND. It stipulates: "all Rwandese enjoy full rights of membership to the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*. They are known as militants and must conform to the statutes and regulations of the movement"⁵².

Article 7 of the 1978 constitution specifies that: "(...) Le *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* is a single political party beyond which no political activity can take place"⁵³.

It follows from the MRND statutes and the constitution designed by President Juvénal Habyarimana's government that Rwanda was under a single party system and was also under a dictatorial regime. Indeed, MRND was identified with the state. Juvénal Habyarimana was the President, founder of MRND, Prime Minister, Commander in Chief of the National Army, Minister of Defense and President of the Judiciary. Hence, the new President of the Republic cumulatively and concomitantly exercised both executive and legislative powers. Such a situation was detrimental to the image of the new regime.

On accession to power, the President announced that constitutional order would be re-established within five years. Having governed by decree, it became necessary to introduce a constitution. The Constitution of 20th December 1978 was designed by three specialists namely the legal adviser in the Ministry of Public Service, the MRND legal adviser in the Ministry as well as the Vice – Dean of the law faculty at the *Université Nationale du Rwanda* (UNR). The content of the constitution drew significantly from the 1962 constitution from which it borrowed many elements after adapting them to the political context of the day. The constitution makers were strongly inspired by the governing principals provided by the President of the Republic, the MRND central committee and the commission of political, administrative and judicial

⁵¹ Présidence du MRND, op.cit.p.112.

⁵² Ibid., op.cit., p.114

⁵³ Ibid., op.cit., p.112

matters. In other words, the three constitution makers simply expressed in writing the wishes of the president of the Republic⁵⁴.

The constitution was approved during the December 1978 referendum. The text provided for a presidential term of five years with a possibility of re-election without exceeding two successive terms. The same constitution stated that in case of temporary or definite disability to exercise power, the President of the Republic would be replaced by the Secretary General of the ruling party. And in case of simultaneous disability on both of them, the post of President of the Republic was supposed to be occupied by a member of the central committee of MRND who would be elected by his colleagues. In order to avoid duplication of power between the President and that the MRND president, the 1978 constitution proposed the MRND President as the sole candidate to the presidency of the country.

The new constitution gave overwhelming powers to MRND and its president. MRND was henceforth enshrined in the constitution. Its organs became omnipresent in the entire life of the people and country

The 1978 constitution established a presidential structure with a very powerful executive, sometimes with clauses that seemed strange. Article 56, for example gave the President the power to be the supreme custodian of the constitution, a role which is normally played by the constitutional court. In addition, the President of the Republic was not directly accountable to CND. On the contrary, the ministers and permanent secretaries were answerable to the Parliament. In other words, the Members of Parliament could not question the President. The ministers were supposed to assume that responsibility before the CND. Incidentally, the President could dissolve the CND.

It should be noted that even if the President was answerable to CND, the latter could not threaten him since the ministers were all Members of Parliament who were appointed and could be dismissed by the President. They could not in any way challenge their boss.

⁵⁴ Nzaranyimana, I., *Organisation des pouvoirs constitutionnels au Rwanda. Approches des constitutions des 1962, 1978 et 1991*, Dissertation for a BA. Degree in Public Administration, Butare, September, 1993. p.66.

The legislature was linked to the executive. The judiciary was undermined in favor of the executive with the suppression of the Supreme Court. Article 81, Section 2 provided that the President of the Republic was the Custodian of the Independence of the Judiciary.

By virtue of all these clauses, MRND became the center of all power. The central government undermined democracy whereas excessive powers replaced the separation of powers. MRND did not take long before it became an extra ordinary machinery of propaganda expressing the wishes of its founder up to the remotest corners of the country as a result of its organs. These ranged from the National Congress via provincial committees, congresses at district level extending to sectoral committees and then assemblies and committees at parish level. In order to consolidate its power and its grip on the country, the MRND regime resorted to two methods of rural mass mobilization and recruitment of supporters in the entire country. These were communal work (*Umuganda*) and facilitation (*gushyushya Urugamba*) both of which were inspired by the *Salongo* and *Sakayonsa* bands from Zaire's MPR.

Communal work and facilitation were political instruments aimed at controlling the population and ensuring its support to the regime. During the facilitation process, the founding President was idolized, praised and glorified with slogans like "*Prezida fondateri, Ramba, Sugira, Sagamba, Tera imbere, Turagushyigikiye!*"⁵⁵. These slogans transcended every where during such functions. The president was a cult leader of sorts.

That politics of controlling the population in order to ensure its allegiance only brought about rivalry. In 1980, a conspiracy against the regime led by Major Lizinde and his associates⁵⁶ flopped. The coup plotters were tried by a tribunal which sat in Ruhengeri; they were condemned to death on 14th July, 1982.

President Habyarimana pardoned them by changing their capital punishment to life imprisonment. Lizinde and many of his associates remained in prison up to 23rd January, 1991, the day

⁵⁵ Nkunuzumwami, E., *La Tragédie Rwandaise. Histoire et Perspectives*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996, p.96

⁵⁶ "Urubanza rwa Lizinde na bagenzi be mu Ruhengeri", in *Imvaho*, n^o395, 21 au 27 Septembre 1981, pp1-3

they were set free by an attack on their prison by the *Inkontanyi*. Luzinde and Biseruka joined their liberators.

The 1980 aborted coup resulted into a split of the holy union of the 4th July, 1973 putchists. The division was between people from the northern part of the country (northern Ruhengeri and Gisenyi province) in general. In particular, the members from Habyarimana's region occupied the best positions in the country in all fields, both in the private and public sectors⁵⁷.

5.2.2. Worsening of the crises

a. Ethnic and Regional Balance

Although the First Republic was established along lines of ethnic discrimination against the Tutsi, the Second Republic was basically made of Hutus who originated from the central and southern parts of the country⁵⁸. This policy established regional quotas according to ethnic groups. These quotas were based on the criterion of proportional representation according to population as far as education and employment in the public service and private sector were concerned. MRND radicalized this process. In the speech its founding father on 1st August 1973 and during the 4th MRND congress held on 29th June 1983, he had this to say: "(...) it is understandable that admission to different schools will take into account the social, ethnic and regional composition of the Rwandese society"⁵⁹.

The so-called policy of "ethnic and regional balance" prevented the best performers to join the education field, the army, the police and other posts which they deserved or wished to join. The policy marginalized the Tutsis as well as the Hutus from other districts apart from Gisenyi and Ruhengeri.

The table below illustrates regional inclinations in the admission process to government secondary schools in 1989 according to provinces.

⁵⁷ Mushali, F., interviewed Musanze on 1st August, 2007.

⁵⁸ Nkuzumwami, E., 1996, op. cit., p. 99.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 3 10.

Table 12: Admission to government secondary schools according to provinces in September 1989

Province	Places available according to population	Places allocated	Range
BUTARE	836	696	-140
BYUMBA	722	662	-60
CYANGUGU	461	443	-18
GOKONGORO	514	466	-48
GISENYI	649	1045	+396
GITARAMA	836	792	-44
KIBUNGO	501	425	-76
KIBUYE	468	412	-56
KIGALI	970	1005	+35
RUHENGERI	736	747	+11
Total	6,693	6,693	442-442=0

Source: Uwizeyimana, L., *Octobre et Novembre 1990. Le Front Patriotique Rwandais à l'assaut du Mutara*, Edition Université du Rwanda, Ruhengeri, 1992, p.83.

In spite of the fact that Gisenyi province had a population of 9.7% of the total Rwandese population, 15.61% of the places were allocated to it. During the 1978-1990 period, Gisenyi, Kigali and Ruhengeri provinces received 51% of the total budget allocated to all provinces compared to less than 25% received by the four provinces of Gikongoro, Kibuye, Cyagugu and Kibungo. Gisenyi and to a lesser extend, Ruhengeri province grabbed positions of responsibility both in government and private institutions. In government institutions, 50% of the managerial posts were occupied by people from these two provinces. The diplomatic posts and access to regional or international organizations were equally reserved for particular people⁶⁰. The segregation policy of ethnic and regional balance was approved as a good policy of fairness intended to distribute equitably the wealth of the

⁶⁰ Kinyamateka, no 1344, May 1991.

country. This is what the Rwandese bishops told their flock: “Do not ignore that the policy of ethnic balance in work places and schools was aimed at correcting this inequality which gave favors to some ethnic groups at the expense of others. It is obvious that such a policy can neither please everybody nor produce all expected benefits immediately”⁶¹.

The policy of ethnic and regional balance undermined the Second Republic significantly. It was seriously contested by the democratic forces which militated for change and it ended up by leading the MRND regime to its downfall in 1994.

b. Economic improvement

In social and economic matters, MRND opted for “a system which neither favored frantic capitalism and without limitations nor extreme communism which suffocated the liberty and initiative of the individual”⁶². Committed to a denial of both capitalist and communist extremes, the MRND regime used the methodology of rhetoric on development as its main ideological pillar. It conceived development as the best means of overcoming ethnic and regional contradictions⁶³.

The 1974-1982 period was a very important phase of economic growth because of favorable rates of exports. On the one hand, there was an increase in coffee exports, and on the other hand foreign aid also increased. Thus, the value of coffee exports which was US\$ 20 million in 1970 reached US\$100 million in 1979⁶⁴.

Coffee was therefore considered as the irreplaceable base of Rwanda’s economic development because it contributed a lot to the revenue of the population. The growth of financial inflows from bilateral and multilateral aid was particularly important. This aid was US\$ 250 million in 1970. It rose to US\$ 400 million in 1980. The countries which provided aid included Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and USA. International organizations which gave aid were: WB, AID, EEC, FIDA, etc.

⁶¹ SGCECR, *Lettres pastorales et autres déclarations des évêques catholiques du Rwanda*, Kigali, SGCECR, 1999, p. 28.

⁶² Présidence du M.R.N.D., *Op.cit.*, p. 57.

⁶³ Hanssen, A., *Le Désenchantement de la coopération. Enquête au pays des mille coopérants*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 1989, P.134.

⁶⁴ Maton, J., *Développement économique et social au Rwanda entre 1980 et 1993. Le dixième décile en face de l’Apocalypse*, Université de Gand, 1994.

Due to economic improvement, a number of important projects were undertaken. These were projects which Rwanda neither had during the colonization nor during the First Republic. Thus, Kigali and other urban centers were developed. Tarmac roads were constructed. An efficient posts and telecommunications service and water supply were developed. Due to the strength of the Rwandese currency and relative stability of the country, it became possible to attract coffee products from bordering regions especially from Zaire and Uganda. Finally, the setting up of several cooperation missions and NGOs that were connected to the inflows of international aid allowed the job market to grow. Real estates development was equally significant⁶⁵.

The economic improvement was fragile towards the end of the 1970-1980. This was due to an economic crisis which became worse during 1980-1990. It was especially from 1984-1986 that the crisis exacerbated and reached its highest point during 1990-1993.

The crisis was characterized by a recession. The external factors which had favored economic growth were reversed with tendentious reduction in foreign aid and serious deterioration of the terms of trade. Meanwhile, internal factors of structural nature like the reduction in agricultural yields and failure to control population growth, weighed negatively on the economic situation. This led to a fall in domestic resources.

The drop in domestic resources led to famine; it also led to an increase in imports and a reduction in the value of exports precisely linked to the deterioration in the terms of trade, i.e. reduced prices of exports, notably coffee which saw its prices drop dramatically.

The country experienced economic imbalances with a big reduction in resources whereas its demands kept on increasing. These imbalances were mainly manifested through three types of deficits: commercial, food and budgetary deficits. The inability of exports to offset the necessary imports led to a commercial deficit which worsened all during 1980-1990.

⁶⁵ Uwizeyimana, L., In Willame, J.C., *Aux Sources de l'hécatombe rwandaise*, Cahiers Africains, n°14, 1995.

Table 13: The trend of balance of trade from 1980 to 1991

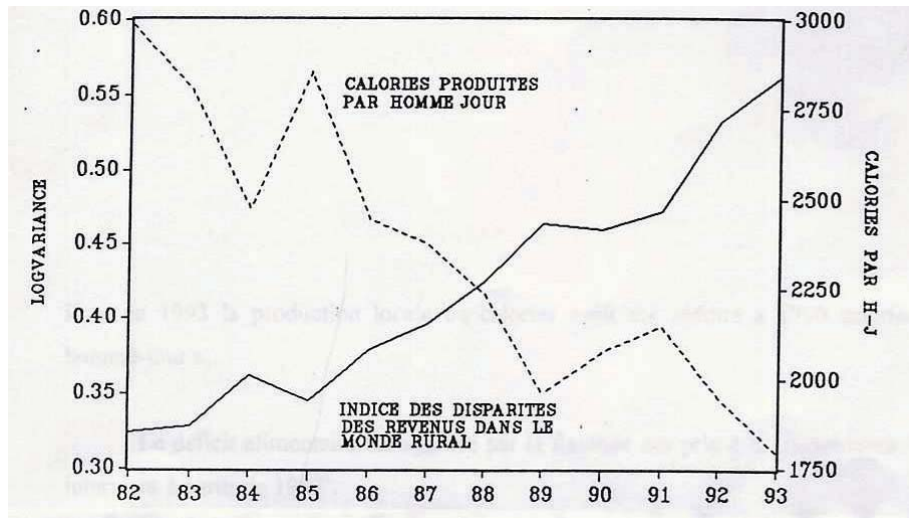
Year	Imports	Exports	Commercial balance
1980	18,177	12,402	-5,775
1981	19,230	10,521	-8,709
1982	19,929	10,069	-9,860
1983	18,646	11,706	-6,940
1984	19,786	14,455	-5,331
1985	22,211	13,222	-8,989
1986	22,717	15,338	-7,379
1987	21,271	9,075	-12,196
1988	21,296	8,410	-12,886
1989	19,623	7,777	-11,846
1990	18,804	8,478	-10,326
1991	28,549	11,971	-16,578

Source: BNR, *Economic and financial statistics*, no. 11, September 1997

This table dwells on imports characterized by fluctuations but which were generally experiencing an upward trend. The years when the values of imports dropped correspond to the size of exports which dropped in value.

Although food products formed a large proportion of imports, the reduction in production of useful food products led to a food deficit throughout the decade. During 1985-1986, there was a drop in the production of calories per person per day which went below the minimum level required.

Figure 10: Calories production trends per person per day



In 1993, the local production of calories dropped to 1790 calories per person per day. The food deficit was worsened by rocketing of prices of consumable products which happened from 1987⁶⁶.

During the decade, budgetary incomes were higher than public expenses but they grew at a lower rate than expenditure. The downward trend was mainly due to the fall in prices of coffee and the rise in inflation. At the end of the decade, the budgetary deficit worsened as shown in the table below:

⁶⁶ Matton, J., *Développement économique et social au Rwanda entre 1980 et 1993. Le deuxième décile en face de l'apocalypse*, Université de Gand, 1994.

Table 14: Changes in income and expenditure for budgets between 1980-1992

Year	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
1980	12,975.0	7,192.0	5,783.0
1981	13,448.9	10,048.0	3,360.9
1982	15,581.0	12,073.0	3,508.0
1983	15,784.0	11,411.4	4,372.6
1984	17,477.0	NA	NA
1985	21,061.0	NA	NA
1986	23,628.0	NA	NA
1987	18,133.4	NA	NA
1988	18,213.3	NA	NA
1989	19,162.7	NA	NA
1990	21,583.0	28,117.0	-6,534.0
1991	24,994.0	31,596.0	-6,602.0
1992	27,562.0	40,041.0	-12,499.0

Source: B.N.R, *Economic and financial statistics*, n^o12, September 1998

These deficits became worse from the beginning of the 1990s and reached their highest point in 1994. The beginning of the 1990s was again characterized by less productive utilization of available resources with an increase in military expenditure. This situation led to a drop in GDP levels and an increase of external public debt and its servicing which exceeded the value of exports. This was the climax of the unfavorable balance of trade. Already in 1989, IMF had imposed the first Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) on Rwanda. But this program was not effected because of the 1990-1994 war.

Table 15: Budgetary estimates as from 1st January to 31st December 1990

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Budgetary deficit (millions of RwF)	-4,136	-4,885	-3,692	-5,986	-5,651	-11,842	-7,795	-7,331	-101
% GDP Deficit	-3.2	-3.4	-2.3	-3.4	-3.3	-6.9	-4.4	-4.2	-6
External debt (billions of RwF)	18.7	21.7	26.6	31.7	36.2	44.6	50.3	48.3	51.8
Internal debt (billions in RwF and % of GDP)	7.16 6.1	11.6 8.2	13.5 8.5	14.3 8.3	16.5 9.7	20.7 12.1	24.3 13.6	28.9 16.6	34.2 20.1
% of total public debt of GDP	20.4	23.4	25.4	26.5	31.0	38.1	41.9	44.4	56.7
Foreign debt servicing in % of exports	5.9	5.6	5.7	6.6	7.2	14.8	14.9	16.5	18.3
Total public debt servicing in % of budgetary revenues	11.0	17.4	12.5	13.2	12.9	20.4	26.5	30.6	32.2
Net internal debt (millions of RwF)	779	3,231	3,035	3,001	2,744	6,804	8,481	10,551	16,484

Source: Ministry of Planning, *Projections of the Ministry of Planning prior to the October 1990 events.*

c. Effect of the Crisis

Until the mid 1990s, the macroeconomic balances were maintained. The currency was stable, GDP grew by 4.9% per annum from 1965 to 1989 and inflation was under control (less than 4% per annum). Financial Donors and western NGOs rushed to Rwanda and invested heavily believing that they had found in Rwanda a haven of peace and a favorable ground to try their development theories. In Rwanda, they saw a model of development that was different from that of neighboring Burundi. On the one hand, Rwanda was described as a country with a political direction “that was not born out of an ethnic majority”. On the other hand, the “majority” was in power with development as their catch word⁶⁷.

⁶⁷ Hanssen, A, 1989, op.cit.

The activism of the donors and NGOs gave the impression of an economic take off. But it was not the case. Cooperation with foreign countries inhibited local initiatives in a way and this affected the people negatively due to the mindset of receiving aid. The virulence with which the people looted public property and destroyed a big number of project achievements shows that they did not have a feeling of concern for initiatives that were donated. Most NGOs were only interested in the success of their local projects rather than the general deterioration of life conditions⁶⁸.

At the end of the 1980s, poverty levels of the common man had by far exceeded acceptable levels. The wealthy people got hold of the best arable land. Famine and deprivation became endemic. A government commission set up in 1990 admitted that 54 districts were deficient in food. The most affected provinces were Butare, Gikongoro and Kibuye. Between 1988 and 1990, the production of beans and bananas reduced by 50% and 30% respectively. With such disparities, Rwanda was no longer immune from social conflicts⁶⁹.

The situation deteriorated due to combined effects of the Structural Adjustment Program (currency devaluation of November 1990 followed by another devaluation of June 1992). This was in addition to consequences of the war and the get-rich-quick mentality of the regime barons. The Akazu established its monopoly on all profitable businesses of the nation as well as the private sector.

There were many factors that led to the new contradictions which the regime in place failed to control. These included: the impoverishment of the people (especially the youth), rate of increase in terms of trade, scarcity of land and high population growth (in 1990, the country registered an average of 285 inhabitants /km² with the growth rate of 3.5% and fertility index of 8.5 children per woman), agricultural uncertainty, urban development and many other phenomena. The official pronouncements of the authorities in power were still oriented to the myth of an egalitarian society. The regime took advantage of the people's poverty and promised them many things (money,

⁶⁸ Uvin, P., *L'aide complice? Coopération internationale et violence au Rwanda*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1998.

⁶⁹ It is the conclusion of a study published on the eve of October 1990 war, read F.Bezy, *Rwanda, socio-économique d'un régime*, Louvain-La-Neuve, 1990, pp 54-56.

cows and land of a neighbor) in order to mobilize them when the government felt that its interests were threatened.

Like with the First Republic, the history of Habyarimana's regime can be read as a process of exclusion of the largest section of the Rwandese society. The institutionalization of the politics of ethnic and regional balance established quotas which excluded Tutsis and Hutus from the rest of Rwanda (apart from those of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri who enjoyed a big portion of the national cake). During the 1980s, power was concentrated in the hands of people from Bushiru and especially, the members of a small clique of family members related to the first lady. This was referred to as Akazu. Concentration of power was accompanied by amassing property and riches in the country by the very group and its associates. This was linked to self enrichment and corruption of the political leaders and military generals.

When RPF launched its attack in the North-East of the country on 1st October 1990, Rwanda was already in a socio-economic crisis that was little talked about⁷⁰. The crisis was aggravated by the slump of coffee prices which brought into the country more than 80% of the revenue. It was the "end of the regime"⁷¹. During the same period, sections of the civil society began denouncing injustices and abuses and clamored for democracy.

Consequently, the socio-economic crisis symbolized the failure of the rural-based development model promoted by J. Habyarimana's regime, a model that kept the common man in his backyard without any possibility of acquiring new ideas. Their ignorance and credulity comforted the ruling class of "intellectuals" who were pretended that they spoke "on the people's behalf", manipulated them as they pleased.

Finally, the social disparities, the institutionalization of ethnicity and the policy of regional balance as well as strict control of the population exacerbated this exclusion by provoking irreparable discord among the Hutu from the northern part of Rwanda. This situation marked a prelude to the political crises of the 1990s which became fatal for the MRND regime.

⁷⁰ Chrétien, J.P., "La crise politique rwandaise", in *Genève-Afrique*, 2,1992, pp 121-140; Willame, J.C., "La panne rwandaise", in *La revue nouvelle*, 1990 p. 59-66.

⁷¹ La Libre Belgique, 31st October – 1st November, 1989.

5.2.3 Problem of Rwandan Refugees

From 1959, the Tutsis never run away from democracy as PARMEHUTU propagandists used to say, but they did so because they had to save their lives. Generally, they run towards church missions, schools and other places which could give them cover from danger. Others decided to leave the country as soon as possible to look for asylum in neighboring countries.

Soon after the bloody events of 1959, the Belgian government was embarrassed by the presence of displaced persons. More especially because UN emissaries were present in the country and in their raids, the UNAR claimed that the Belgian government did not want the displaced persons to return to their homes. This is why Logiest led a huge campaign to force the displaced people to go back home even if they run the risk of being chased once again. Those who were still considered “undesirable” in their regions were settled in other places. The State even availed trucks to those who wanted to go out of the country. In 1962, the latter were estimated to be around 150,000 people, a figure that kept on rising. The policy of removing displaced persons from their places of refuge was systematically carried out countrywide. By March 1962, more than 78,000 people had been forced to leave their places of refuge⁷².

Those who returned home did not find their property which had been illegally grabbed by *Burgomasters* and their friends. This is why those properties caused several conflicts and law suits⁷³. In 1966, President Kayibanda prohibited refugees from claiming for their property. In 1975, the Habyarimana government decreed that properties left behind by the Tutsis were henceforth taken by the State. This was because those who had grabbed them did not want to lose them.

The refugees always tried to return but only a small number managed to get back after having faced several challenges on the part of the security services and the provincial and district administrations. The first laws on the return of refugees date back to 1966. They specified documents that the returnees had to possess. These included: identity card, documents provided by the country of asylum and papers issued by the UNHCR.

⁷² According to Imvaho, no 3..

⁷³ Mugesera A. took inventory of the conflicts (Mugesera, A., op.cit., pp 87-99).

In addition to all the above documents, the refugee had to produce a report written by the governor. It had to indicate the departure date from Rwanda, countries of residence, members of the family, entry post into Rwanda, etc. It was the governor who issued a temporary identity card and indicated the place of residence. The returnee could not go to another district without the permission of the governor. The *Burgomasters* prepared a monthly report addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Defense as well as the National Police regarding the returnee's actions and movements, the visitors he received, etc.

The *Burgomasters* were detailed to watch all families that received them, because according to the Minister of Defense, all refugees were spies who worked for the *Inyenzi*. There was total mistrust with regard to the returnee.

Refugees were considered as “fundamentally evil”. Those who left in 1959 were the worst. The maliciousness of the refugees was graded⁷⁴. This was why the act of hosting returning refugees was considered as a serious crime of complicity with the enemy. In spite of that mistrust and surveillance of the returnees, many Rwandeses took the risk of crossing the border to give supplies to their brothers, friends or neighbors who lived in the neighboring countries. Many cases of refugees, notably in North Kivu who were sponsors of young Rwandese Hutus are known. They facilitated their access to secondary school education. The borders of Rwanda and Zaire and the anti-Tutsi policy of the two Republics did not put an end to the relationship between the Rwandese Hutu and Tutsi refugees.

Although the Rwandese government had since 1964 requested that refugees be settled in their countries of asylum, it did nothing to help them. On the contrary, its policy consisted of making life for them very difficult in those countries. The Rwandese embassies watched refugees closely in their countries of asylum.

In 1973, the Second Republic put in place a joint ministerial commission of Rwanda – Uganda for the repatriation of Rwandese refugees living in Uganda. The above commission met only once in Kampala from 21st to 28th July 1974 because some political personalities were ferociously opposed to the return of refugees. The circular issued on 25th October 1973 reiterated the previous

⁷⁴ Mugesera A., op.cit., p 102.

instructions on the re-integration of the refugees. It all depended on the Governor who also depended on the Minister of Internal affairs. A brochure published in 1979 specified the procedure of return. The refugees had to express in writing their desire to return. The request had to be addressed to the country of origin through the High Commission for refugees and the hosting government. The refugee whose request was rejected stayed in the country of exile or looked for another.

Refugees who were wanted by the Kigali government were captured and imprisoned. Others were killed. In 1983, Obote's government sent 60,000 refugees to Rwanda by force. The Rwandese government only accepted 1,026 of them who, according to it met conditions of being Rwandese. This attitude shocked the concerned refugees and even many other Rwandese nationals⁷⁵.

The Kigali government also fomented division among refugees or caused conflicts within the local people. To that effect, the Kigali government supported associations which fought the Tutsis in the neighboring countries like Magrivi⁷⁶ in North Kivu and the Abanyarwanda – Buhutu Association in Uganda.

In 1982, President Habyarimana reversed his decision that refugees had to settle in their countries of asylum because Rwanda was occupied to full capacity⁷⁷ and that it did not have any more land. In 1986, the central committee of MRND revisited this issue and suggested that refugees be naturalized. When the refugees rejected that alternative, the Rwandese government put in place a “special commission to look into problems of Rwandese emigrants on 9th February 1989.” In May 1990, the above commission published its first report entitled: “Rwanda and the Refugees problem: Context, history and solutions”.

Two solutions were proposed i.e. repatriation and naturalization. These involved settling refugees in their countries of asylum. But in connection with repatriation, the report said: “The government of Rwanda recognizes that repatriation is the ideal solution (...) but it imposes a condition of guaranteeing the means of survival

⁷⁵ Kinyamateka, Nos 1144 - 1145, December 1982, P.5.

⁷⁶ MAGRIVI: Health Insurance of Virunga Agriculturalists.

⁷⁷ Interview In Le Courier ACP-CEE, NO72, March-April 1982, P.16.

by the refugees themselves or by the international community”⁷⁸. This condition did not differ from the one imposed in the 1986 declaration of MRND on the same issue.

Until 1990, the political class did not consider refugees as Rwandese⁷⁹. The government prevented them from returning and by destabilizing them where they lived in refuge camps, the Kigali regime wanted them to die in absolute poverty and to be wiped out completely. It was the protocol on refugees signed in 1993 during the Arusha negotiations that recognized refugees and Rwandese with full rights⁸⁰.

5.2.4 Armed intervention of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (1st October, 1990)

a. Distant and immediate causes

The preceding chapter which treated the 1950-1962 decade provides details which enable us to understand Rwanda’s messed up decolonization within the global framework of decolonization of Belgian Africa. This was a kind of decolonization that took colonial territories unawares and obliged them to get independence hastily. This threw them into a tragedy which Burundi, Congo and Rwanda were to experience later on. Anti-Hutu racism that took place during the colonial era was replaced by the anti-Tutsi racism from the end of the 1950s. With the advent of PARMEHUTU, all Tutsi qualities became evil and all evil that were previously associated with Hutus became qualities. In any case, Hutus were the majority who had been exploited by the federal system for many centuries.

The consequences of putting in place a regime based on the ideology of exclusion are well known. Some of these are the destruction of Rwanda as a nation, the destruction of properties belonging to Tutsis, massacres and exile within and outside the

⁷⁸ Report of the Special Commission on the problems of Rwandese emigrants : Le Rwanda et problème de ses réfugiés, historique, analyse et voies de solution, p.47.

⁷⁹ Le Soir of 4th October 1990 reported President Habyarimana’s remarks on the Rwandese refugees saying :“... we simply have no place to settle them. It would be better (...) to remove their refuge status and allow them acquire Ugandan or Zairian nationality. They could then be authorized to come into the country for limited periods during holidays to meet their families”.

⁸⁰ Since the government of national unity was put in place on 18th July 1994, the return of refugees to their country is a right.

country. Reactions to these acts of violence were the following: submission for the vast majority, armed struggle by Inyenzi, attempts to integrate into the new regime in Rwanda and in countries of asylum.

Towards 1965, in spite of the support from the non-aligned and socialist countries as well as the afro-asiatic group, UNAR or at least its external wing disappeared. Rwandese communities then camped on other priorities. They organized themselves in order to survive. They sought for integration in host countries or in new Rwanda. They had to ensure education of their children, as they tried to observe changes in Rwanda and the host countries.

The experiences lived affected the people and provided them with lessons through which their political awareness was aroused and the necessity to regain their motherland and recover all alienable rights to any citizen of a country was strengthened. G. Prunier made the following observation: "In different refugee communities cultural awareness preceded political awareness. Towards the 1970s, there was a proliferation of cultural associations almost every where, Rwandese culture always stirred up Rwandese communities but the new strategy consisted of organizing better and animating existing groups, creating new groups where they did not exist as well as organizing public shows. They made tours, taught the youth the Kinyarwanda language as well as Rwandese music and dances, etc. Behind that cultural involvement was a nostalgic feeling for Rwanda which later provided fertile ground for political awakening and support to RPF during the liberation war."

The political awakening happened after the failure of a Rwandese integration in President Idi Amin's Uganda and the massive expulsions of the Rwandese under President Obote in 1982. There were also doubtful nationalities in Zaire in the 1980s as well as threats which weighed heavily on the Rwandese refugees whose fate was directly linked to that of the Tutsis of Burundi, a fact according to which a Tutsi inside the country was considered as a second class citizen and therefore humiliated and persecuted. This climate of deception gave rise to political awareness which translated into discussions between friends or parents and solidarity consciousness among all people who were in this situation of exclusion⁸¹.

⁸¹ Prunier, G., "L'Ouganda et le Front Patriotique Rwandais", in Guichaoua A. (éd),

This political awareness gave birth to the “Rwandese Alliance of National Unity” (RANU) created by young intellectuals who were educated at Makerere Univeristy in Uganda. They raised questions about the future of their community. In 1979, a group of intellectuals decided:

1. To create a forum in order to meet and engage in debates concerning the Rwandese community that was scattered all over the world without any spokesman;
2. To create a core group to fine-tune the objectives of the forum.

The causes of UNAR’s failure were constantly reviewed. In spite of the separation with UNAR, the group kept the main elements of UNAR’s political line i.e. national unity and sovereignty. Incidentally, after deeply studying the Kigali regime, this group of intellectuals made and imagined suitable solutions.

RANU had many objectives. It aimed at fighting against ethnic divisions and the ideology of divisionism by the Kigali regime. It also sought to fight against grabbing Rwanda’s riches by a small group of people. The other objective was to instill into the Rwandese a sense of consciousness as far as their rights were concerned. RANU wanted to find an appropriate solution to the refugee problem and to fight the fascist and dictatorial regime of Kigali. The strategy consisted of uniting all Rwandese intellectuals inside the country and in the Diaspora in order to restore national unity in the spirit of “true democratic republicanism and socialism”.

RANU insisted very much on the involvement of individuals and rejected any attempt of belonging to groups. Apart from undertaking to mobilize the Rwandese, RANU was involved in a discrete action towards some embassies first, and then sending petitions to the OAU. It intended to attract the attention of the international community to the problem of the Rwandese refugees who, except for being mentioned here and there, were practically forgotten. These efforts were relatively mitigated as far as concrete aid was concerned. But on the other hand, they were very important because these contacts allowed better

Enjeux nationaux et dynamiques régionales dans l’Afrique des Grands Lacs, Lille, Facultés de Sciences économiques et sociales, 1992, pp.43-49.; Prunier, G., “Eléments pour une histoire du Front Patriotique Rwandais”, in *Politique Africaine*, no 51, 1993, pp. 121-138.

understanding of the reasons for the beginning of the war launched on 1st October 1990.

The main organs of RANU were the Congress that met after every two years, the General Assembly that held annual meetings and regional committees from local, regional and central levels. During RANU's recruitments, members had to take an oath (*Kurahira*). It operated on democratic principles i.e. decisions were taken by the majority. The organs of expression and mobilization were: "Alliancers" which was replaced by "*Vanguard*" in 1987, which in turn disappeared in 1990 when the war started.

At the outset, RANU mainly targeted Rwandese intellectuals living in the Diaspora and the international community. As time went on, RANU decided on a military option. It was necessary to include all Rwandese in its activities. This began with refugees generally and then the elites. Finally, it was important to have permanent cadres who were well trained in order to manage the movement and continue with the mobilization program. Once the importance of the military option became clear, the persecution of Rwandese and Ugandans of Rwandese origin gave the young Rwandese reason to join the Museveni rebellion in order to acquire experience that would help them to wage an armed struggle to force their return to Rwanda. The guerilla war and Museveni's final victory constituted the essential turning point in the life of the movement. However, RANU realized that with part-time volunteers without appropriate training, it could not achieve its objectives. It then decided to do mass mobilization starting with vulnerable areas most especially refugee camps. It was at the end of this process that RANU charged into RPF- *Inkontanyi*. After the Museveni Victory, the movement headquarters were moved from Nairobi to Kampala.

b. Beginning of the war and its consequences

With the creation of RPF during RANU's Congress in December 1987, military preparations escalated. Movement structures were confirmed. Short, medium and long term objectives became clear. Orientation and political programs were specified. They included all Rwandese inside the country and the Diaspora, Hutus, Tutsis and Twa. The programs were based on a critical analysis of the Kigali regime and countries in the region especially those that hosted large Kinyarwanda-speaking and

Rwandese communities⁸². The RPF also made an analysis of the experience of other liberation movements around the world. And its knowledge of Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) allowed it to avoid administrative errors encountered by the latter.

The presence of cadres who had participated in the NRM guerilla war within the RPF ranks was a deciding factor. It allowed the movement to avoid purely intellectual debates, to have specific objectives and to acquire both human and material resources that were required before starting the war. With the help of networks put in place between 1987 and 1990, RPF knew that it could count on a large mass of the Rwandese population to start military recruitment and war financing within the Diaspora and eventually inside Rwanda. RPF contacts allowed it to distinguish friendly, indifferent or enemy territories. Nevertheless, none of these gave official support to RPF. Very often, it benefitted from individual support and sympathy. The main issue for the movement was to make the international community understand that it was fighting for a just cause and that it had been constrained to take the military option by the Kigali regime and its allies.

The reasons for the war were summarized in the RPF program. These were: racism against the Tutsis and sectarianism of the Kigali regime, poor management of state affairs and the question of refugees to which the Rwandese government did not wish to find a solution to.

After benefitting from their participation in the NRM guerilla warfare and after the victory achieved by the latter and having observed the structures of the Ugandan army, the Rwandese military officers were able to recruit and train a big number of Rwandese Soldiers. When the war started in 1990, RPF could count on about 3,000 well trained soldiers of various grades.

It was in the morning of 1st October, 1990 that two RPA platoons attacked the border post of Kagitumba which they overran easily after a brief encounter. The same day at 4.00 pm, Major General Fred Rwigema addressed about 500 soldiers who had already

⁸² Guichaoua A (éd), *Les crises politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-1994)*, Lille, Université des sciences et technologies de Lille, 1995; Monique Maas, *Paris-Kigali 1990-1994, Lunettes coloniales, politiques du sabre et action humanitaire. Pour un génocide en Afrique*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1999; Prunier, G., *Rwanda 1959-1994. Histoire d'un génocide*, Paris, Dagorno, 1995.

assembled on Rwandese soil. Other soldiers from different military camps in Uganda moved towards different strategic points at the border with Rwanda. It should be noted that the Gulf war had started two months earlier and therefore this new unexpected conflict in turn alerted the International community.

c. Reaction of the Rwandese government

The Rwandese government was surprised by that attack, even when the ordinary people knew that an attack by refugees was imminent. The racist ideology against the Tutsis reappeared in speeches and the national Press. The subject of discussion was that RPF was a reincarnation of the Inyenzi of the 1960s and that it was made up of Tutsi federal monarchists who did not accept the 1959 Hutu revolution.

The RPF raid also allowed the Kigali regime to launch a vast operation to eliminate the opposition after gunshot fire in Kigali in the night of 4th-5th October 1990. The regime made people to believe that it was an attempt by the rebels to attack the capital whereas it was a sham attack meant to allow a presidential move to justify a massive cleansing operation against the Tutsis and other opponents of the regime. Between 7,000 and 10,000 people were arrested and imprisoned arbitrarily. Large scale raids took place throughout the country, especially in Kibiriria, Mutara, Mukingo, Murambi, Bugesera, etc. where Tutsis were molested, imprisoned or killed together with those who dared to criticize the regime. They were called “traitors” or “accomplices” (*Ibyitso*).

Finally, the Kigali regime launched a diplomatic offensive towards all its Western god-fathers and missionary circles to compel them to denounce the aggression of “feudalists supported by Uganda.” This country was considered as an aggressor. According to Kigali, the aggressor had the support of anglophone and anglo-saxon countries against a francophone state. The Kigali regime and its allies carefully avoided to refer to the reasons expounded by RPF to start the war.

d. Reaction of the International Community

Uganda which was considered as an aggressor or at least as the unwavering supporter of RPF rejected these accusations. It especially avoided verbal and military provocations on Kigali. It

made so many gestures of good will by responding to initiatives of mediation. Uganda also accepted the UN mission of military observers at its border with Rwanda. It received a mission of the European Parliament whose conclusions exonerated Uganda from all accusations made against it by Rwanda. During the entire duration of the war, Museveni's attitude remained ambiguous. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the genocide, Museveni declared that despite controls of the international community, Uganda intervened on the side of RPF in order to stop the genocide.

Zaire immediately sent soldiers to help the Kigali regime. For unclear reasons, the Zairian army did not stay in Kigali for long. The Zairian soldiers who were arrested were among those who portrayed a very positive image of RPF after their release. They referred to RPA as an army that was convinced about the cause it was defending, very disciplined, very organized... The commander of the Zairian contingent hailed the RPF continuously because even when he was in the enemy camp, he was treated with all honors due to his military rank. It seems that the information made President Mobutu to have a different view of RPF.

Belgium sent to Rwanda a contingent with a mission of repatriating its citizens who wished to leave the country. Their stay in Rwanda aroused very animated debates which led to their departure at the end of October 1990. But on the other hand, Belgium sent several high level missions which made sensible suggestions but which disturbed the Kigali regime. According to Belgium, overcoming the crisis depended on the Rwandese themselves and mediation efforts had to be entrusted with Rwanda's neighbors and the OAU, supported by the international community. In the end, it was that approach that was pursued.

At the beginning of the conflict, President Habyarimana requested France to help a French-speaking country that had been attacked by English-speaking feudalists supported by a foreign country. France sent a contingent to Rwanda. It was baptized *Opération Noroit*. Its numerical strength is difficult to estimate. The contingent stayed in Rwanda until December 1993. It was an additional military force intended to back up French soldiers who were already in Rwanda in the name of military cooperation. The French military agents stayed in Rwanda until the beginning of the genocide⁸³.

⁸³ Braeckman, C., *Rwanda. Histoire du génocide*, Paris, Fayard, 1994, p.212. French

France gave a number of reasons for maintaining its military presence and multiform cooperation with the Kigali regime. These were: to ensure protection of the French citizens and other foreigners, to contribute to the democratization of the country, to defend a francophone country and the Hutu majority attacked by a Tutsi minority from a foreign country etc. France wanted to avoid losing its face before its other African allies. But it is worth noting that France strangely adhered to the concept of democracy practiced by the Kigali regime. The ethnic majority and minority are identified with the political majority and minority, even though the latter implied individual choice and membership to a political program of one's choice.

Even without directly participating in battle as the French officials declared, the presence of the French contingent and France's support comforted the regime in its positions. They trained and equipped the army as well as the militia.

From the beginning, many organizations, many French and other foreign personalities criticized France's unfailing support to a regime whose dictatorial and racist tendencies were openly proclaimed by an extremist press and the highest cadres of the regime.

In 1988, with pressure from all sides, especially from French citizens, the French government formed a Parliamentary Information Mission (instead of a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry) whose report exonerated France declaring that it was "wrongly accused".

Since the conclusions of that report were not convincing, a series of publications and audio-visual documentaries as well as eye witness reports indicated the hidden truth of France's responsibility in the Rwandese tragedy. This movement reached its climax in 2004 during the 10th anniversary of the commemoration of the Rwandese tragedy. This is when a publication of a book by a French journalist Patrick de saint Exupéry in 2004⁸⁴. In Paris, an investigation commission was set up which showed that the French citizens wanted to know the truth about the implication of their country in the Rwandese

military advisors stayed in Rwanda after 14th April, 1994 during the evacuation.

⁸⁴ Saint-Exupéry P., *L'Inavouable – La France au Rwanda*, Paris, Les Arènes,

tragedy. This manifestation gave rise to several documents which were compiled in a book entitled: “*L’horreur qui nous prend au visage, L’état français et le génocide au Rwanda*”, published by Karthala in 2005⁸⁵.

On its part, the government of Rwanda set up an independent national commission which was asked to collect evidence to show the implication of the French government in the genocide that was perpetrated in Rwanda in 1994. The commission was called the “Mucyo commission” from the name of its president, i.e. Jean de Dieu Mucyo. In 2007, the Mucyo commission produced its report which drew overwhelming conclusions on France’s implication in the preparation and execution of the genocide against the Tutsi⁸⁶.

e. Evolution of the war

On the military field, the death of Fred Rwigema on the second day of the war disorganized everything. The re-organization of the high command and the whole army with the arrival of Paul Kagame as well as the transition from conventional to guerrilla warfare and the creation of new fronts especially with the opening of a front in the volcanic mountains gave new impetus to RPA

Fred Rwigema’s death was followed, three weeks later, by that of Major Peter Bayingana and Chris Bunyenyezi. This was very often considered, especially by the Kigali regime and its allies, as a consequence of infighting within the RPF. However, that was not the case.

The disorganization of RPA permitted the Rwandese army with the help of Zairean contingents and the support by Belgium and French contingents to score military successes in such a way that Kigali celebrated the end of the war throughout the country. Everywhere Rwigema “the enemy” of Rwanda was buried in jubilation. The Kigali regime and its allies talked

⁸⁵ Let’s also quote the following three books published in framework of the citizens investigation commission: Coret, L., (under direction of), *Rwanda 1994-2004: des faits, des mots, des oeuvres*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2004; Coquio, C., *Rwanda. Le réel et récits*, Berlin, 2004; (de) Pradelle, G. *Imprescriptible. L’implication française dans le génocide Tutsi porté devant les tribunaux*, Paris, les Arènes, 2005.

⁸⁶ Republic of Rwanda, *Report of the National Independent Commission in charge of collecting evidence to show France’s involvement in the genocide perpetrated in Rwanda in 1994*, Kigali, 2007.

about “the October war” as a conflict that was over by then. RPA re-organized and resumed the war. It carried out a series of successful raids, some of which, like the capture of Ruhengeri prison were very daring and spectacular.

Drawing lessons from the short crisis after the death of Fred Rwigema, the RPA high command began very serious coordination missions between civilians and the military. It opened administrative structures especially for the business community and intellectuals who had specific contributions that the movement needed. It strengthened the political schools, organized visits to the front, and improved communication by regularly diffusing news from the front. Here, radio Muhabura played an important role by broadcasting the RPF program. The radio also counteracted the disinformation of the Rwandese press, both government and private, but close to the government and relayed by the international press that was favorable to the government. Finally, the RPF re-organized all its structures in order to respond efficiently to the needs of the movement during the war.

In order to cope with negative reactions perpetrated all over the world, RPF deployed intensive diplomatic activity especially in Africa and in the west. In Kampala, those who wanted to visit the high command on the front were allowed to do so. Brussels and New York also played a major role in broadcasting the war.

Finally, in addition to its emissaries who were punctually deployed in different parts of the world, RPF utilized its structures which were created in the entire world after the beginning of the war.

The western allies finally convinced President Habyarimana that it was necessary to look for a solution to his country’s crisis from Rwanda’s geographical environment. The Belgium Troika made of the Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister and the Defense Minister particularly insisted on the fact that it was incumbent on Rwanda to find a solution to the crisis. For long, President Habyarimana refused to meet RPF and several conferences were held without allowing RPF to participate. Moreover many of those conferences essentially discussed the question of refugees. In the political program of RPF this question was considered as a point among others. In the

conferences held in Mwanza (17th October 1990), Gbadolite (26th October 1990), Zanzibar, (17th February 1991) and Dar-es-salaam (19th February 1991), the question of refugees was high on the agenda.

Despite the status accorded to RPF during those meetings, none of these bore its signature, RPF responded to all invitations addressed to it. It wanted to show its good will and take advantage of such occasions to explain its positions because several delegations asked for RPF's point of view.

The N'sélé agreement concluded in Zaire on 29th March 1991 was the first agreement signed between the Rwandese government and RPF. Two facts ought to be pointed out. The two Rwandese protagonists never sat together to discuss the terms of that agreement. The latter remained worthless and both sides accused each other of violating the ceasefire. According to declarations that were broadcast notably by the Rwandese Minister of Foreign Affairs on his return to Kigali, the N'SELE accord was somehow considered as an act of RPF's surrender⁸⁷.

It was during the Paris conference which was held from 6th to 8th June 1992 that, for the first time, the Rwandese government and RPF sat together to lay down the basis of their negotiations as equal political partners. Rwanda and France wanted the latter to play the role of facilitator. The RPF rejected that proposal not only because of France's implication in the Rwandese crisis but also because RPF found it politically wrong to look for the mediation of a colonial power. Rwanda proposed Senegal because at the time, President Diouf was the chairman of OAU. RPF preferred to look for help from Rwanda's neighboring states. Presidents Mobutu and Nyerere were accepted as "mediators and facilitators" respectively. These two terms were never defined precisely.

⁸⁷ See President Habyarimana's message broadcast on radio Rwanda on 29th March, 1991 in which he said: "Today there is no armed presence of our aggressor on our territory (...) I renew the appeal sent to those who took arms against Rwanda, for a war without an end result, inviting them to stop the hostilities honorably, without reserve and hatred, to come and put down arms, to be received on the Rwandese soil with full security. For that reason, we have doubled the entry posts". On arrival at Kigali airport, the Foreigner Affairs Minister who was just coming from signing the so-called agreement declared to RFI that the clause requesting France to remove its troops from Rwanda since the beginning of the civil war was purposeless. To the press which said that maintaining French troops in Rwanda was violating the N'sele Accord, the French ambassador to Kigali answered that France didn't violate that agreement because it had not signed it! On 23rd April 1991, President Habyarimana made an official visit to France i.e. after signing the N'sele agreement which neither him nor his French interlocutors gave any importance.

Real negotiations started in Arusha in July 1992 and were concluded on 4th August 1993. It should be made clear that these negotiations were held because of pressure from the international community but more especially because of military pressure exerted by RPA.

It should also be remembered that in those negotiations, there were Rwandese protagonists consisting of: the Rwandese government, the un-armed opposition and RPF. There were foreign observers as well particularly from regional states, the OAU, Belgium, France and the United Nations.

During the actual negotiations, Rwanda did not present a united front. On one side, there was MRND and on the other, there was the Prime Minister and ministers from the opposition. MRND which by virtue of its structures wielded real power, did not take these negotiations seriously as its leaders confirmed later. Casmir Bizimungu, the Foreign Affairs Minister before the installation of the government led by the opposition Prime Minister D. Nsengiyaremye suggested to President Habyarimana that for the planned negotiations they should send “a low caliber delegation of technocrats”. President Habyarimana himself described the Arusha protocol as “rags” and all maneuvers that were made to fail the negotiations notably the absence of MRND minister during cabinet meetings aimed at giving the government delegation guidelines to follow. Every point on the agenda confirms the above assertion. The government delegation led by Boniface Ngulinzira, the Foreign Affairs Minister was open in the negotiation with the view of putting an end to the war.

The unarmed opposition political parties which were grouped under the democratic forces for change composed of MDR , PL , PL , PSD, PDC contacted RPF and held discussions with it in accordance with their respective programs. Three main tendencies could be discerned within those unarmed opposition political parties. Some subscribed, with some minor differences, to the political program of RPF. Other thought that they could share a common platform with RPF but nonetheless keep their own identity. The last movement was opposed to Habyarimana and MRND but did not subscribe to RPF'S program at all. It was that movement which finally joined the HUTU power.

As far as RPF was concerned, the negotiations constituted an essential step in its struggle. It employed all necessary means to ensure the success of the negotiations. A delegation led by Pasteur Bizimingu was tasked to lead those negotiations step by step. Depending on the items on the agenda, the RPF high command consulted members of its networks around the world before drafting a document that represented an agreed position to be presented by the delegation in the Arusha negotiations. Reliable witnesses have confirmed that it was the RPF document that was generally used as a basis for the discussions.

Finally, the Arusha negotiations were of interest to many countries within the region, in particular Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania which played the role of facilitator. Other interested parties included Belgium, USA, France and the UN. Some observers kept their neutrality while many others, notably the French and Belgian delegations behaved like advisors of the Rwandese delegation especially the political hard-liners of that delegation. The OAU and Tanzanian delegations played a very positive role in conducting the negotiations.

The agreement of 4th August 1993 resulted from a series of meetings organized from 17th October 1990. The following protocols formed an integral part of that agreement:

- I. The N'sélé ceasefire agreement of 29th March 1991 between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front as amended in Gbadolite on 16th September 1991 and in Arusha on 12th July 1992;
- II. The agreement protocol between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front relating to the rule of law signed in Arusha on 18th August 1992;
- III. The agreement protocols between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front on the power sharing arrangement in the framework of a broad-based transitional government signed in Arusha on 30th October 1992 and 9th January 1993 respectively;
- IV. The agreement protocol between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front on the repatriation of Rwandese refugees and the resettlement of displaced persons signed in Arusha on 9th June 1993;

- V. The agreement protocol between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front relating to the integration of the armed forces of both parties, signed in Arusha on 3rd August 1993;
- VI. The agreement protocol between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front regarding various questions and final provisions, signed in Arusha on 4th August 1993.

Practically during each of the signed protocols in Arusha, contradictory approaches between RPF and MRND and their companions were noticeable. Here are three examples:

1. The agreement protocol on the rule of law. While the agreement put emphasis on respect of life, it was observed that at the same time collective massacres of Tutsis were taking place because they were Tutsis by birth. Hutu opponents, real or imagined were also butchered. Riots and attacks were remote-controlled by the ruling power. It was this lack of respect for signed agreements and particularly that lack of respect to life that led the RPF to violate the cease-fire on 8/9th February, 1993. After several warnings to the Kigali regime and repeated calls to the international community regarding acts of violence by the Kigali regime, RPF's decision was to show the weakness of the Kigali regime. RPF resumed the hostilities. The first consequence of RPF's decision was to show the weakness of the Rwandese army. It also caused severe disapproval of the International community which was very sensitive to the situation of displaced persons who were near Kigali city as well as other innocent victims who were killed by the Rwanda army. Moreover, another group within the unarmed opposition feared that despite its involvement in negotiations, RPF could take over power by force of arms. Here again, France came to the rescue of Kigali by sending a new contingent to stop the fall of Kigali.

By accepting to return to its previous positions before the attack of 8th-9th February 1993 and by demanding that the positions that had been taken after the attack constitute a buffer zone under the control of a neutral military force, RPF demonstrated that it was in favor of dialogue. Lastly, the protocol insisted on democracy but as far as MRND and its allies were concerned, politics was defined in terms of

ethnic belonging by virtue of birth i.e. putting emphasis on the ethnic majority/ minority politics.

2. The protocol on the power sharing deal that was proposed in the framework of a broad-based transitional government revealed many conflicting positions. MRND wished to share ministerial posts and RPF was just supposed to join a government led by a Prime Minister and which was composed of other ministers from the opposition. Whereas, in the spirit of the signed protocol, RPF wanted to change the nature of the MRND regime. The latter did not accept that the president be stripped of his major powers during the transitional government. RPF thought that during the transition, the President was not supposed to have outrageous powers which were granted to him by the constitution in force. According to the power configuration provided for in the protocol, MRND and its allies had little chance of having a majority vote. This is why they wanted to integrate CDR in the transitional National Assembly. RPF rejected CDR which, according to it, was a sectarian party. The President was therefore involved in maneuvers aimed at sowing division in the senior ranks of the parties. He succeeded in his endeavor.
3. In the protocol on the integration of the armed forces, divergent views were also noted. For MRND, the integration of the armed forces had to respect ethnic balance. As a result, the power-sharing deal would tilt in favor of MRND. For RPF, the Rwandese armed forces disqualified themselves by massacring the very citizens that they were supposed to protect. The obsession for ethnic balance harbored by MRND and its allies did not carry sense for RPF. This protocol was criticized by the allies of the Kigali regime who shared the same ideology and felt that RPF's demands were excessive. It was reported in the press that Théoneste Bagosora who participated in the negotiations on the protocol left Arusha with a resolve to provoke "hell".

Having failed to block the signing of the Arusha Peace Accord despite all maneuvers, President Habyarimana and his followers did whatever was in their powers to block its implementation. The first opportunity was availed to them by delaying to set up UNAMIR. This one was supposed to have been done 37 days after signing the peace agreement that took place on 4th August

1993. In the meantime, the president continued his maneuvers aimed at sowing division within political parties with the view of increasing the number of his followers both in government and in the Transitional National Assembly. All his attempts to approve his lists failed. On several occasions, the President of the Constitutional court, Joseph Kavaruganda, was the only competent authority to identify members of political parties who were regularly elected to be in the National Assembly. He rejected the lists that were concocted by the Habyarimana camp. Even though the texts in force gave him no legal authority, President Habyarimana also tried to organize the swearing-in of ministers and members of parliament. The swearing-in ceremonies organized by competent authorities failed because the militia who were close to MRND/CDR blocked the entrance of the National Assembly to prevent undesirable candidates from accessing it.

For the same reasons of sabotaging the implementation of the Arusha Accord, an ambush was laid against the convoy which was supposed to take to CND political personalities of the RPF who had been summoned to participate in transitional institutions. Fortunately, those personalities delayed their arrival to Kigali but the attack claimed one soldier and injured another. Only President Habyarimana took the oath on 5th January 1994. Thus, up to the end, he succeeded in blocking the establishment of other institutions that were provided for in the Arusha peace accord.

5.2.5 Short-circuit for multipartism

Rwanda was not spared from the political upheavals that occurred in the world in the 1990s. As a matter of fact, after the democratization wave that affected the Eastern Bloc (former USSR satellite states), it was Africa's turn. Apart from internal disputes, political regimes in Africa received pressure from the West, in this case from France, USA, International organizations as well as the Bretton woods institutions requiring them to adopt political pluralism, failure of which such regimes would no longer get aid from the western powers. President Habyarimana was among the African Heads of State who rejected that injunction arguing that "*multipartism is not a precondition for democracy*"⁸⁸. Yet, political pluralism was imposed on him.

⁸⁸ Nsabimana, A. "Le cas Rwanda", in *Tiers-Monde/ Afrique*, no363, Octobre 1992, p.85.

Inside the country, in a letter published on 1st September, 1990, “33 intellectuals” called for multipartism and democracy but the Kigali regime instantly opposed it. Bowing to both internal and external pressure, the regime began to open up politically by creating a commission known as the “*Commission Nationale de Synthèse*” (CNS). On 5th July, 1990 President Habyarimana announced that the country was going to begin a new process for a democratic dispensation⁸⁹. In January 1991, the commission presented a national political bill which recommended real democratization opening by adopting multipartism. In order to have this done, CNS tabled a new constitutional bill authorizing multipartism. The bill was passed into law by the National Assembly (CND) in June 1991.

The Presidential ascent in favor of multiparty democracy was granted on 13th November 1990. In fact, in his address to the nation, the president asked the commission to draft a working document before the end of the year and announced a referendum on the National charter to be held on 15th November 1991 after a national debate. On the same occasion, he invited the Rwandese to form political parties. The first opposition political party, the PDC was formed on 16th November 1990. It was followed by other political parties. Until July 1992, there was a total of 17 political parties. The table below provides full details:

Table 16: Creation and approval of political parties in Rwanda

Political party	Formation	Approval	Head office
MRND	05/07/1991	31/07/1991	Kigali
MDR	01/07/1991	31/07/1991	Kigali
PSD	01/07/1991	05/08/1991	Kigali
PDC	16/11/1990	10/08/1991	Kigali
PL	14/07/1991	10/08/1991	Kigali
PSR	09/09/1991	30/01/1991	Kigali
RTD	30/11/1991	.../11/1991	Kigali
PDI	30/11/1991	14/12/1991	Kigali
PECO	02/12/1991	14/12/1991	Kigali
PPJR	25/09/1991	10/01/1992	Kigali

⁸⁹ Presidential decree no. 1/90 of 24 September 1990 which approved the Commission above (CNS)

PARERWA	20/12/1991	20/01/1992	Kigali
PADER	18/12/1991	20/01/1992	Byumba
Parti Démocrate	28/01/1992	11/03/1992	Kigali
CDR	16/03/1992	16/03/1992	Kigali
UDPR	?	20/06/1992	Kigali
MFBP	26/12/1991	24/06/1992	Kabuga
PRD	18/07/1992	-	-

Under pressure from the internal opposition (MDR, PSD, PL and PDC), MRND accepted an entente protocol which gave birth to a transitional government that was set up on 16th April 1992. It was formed by D. Nsengiyaremye. The President did everything he could to delay the process but failed. Hence, we can talk of victory by the opposition because many people experienced the advent of a real democratic regime. The program of the opposition may be summarized under the following points: negotiate peace, assure internal security, re-organize the administration, organize a national debate on the question of a national conference, boost the economy, solve the problem of refugees and organize general elections.

RPF realized that the program had positive ideas which “apparently demonstrated good will to solve many problems which the country was suffering from.” RPF said that D. Nsengiyaremye proposed a constitutional framework which gave a lot of powers to the President of the Republic. The opposition political parties did not have a majority in Cabinet, hence, they could not impose their decisions and they were not represented in the CND. Lastly, the Prime Minister’s program was unrealistic. The refuge problem and that of peace could not be solved within 12 months as he claimed⁹⁰. Nevertheless, RPF was ready to collaborate with the new government.

After their appearance on the political scene, the opposition political parties did everything to distance themselves from RPF. Dealing with RPF was at the beginning considered as a serious political blunder, indeed a betrayal. Thus, before he became prime Minister, D. Nsengiyaremye said that MDR could not negotiate with RPF. Only PL broke away quickly enough from the others. Its President declared that: “negotiation is not betrayal

⁹⁰ RPF’s communiqué of 17th April 1992.

(...) but rather a solution for the wellbeing of the country”⁹¹. Other parties constituting the future FDC coalition manifested the same fear and hostility towards RPF.

But gradually, they became closer to RPF in what can be called a tactical alliance for some, with the view of weakening Habyarimana’s regime in order to take power. As a matter of fact, RPF disposed of a military force which they needed to fight against the regime

They felt assured of victory over RPF because of an ethnic electoral majority if an election ever took place. From the ideological point of view, fundamental differences still remained. But it was in that context of real politicking that some points were agreed upon by the opposition and RPF by consensus, especially during the negotiations. The manner in which the President managed the crisis alienated him from those who, among the opposition could still have supported him.

The opposition momentarily showed some assurance by participating in the Nsengiyaremye government. This explains the move by MDR, PSD, PDC and PL leaders to meet RPF in Brussels on 1st June 1992. There was a “historic meeting aimed at reconciling the Rwandese with themselves”⁹². At the end of the meeting, these parties declared “that they agreed with RPF on its objectives but that they did not agree with method of achieving them. We are fighting against a common enemy but our methods are not the same”⁹³. MRND boycotted that meeting but as it was taking place, two political officials of MDR i.e. Karamira and J.M Nkezabera were holding a conference in Brussels to denounce the communiqué that was signed by their party colleagues, namely Bagaragaza and Twagiramungu.

President Habyarimana did whatever was in his power to break that tactical alliance through several maneuvers meant to block the Arusha negotiations. He made the country ungovernable by exploiting stereotypes of the PARMEHUTU ideology. CDR was created and utilized to serve that purpose. Its role in the country’s total paralysis was undisputable.

⁹¹ Négociateur n’est pas trahir le pays () c’est plutôt travailler pour le pays (entretien de J. Mugenzi avec le journaliste V.Nshimiyimana, s.d., s.i.).

⁹² Letter to the President of 17th October 1992

⁹³ Communiqué after the Brussels meeting between RPF and challenged opposition parties, 1st June, 1992.

That politics of sabotage succeeded because the government lost its authority as the war progressed. This was under the combined actions of MRND, CDR and the opposition's incompetence. For instance, the illegal act of evicting MRND from local administration offices (*Kubohoza*)⁹⁴ and their spirit of insubordination partly explain the failure of administrative reforms which Nsengiyaremye's government wanted to undertake. In a tone of satisfaction, CDR talked of the failure of Nsengiyaremye's government, 100 days after its formation⁹⁵.

According to CDR, the government failed because of its composition and because it refused to include other parties in government. Within its ranks, it had brought on board allies of its "enemy" (RPF) such as PL which it considered to be a branch of RPF. Some regions such as Kibuye were not represented in government. The government displayed its internal wrangles in broad daylight. It did not have collective responsibility because every minister worked exclusively for his political party. According to CDR, the government manifested its inability to implement its program⁹⁶. The Nsengiyaremye government has betrayed the Hutus. "The Nsengiyaremye government is betraying us"⁹⁷. MRND gave the same negative account at the end of Nsengiyaremye's

⁹⁴ In Gikongoro Province, Nshili district (Burgomaster was challenged in May 1992), Kivu, Mubuga in the sub-province where the deputy governor Biniga was rejected by part of the population. In Butare province, the district of Nyakizu, Kigembe (40 houses were destroyed by the population who did not want the MRND burgomaster who was accused of partiality: the councilors and burgomasters were suspended. In Kigali Rural province in the districts of Ngenda and Gashora the same events took place. The same thing happened in Kibungo province in Sake district, in Cyangungu province, district of Gatare, Kagano and Kirambo. In Kibuye province, the districts of Rwamatamu, Gishoma, in Ruhengeri province, D.Murego threatened to "liberate districts of that province in order to give them democracy" (*kubohoza amakomini ya perefegitura akagira demokrasi*) (August 1992).

⁹⁵ CDR, *guverinoma y'inzibacyuho imaze iminsi ijana n'ibiri*, S,D,SL.

⁹⁶ In a communiqué CDR admitted that the administrative reform initiated by the government oppresses the Bahutu because Batutsi take 50% of positions in the state institutions whereas the Bahutu are 90% of the population. Recruitments are done according to party affiliation not merit. The government replaced Hutu officials by Tutsis most of whom work for Inkontanyi and even some of them were imprisoned among the accomplices (*ifata abakozi bakuru ba leta ibasimbuza Abatutsi abenshi bakorera Inkontanyi, ndetse bamwe bakaba barafunguwe kuba ibyitso*) Itangazo no 2, 21/7/1992: communiqué that gives a list of Tutsis recently recruited who were 44.6% in posts responsibility. A group of priests made the same remarks warning "government should not help the enemy indirectly by undermining State authority (Letter to Pope by 15 priests, 5/3/1993).

⁹⁷ "...guverinoma ya Nsengiyaremye iratugambanira (Itangazo no 2, rigenewe Abahutu 21/7/1993).

term of office. “The transition created a gap instead of filling it.” Even according to F. Twagiramungu, Nsengiyaremye’s government disappointed the people. “The Prime Minister was incapable of keeping the cohesion of his government team. Instead of resigning or calling for pressure from the parties opposed to MRND and its allies, he instead resorted to writing confrontational letters to the President of the Republic. His iron hand only aggravated the tension within the government. Thus, instead of being a real transitional government, it became a government of confrontation”⁹⁸.

Another weapon used by President Habyarimana to weaken the opposition coalition was the creation of ethnic and regional divisions within PL and MDR.

At the inception of PL, one of the objectives of the founder members of PL was to remove ethnic and regional divisions⁹⁹. The inner circle of the founders of PL was composed of Hutus who wanted to associate with Tutsi partners. The idea of equality within PL won hearts of many Tutsis who wanted an open political party devoid of any discrimination¹⁰⁰. The “Tutsi party” label disgusted some Hutu members of PL and caused discomfort within the party leadership. The party began to preach ethnic balance thereby falling into the MRND trap. This was especially felt at the time of posting administrative staff in the ministries held by PL. “Competence that was considered as value No. 1 came far behind ethnic and regional origins of a candidate”¹⁰¹. The North rejected the liberal ideology. Members from the North did not wish to participate actively in PL activities. “They displayed superficial militantism”.

Apart from the ethnic and regional divide, PL had internal problems. The party lacked organization and this led to improvisation (the executive committee joined government and forgot about party affairs). In short, it lacked specific objectives. Secondly superficial promises caught the attention of the leaders over essential things. Financial management was “not transparent”. Campaign-shows were privileged instead of meaningful contacts with small groups in anticipation of elections. PL’s relations with

⁹⁸ Twagiramungu 1993, op.cit., p.3.

⁹⁹ Kameya, A., Mémoire sur le Parti Libéral, 5/9/1992, P.2

¹⁰⁰ The first signatures were collected from 14th July 1991.

¹⁰¹ Kameya, A., 1992, op.cit., p.2.

other opposition parties and RPF were not clear... The discord within PL exacerbated when the party was required to nominate MPs to the Transitional National Assembly¹⁰², L. Ndasigwa (Lando) presented his candidature for the presidency of TNA while the PL President proposed another candidate in the person of Adalbert Bayingamba. In order to resolve the crisis, the Lando group proposed to convene an urgent meeting of the national congress of the party. This was composed of statutory members of provincial offices. This was the only competent organ that took decisions on important questions involving the party like choosing ministerial candidates and members of the cabinet¹⁰³. The PL President did not convene the congress because he was opposed to it.

Divisions within MDR started when it was required to provide a candidate for the post of Prime Minister in the broad-based transitional government. On 4th April, 1993, Nsengiyaremye was filed as a candidate by the MDR political bureau. On 10th June, 1993 his candidature was made official by the President of the Republic who forwarded it to government. The cabinet examined Nsengiyaremye's candidature in its 22nd June, 1993 session. He was rejected by MRND, PSD and PL ministers. The President requested MDR to nominate another candidate. On 24th June, 1993, MDR re-affirmed Nsengiyaremye's candidature. The candidate blamed F. Twagiramungu, MDR President by saying that he was behind this refusal. The President of the Republic asked MDR for the second time to be more serious by not presenting the same candidate¹⁰⁴. The cabinet once again rejected Nsengiyaremye's candidature¹⁰⁵. The MDR political bureau stood its ground¹⁰⁶ and F. Twagiramungu distanced himself from the stubborn members. On 15th July, 1993, the President of the Republic invited the 5 parties to decide on the eventual prolongation of Nsengiyaremye's government. The parties set a condition for continuation of the government. MDR finally accepted to nominate another candidate to lead the broad-based transitional government.

¹⁰² Letter of party president to L. Ndasigwa, 2nd September, 1993 and latter's group answer to the party president, 3rd September, 1993.

¹⁰³ Communiqué of 19th September, 1993.

¹⁰⁴ Letter from President of the Republic, 28th June, 1993.

¹⁰⁵ Cabinet meeting, 8th July, 1993.

¹⁰⁶ Political parties meeting, 12th July, 1993.

F. Twagiramungu ignored the decision of his Head Office and proposed the candidature of Agathe Uwilingiyimana as the Prime Minister¹⁰⁷. Agathe Uwilingiyimana was accepted and confirmed by the President of the Republic¹⁰⁸. The term of this government lasted three months. Twagiramungu's faction was victorious but MDR's crisis was exposed in broad daylight. There was friction between F. Twagiramungu and the extremist faction of D. Mulengo who was Secretary General as well as F. Karamira and Nsengiyaremye who was the First Vice-President¹⁰⁹.

The MDR extremist faction organized an extra-ordinary Congress from 23rd to 24th July 1993 at Kabusunzu in which F. Twagiramungu and MDR ministers in Uwilingiyimana's government were excluded. MDR extremists joined CDR. Reconciliation attempts, notably those initiated by representatives of religious denominations were in vain due to the intransigence nature of the two factions¹¹⁰.

5.2.6 Violence and insecurity as political strategies

In the management of the war and its effects, the Habyarimana regime was pre-occupied with defending those in positions of authority rather than protecting the entire population. This was seen on 1st October, 1990, when Habyarimana's regime carried out arbitrary arrests of thousands of people who were suspected to be conniving with RPF. The regime exploited ethnic identities and political positions opposed to its own. Most of the prisoners were released at the end of March 1991 because of pressure from the international community as well as local organizations fighting for human rights. Mr. Sylvester Nsanzimana the Minister of Justice then, declared them innocent (*abere*) while the presidential circles talked of clemency from the father of the nation (*imbabazi z'ububyeyi*). No member of the security forces was tried or punished after the October 1990 arrests for having tortured or having been involved in inhuman or degrading treatment of detainees or suspects. At the time of arrest, the Minister of Justice declared that "homicide was a consequence

¹⁰⁷ During the parties' meeting on 16th July, 1993.

¹⁰⁸ Presidential decree, no326/01 and 327/01.

¹⁰⁹ According to Twagiramungu, F. Nsengiyaremye was not an extremist. He joined the extremist faction tactfully rather than ideologically (F. Twagiramungu 1993 op. cit., p. 7).

¹¹⁰ Declaration of the Catholic Church and Protestant representatives concerning their mediation for reconciliation within MDR, 24th/12/1993.

of Tutsi provocations and panic by the population”¹¹¹. Among the people who were arrested in October 1990, 25 were tried and sentenced by the state security court. Seven of them were condemned to death during an unfair trial¹¹².

Journalists were also another category of people who were targeted by the security operatives of the former regime. More than a dozen journalists were imprisoned for “abusing” the Head of State. The Directorate of military operations of the Former Rwandese Army (FAR) criticized the written press and the opposition political parties, accusing them of being on RPF’s pay roll¹¹³.

Remote controlled repressions and violence which followed the *Inkotanyi* attack between 1st October 1990 and 18th July 1994 caused more death than the war itself. Those violent acts were diverse in nature and were carried out far from zones of military confrontation. Some massacres were carried out collectively. In 1990, massacres were perpetrated in Byumba, Ruhengeri, Gisenyi, Mutara and Ngororera-Kibilira provinces. In 1991, massacres took place in Kibungo, Byumba and Kigali-rural provinces. In 1992, they were in Bugesera, etc. These violent acts which were mainly directed towards the Tutsis and were not spontaneous as official propaganda claimed. They did not result from old tribal hatred. They were operations calmly carried out by MRND and CDR as well as the Hutu Power in general.

The regime also organized riots to show its opposition to the negotiations. These riots caused violence whose extent became more pronounced as the power-sharing deal became a must in the Arusha Accord frame work. Every protocol that was signed was considered as a failure of the regime and was greeted with more violence. During the Kigali riots of May 1992, the Police killed 3 PSD sympathizers. These riots spread to the towns of Gisenyi (Mukamira, 31st May 1992) and Ruhengeri. It is estimated that 27 people died and very many injuries were sustained. In July 1992, at the time when people talked about the start of the Arusha accords, MRND youth caused trouble of a political nature by attacking MDR and PSD youth in Kigali suburbs. At Gikondo, two people died and others sustained severe injuries.

¹¹¹ Amnesty International, 1992; 23

¹¹² Amnesty International, communiqué of 20th February, 1991.

¹¹³ Amnesty International, communiqué of 1st December, 1991.

Grenades exploded everywhere in the country, especially in public places. At the end of May 1992, about 34 mines exploded. In reaction to the Arusha Accord and especially the protocols that had just been signed in the entire month of January 1993, there was insecurity against the Tutsis and Hutu opponents at Kibilira and the district of Rutsiro (Kibuye). Insecurity in Gisenyi resulted into approximately 350 who died and 4,400 refugees as well as many injuries. Roads in Gisenyi, Changugu, Ruhengeri, Kigali and Kibungo were closed. MRND and CDR organized illegal demonstrations in almost all provinces in reaction to the Arusha Peace Accords. The MRND demonstrations in Kigali which took place in January 1993 degenerated into violence. This caused 47 deaths and many injuries. Grenades exploded almost everywhere in the country. According to the cabinet, MRND and CDR were responsible for those acts of violence which became intensified in many places from 18th January 1993.

On 6th February 1993, the cabinet meeting decided, against the views of MRND ministers, to suspend political party campaigns temporarily in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri provinces. Some authorities who were involved in the violence were also suspended¹¹⁴. For example, the *Bougcestres* of Rutsiro, Giciye, Ramba and Gaseke as well as some directors (Leon Mugesera's case) were also suspended.

With the turn of events, representatives of foreign countries (the West) and the international community expressed their concern to the President. They asked him to make a declaration condemning the violence and to calm the situation. They threatened to suspend international aid. The President preferred to keep quiet.

Between April and May 1993, a new wave of violence shook the country. In the capital, there were violent acts which were perpetrated by soldiers. Mines and grenades exploded and armed robbery took place. Almost everywhere in the country especially in Gisenyi, Butare, Kigali, etc., grenade explosions were observed in public places like markets in May 1993. Many assassinations and murders were also reported in Kibuye province (Kabengeru, Kirambo...). In Kigali, there were at least 2 to 3 attacks per night. For example, Stanislaus Mbonampeka, Minister of Justice was attacked before defecting to the Hutu power. Then,

¹¹⁴ Cabinet meeting of 9th February, 1993.

Ignace Ruhatana, the Human Rights militant together with the Kanyarwanda Association were also attacked. Those responsible for the attacks were young soldiers. In August, 1993, a bomb exploded in the big market of Nyarugenge. It caused several death and injuries.

In 1992, violence against the Tutsis was concentrated in Kibuye Province. On 18th August 1992, in Gishyita district, almost 197 houses belonging to the Tutsis were burnt. Coffee and banana plantations were demolished and many animals were killed or stolen. Between August and September 1993, the same violence was reported in Taba District (Gitarama). There were many injuries and displaced persons. There was a continuation of tragic events in Burundi, i.e. President Ndadaye's assassination and the massacres that accompanied it. This gave an opportunity to some people to spread insecurity in Changugu (Bugarama) and Kibuye (Rwamatamu) by uttering threats against the Tutsis.

The Rwandese state media was put at the disposal of the "legal government in exile" to explain the situation and solicit for diplomatic support and aid (Ref: Minani on the airwaves of Rwanda: appeal addressed to the Hutu population of Burundi to massacre the Tutsis). After the Burundi coup d'état and the massacres against the Tutsis that followed, there was a massive influx of Burundian refugees, approximately 400,000 refugees in November 1993, in Bugesera and Chagungu regions. In some regions, Burundian refugees played a big role in the massacres and genocide of 1994.

In several places, violence was caused by scuffles between sympathizers of political parties. Generally, sympathizers of CDR and MRND were the ones who mistreated sympathizers of other parties.

In 1992, riots were stirred up by CDR against members of PSD in Rwamatamu. In Rwesero sub-Province (Cyangugu) skirmishes opposed sympathizers of MDR and MRND. The same thing happened in Kibungo Province (Saku, Mugesere, Kigaramo and Birenga) as well as in the districts of Gitarama Province.

The attacks targeted politicians. The Minister of Primary and Secondary Education who became future Prime Minister was aggressed by armed "bandits" who were armed with grenades,

machetes and clubs. Gapyisi Emmanuel, President of the Forum for Peace and Democracy (FPD), who owned a newspaper called "*Paix et Démocratie*," as well as the President of MDR/Gokongoro were shot dead on 18th May, 1993 by two persons. In August 1993, the *Burgomaster* of Kazenze, F. Rwambuka who was implicated in the Bugesera massacres was also killed by professional killers. At the beginning of April 1994, F. Gatabazi's assassination was followed by that of Bucyana, the Vice President of the *Interahamwe* militia. In fact, there was widespread insecurity, especially in the capital.

The government was overwhelmed by these acts of violence and insecurity which were remote-controlled by the regime. On several occasions, the Prime Minister, Nsengiyaremye, condemned the violence that was caused by small groups linked to political parties,¹¹⁵ but in vain. The country was governed by other forces and not his government. There was no more administration and that was what the trouble makers were looking for.

The international media denounced the violation of human rights and insecurity. Janvier Africa, a journalist of the UMURAVA monthly newspaper revealed to a fellow journalist Fr. Misser that he belonged to the "zero network" which was in charge of "death squadrons." He accused President Habyarimana's brother in law as the leader of those killers.

The Prime Minister explained to the Head of State about bogging down government activities and the involvement of his party¹¹⁶. He blamed MRND ministers who blocked government decisions and who wanted to protect *burgomasters* who were implicated in the bloody events in Murambi, Kibuye, and Kibirira...). They also boycotted cabinet meetings. The Prime Minister went a step further and blamed the President himself to be behind the boycott. "You are responsible for the boycott of government activities on two counts. First, as President of the Republic and then as President of MRND, a party controlling half of the ministerial posts is responsible for the good functioning of the Cabinet"¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁵ In his message to the Rwandese on July 28th, 1992.

¹¹⁶ Prime Minister's letter to the President of the Republic, 22nd September, 1992.

¹¹⁷ Prime Minister's letter to the President of the Republic, 22nd September, 1992

The four parties opposed to MRND and its allies organized a press conference in which they denounced "the acts of terror and violence"¹¹⁸. Precautions were taken against ARD (a group of pro-regime parties) which symbolized "the rise of fascism in Rwanda". The silence of the Minister of Internal Affairs (MRND) was perceived as a sign of approval. On 15th November 1992, the four parties organized a demonstration against MRND (*kwamagana MRND*). It was a success. The youth of the presidential movement caused a lot of violence by attacking the demonstrators of other parties.

At the end of the meeting with parties in government which was held from 16th -25th November 1992, church representatives demanded that insecurity be stopped. Nothing was done. Insecurity even took another turn when large quantities of fire arms were distributed among the population. In a meeting of 13 political parties with church representatives held in March 1993, one of the recommendations was that civilians should be recruited and equipped with the necessary tools (weapons) to defend their country. The government was concerned by this development and in one cabinet meeting, it ordered the Minister of Defense to collect all the arms that were given to the population in March 1993 (*gutahura*). However, this order was disobeyed, leading to a further escalation of acts of armed robbery and assassinations using fire arms.

The human rights crisis which the country experienced for sometime was confirmed by a committee of inquiry that was carried out by an International Commission made up of associations defending human rights¹¹⁹. This commission was invited by local associations defending human rights in Rwanda. It was composed of 10 members. Alison Des Forges was the coordinator of the association activities. MRND was opposed to the coming of that mission to Rwanda, but the cabinet meeting ruled otherwise. It arrived in the country on 7th January 1993. It visited 5 of the 11 provinces. These were Kigali rural, Kigali-city, Gisenyi, Ruhengeri and Byumba. But it was neither able

¹¹⁸ Press conference of political parties held on 13 November 1992.

¹¹⁹ International Commission of inquiry on violation of human rights committed in Rwanda since 1st October, 1990. The composition of the commission was as follows: Human Rights Watch (New York); Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (Paris); Centre International des Droits de la Personne et du Développement Démocratique (Montréal) ; Union Interafricaine des Droits de l'Homme et des peuples (Ouagadougou).

to visit nor carry out investigations in the prisons. Due to press harassment and the way trials were conducted, the commission did not also have access to military camps or other places of detention, for example in brigades.

The commission found open graves and many mass graves in many areas of the country that it visited. It confirmed continuous violence, intimidation and massacres. The commission said that there were systematic massacres against Tutsis and Hutus who were hostile to the regime. Concerning the Tutsis, the International Commission concluded “that there had been genocide in accordance with international law”. Eric Gillet, a member of the commission, said: “It can be truly called genocide against the Tutsis.” There was “a real intention to wipe out the Tutsis”¹²⁰. Jean Carbonare of the same commission shared the same view. He said that it was not a matter of ethnic confrontation. It was an organized policy. The incidents were planned. It was ethnic cleansing, “genocide” and a “crime against humanity”¹²¹.

The responsibility of the Head of State and his close entourage as well as members of his family was undisputable¹²². At the lower echelons of the administration, the local officials equally shared the responsibility. For example, the *Burgomaster* and local councilors in Kibirira and Bugesera. The International Commission report confirmed a climate of insecurity and terror caused by state agents who carried out systematic murder and rape. The population was at the mercy of the *Interahamwe* militia and indeed, there was total paralysis of the judicial system. The President was in charge of the Judicial Council. It can therefore be concluded that President Habyarimana himself controlled his network of killers.

The commission implicated the Former Rwandan Army fighters (FAR). It enumerated violations that were committed by the government armed forces. The latter were implicated in the violation of human rights not only in the context of the conflict but also outside the scope of military operations. They were involved in arbitrary arrests. Military camps became places of detention. About 150 prisoners who were captured at the

¹²⁰ Radio France International, 23rd January, 1993.

¹²¹ Radio France International, 29th January, 1993.

¹²² International Commission of inquiry on violence of human rights committed in Rwanda since 1st October, 1990, Report, p.7.

beginning of the war were executed. There were cases of rape carried out by soldiers.

The report incited a lot of reactions and emotions within the international community, notably in Belgium, France and USA. The donors threatened to suspend their cooperation as they had been requested by the investigators of the International Commission. “The development policies of some western countries must change radically. It is high time that friendship ends here so that free democracy is genuinely supported by governments of the West”¹²³.

In reaction to the report, President Habyarimana blamed the commission for paying attention to just a single problem of ethnicity and ignored the logic of partisan confrontation that was prevailing in the country. The President said that all political parties were involved. The President felt that the conclusions of the report were “rushed” and attributed to “biased testimonies”. The government issued a declaration which highlighted the limitations of the final report of inquiry on violation of human rights. The declaration exonerated President Habyarimana and his allies from all involvement in the violation of human rights¹²⁴.

RPF congratulated the international community for having put to light the misdeeds that were committed by the armed forces, MRND, CDR militias as well as the death squadrons¹²⁵. This was on top of paralyzing the judicial system. In its criticism against RPF, the commission said that had no liberty to work and express itself in the zone controlled by RPF (its representatives and a camera man were present). RPF’s responded that: “the commission did not express the desire to talk to the displaced persons or the prisoners of war in camera”. The International Committee of the Red Cross did it and expressed its satisfaction¹²⁶. The commission did not want to spend a night in the RPF zone, hence it dedicated little time for interviews.

¹²³ Press Conference by FIDH President, 15th March, 1993.

¹²⁴ It is difficult to understand why the Prime Minister cleared the President of his responsibility in the violence. Some people insisted that it was a way of conceding in a deal with Habyarimana who in turn would support renewal of Nsengiyaremye’s term as Prime Minister of the Transitional Government.

¹²⁵ Reaction of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) on the report of the International Commission of Inquiry on the violation of Human rights in Rwanda that was carried out in January 1993, Byumba, 10th April, 1993.

¹²⁶ Testimony of 23rd August, 1992.

According to the International Commission, the crisis and insecurity were mainly attributable to high ranking authorities of the State who were involved in the violence that shook the country. Various means were used by those high ranking officials. These included speeches inciting people to commit violence acts, and instilling hatred especially against the Tutsis. The inactivity of the judiciary, absence of sanctions and impunity of murders, the creation and encouragement of militia were all forbidden by the law¹²⁷.

5.2.7 The crisis of 8th - 9th February 1993 and its consequences

After six months of relative calm between the belligerents, RPF decided to violate the ceasefire which had been in force since 31st July 1992. RPA attacked several Former Rwandan Army positions (FAR) in several areas located in Ruhengeri, Byumba provinces (including Mutara) and Kigali rural. This big offensive brought RPA close to the doorsteps of the capital city, Kigali.

Several factors explain this sudden breakthrough as well as the losses that were inflicted to FAR. The most important factor was that RPA took advantage of 6 months of cessation of hostilities to re-organize, train and improve its military and political strategies. The period was also used to gauge the forces and weakness of the enemy. At the moment of that attack, RPA was a well organized restructured, trained and well politicized army.

RPF justified the resumption of hostilities by the non-respect of the signed accords. During the ceasefire agreement was signed in Arusha on 12th July 1992, RPF ceded to, among other things, acceptance of principles like establishment of a state based on the respect of human rights¹²⁸. It stipulated that no one was above the law and that the two parties should commit themselves to fight all political ideologies based on ethnicity, regionalism and intolerance (art.8). However, the government trampled on these agreements by fomenting massacres in different corners of the country such as Gisenyi, Kibuye, Ruhengeri and Bugesera. Neither the Transitional Government nor the opposition did any thing to condemn or stop these massacres. The International Community itself which was alerted on several occasions by RPF about the violence that was organized by the regime did nothing

¹²⁷ International Commission, Communiqué of 15th April, 1993.

¹²⁸ Response to the forum, p.4

to exert sufficient pressure on Kigali. RPF resumed fighting to oblige the government side to respect the people's right to life. The resumption of fighting was not a cause but a consequence of the violation of accords on the ceasefire¹²⁹.

In a letter addressed to the Arusha negotiations facilitator on 2nd February, RPF gave a number of conditions that were to be met before resuming the suspended negotiations. It particularly insisted on the dismissal of the administrative staff who were implicated in the massacres. It also wanted immediate implementation of measures that were recommended by the Government Commission charged with evaluating and re-organizing the central administration. These measures had until then been blocked by the former single party. RPF asked the Prime Minister to improve services in the Prosecutor's Office. It demanded that death squadrons be dismantled and all persons who were involved in killing ventures be prosecuted. It was only when these conditions were rejected by Government that the RPF resumed the hostilities¹³⁰.

RPF wanted to teach President Habyarimana a lesson in reaction to the intransigence of the government *vis-à-vis* the peace negotiations and assassinations that were prompted by the state. This had culminated in the massacre of hundreds of innocent people as well a displacement of thousands of people. RPF also wanted to demonstrate its fire power which had henceforth become superior compared to that of the FAR.

Military operations started almost simultaneously on a warfront of several kilometers which extended from Mutura to Ruhengeri town. After a week of fighting, RPF captured a territory which was three times larger than the one they had before the resumption of the hostilities. In addition to these military achievements which exposed the weakness of Habyarimana's army and the lack of political consistency of the government team, the masses who escaped from the battle surged towards Kigali. The conditions of living of these people moved "humanitarian groups" among whom were hidden politicians and allies of the Kigali regime.

With the exception of members or sympathizers of RPF, all other intervening parties in the Rwandese conflict condemned the

¹²⁹ idem

¹³⁰ RPF's Communiqué of 9th and 10th February, 1993.

resumption of hostilities. In a joint communiqué, the President and Prime Minister condemned the resumption of hostilities by RPF¹³¹. The four opposition parties also condemned the RPF attack. They attributed the responsibility of the escalation of fighting sometimes to RPF and at others to President Habyarimana who was blocking negotiations. MRND and CDR were also implicated. They demanded that RPF return to its previous positions. The political parties feared that RPF could take the capital. The MRND Minister of Defense and RPF had no reason whatsoever to resume hostilities as their demands were being handled by the government.

The International Community and the GOMN were of the opinion that RPF had violated the accords, but at the same time recognized that insecurity was a reality. They persistently asked that RPF stop hostilities and return to its former positions. In a communiqué dated 21st February, 1993, RPF declared an immediate unilateral ceasefire and said that it was ready to return to its former positions so that peace negotiations could be resumed. But in turn, it demanded that the Former Rwandan Army stay in their new positions and that an intervention force (GOMN) be put in place to supervise the zone between the two forces.

To justify its decision, RPF said that it had achieved its objective. The regime had learnt a lesson. There was pressure exerted from all sides. The OAU Ministers of Foreign Affairs who met in Addis-Ababa asked for an immediate end to hostilities and a return to negotiations. Pressure also came from big powers that were involved in the Rwandese crisis. Thus, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs blamed RPF and the Kigali regime. He blamed RPF for the resumption of hostilities and said that it had to withdraw behind the lines that it occupied before the attack. The Kigali regime was blamed for “the overwhelming responsibility of the resumption of the civil war”¹³². USA also condemned the resumption of the war and demanded for a ceasefire. As for France, it was concerned about RPA’s victory because, according the French government spokesman, it would create disequilibrium in the region as the Tutsis would be in power in Rwanda and Burundi¹³³.

¹³¹ Joint-Communiqué, 13th February, 1993.

¹³² W. Claes, in VOA, February, 1993.

¹³³ Reuters, 11 February, 1993

RPF then accepted to pull back but on three conditions. The government force had to be maintained in its new positions. RPF had to continue operating politically in the newly liberated zones, a condition that was not ratified by the Kinihira accords. RPF also demanded for a complete change in the local administration of the zone¹³⁴. The decision to withdraw to the initial positions particularly surprised many observers and even RPF sympathizers.

The first consequence in military terms was that FAR were not able to contain RPA's big offensive. Their allies had to come to their rescue. France sent a reinforcement of an extra 150 troops in order to prevent total collapse of the FAR. That attack also caused a serious humanitarian crisis and one wonders whether RPF had weighed its extent and effects. In fact, the number of displaced persons increased dramatically to the extent that the first camps were near Kigali (at Nyacyonga). The displaced persons were about 1,000,000 after that attack against 200,000 in August 1992. Their maintenance cost around 1.7 billion RWF per month.

The funds were contributed by donors and NGOs. Part of the above amount ended in the pockets of regime dignatories and administrative agents. The conditions of living in the camps were deplorable. They were characterized by insufficient food, promiscuity, high levels of criminality and many deaths because of diseases, etc.

According to some analysts, RPF's attack alienated its sympathy from some politicians of the Democratic forces for change who saw in that initiative the desire on the part of RPF to impose its rule by force¹³⁵. It is more probable that the 8th February attack scared the political class, which felt threatened for the first time. It did not believe in the military victory by RPF. The attack showed that RPF could become victorious. It was for that reason that some politicians and representatives of the Civil Society were alarmed and started reacting out of fear and for spontaneous self protection. The political class claimed that there was a big risk for the country to fall into a dictatorship which was worse than what it had known for the last 20 years.

¹³⁴ Interview with a senior officer of RPA, 12th October, 2002.

¹³⁵ G. Purnier on RFI, July 1993

To that effect, a campaign against RPF was carried out, accusing it of having committed “massive acts of violation of human rights” during the attack. RPF defended itself by specifying that, certainly, some deaths had occurred but they had not been premeditated massacres. Furthermore, the MRND and CDR armed militia participated in the war and many had been killed on the battle field.

The resumption of political contacts was a culmination of a meeting held in Bujumbura between representatives of political parties in government and RPF. The meeting was held from 25th February to 2nd March 1993 in the absence of the MRND¹³⁶. This meeting took place on the eve of the Dar-es-salaam meeting between the Prime Minister and RPF. The parties noted their convergence on the fact that they had denounced “the dangers that our rescue is likely to face due to the politics of racism, regionalism war mongering and dictatorship of President Habyarimana and MRND party as well as his entourage.” They noted the systematic blockage of Nsengiyaremye’s government regarding negotiations, improvement of the administration, and restoration of security as well as total paralysis of the government. The President and his party were at the centre of organized terrorism which “transformed into a real genocide... which constituted a serious violation of the ceasefire agreement... RPF was drawn into the resumption of hostilities on the front and also violated the cease-fire agreement”. The requirements of that meeting were the following: instauration of a ceasefire, withdrawal of foreign troops which would be replaced by a neutral international force of the OAU and UN, immediate resumption of negotiations, resettlement of displaced persons after the ceasefire and punishing the administrative authorities who were involved in the massacres¹³⁷.

It is worth noting that the French Minister of Cooperation, M. Debarge, was around for a “mediation mission.” On 1st March, he paid a visit to the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic. The divisions which occurred within the opposition parties after the RPF attack were not strange to him. He was also aware of the role of France in the Rwandese crisis. He requested the parties to speak the same language as the President of the Republic and to form a common front around him against RPF.

¹³⁶ Final Communiqué, 2nd March, 1993.

¹³⁷ Final Communiqué, 2nd March, 1993.

Religious leaders also went to Bujumbura to meet RPF with an objective of convincing it to revive negotiations.

Proper negotiations started immediately after the Prime Minister accepted the essential demands RPF on 22nd February. The President of the Republic and his MRND party were not of the same view, they opposed it. CDR maintained its position of refusing to negotiate with RPF. The Prime Minister himself led a delegation at the resumption of the Arusha negotiations. The crisis came to a close after the Dar-es-salaam Accord signed by the Prime Minister, D. Nsengiyaremye and the RPF President.

These accords imposed a ceasefire and a withdrawal of the RPF to positions occupied before 8th February 1993, the resumption of the Arusha negotiations (on 15th March) and an immediate withdrawal of foreign troops (secret part of the accord) which were to be replaced by a group of neutral military observers referred to as GOMN. CDR rejected the accord and withdrew from ARD on 27th March 1993. This was because, in its opinion, MRND had betrayed it by accepting that the agreement signed in Arusha should not be revised.

RPA withdrew to its former positions on 20th March 1993, leaving a demilitarized zone (DMZ) between the latter and the positions of FAR which had been deserted because of the war. In Arusha, the parties to the negotiations decided to hasten the process of re-establishing the demilitarized zone in April 1993. Real negotiations on the resettlement of displaced persons took place in Kinigira from 10th May, 1993 under the chairmanship of GOMN in the presence of observers. These were some ambassadors, representatives of UN Agencies and countries of the sub-region. They were very cautious on the sensitive issues of administration and security.

Under the terms of the Kinigira accord signed on 30th May, the security of the zone was entrusted to GOMN. Local administration was to be handled by cell and sector authorities, *Burgomasters* and Assistant Governors. Cell and sector authorities were directly elected by the population. In turn, they participated in the election of *Burgomasters* but were not eligible for election as *Burgomasters*. The Assistant Governors of Kinigira which was made up of 11 districts out of 17 in Byumba Province and Kirambo which covered almost half of the districts in Ruhengeri

Province were to be appointed by the government and RPF. They were to be directly answerable to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. They would be responsible to the ministry and not to the Governors.

The displaced persons had to be resettled a month after signing the accord. 650,000 people were expected in the DMZ to retrieve their property. A commission composed of 20 people, (10 representatives for the government and RPF respectively) in each sub-province was charged with resettling the displaced persons¹³⁸. That commission was chaired by Mr. Laurent Nyirabanzi who was a government representative. The Vice-charman, Mr. Baririnda Silvestre and the Secretary General, Paul Semajara were from RPF. Among the problems that the commission faced included the large size of the region, limited means of transport (there was only one vehicle available) and the physical inconveniences of living in Kinyihira. It became operational from 23rd June, 1993 and served only one part of Byumba Province¹³⁹. The provinces, districts and sectors that were affected by the buffer zone were divided as follows:

Table 17: Areas under demilitarized buffer zone

Provinces	Districts located in DMZ	Sectors	DMZ-RGF	DMZ-RPF	RGF	RPF
Byumba	8 out of 17	76	11	2	19	11
Ruhengeri	10 out of 16	111	13	5	47	10

Key:

DMZ: Demilitarized zone

RGF: Sectors under full control of FAR

RPF: Sectors under full control of RPF

DMZ-RGF: Sectors partly demilitarized and partly under the control of FAR

DMZ-RPF: Sectors partly demilitarized and partly under the control of RPF.

¹³⁸ It was called “*Komisiyo ishinzwe ibibazo by’abasubira mu byabo, gutegura no kuyobora amatora mu karere ka kinyihira*” (CRE-Kinyihira).

¹³⁹ idem

A few days after the Kinihira accords, 80% of the displaced population in Byumba Province returned to their homes and properties. However, government agents kept on discouraging the displaced persons who wanted to return home in the zone controlled by RPF.

The elections that were planned and organized through several meetings of the adhoc commission took place peacefully in Byumba Province. However, there were many conflicts in some parts of Ruhengeri Province and some districts especially Kinigi, Kidaho and Nkumba. The minister of Internal Affairs suspended elections in these districts in November 1993, after conflicts between sympathizers of MRND and RPF.

The buffer zone was not spared by the violence that was rampant in the country. In the night of 17th-18th November 1993, massacres were committed in Kidaho, Cyeru, Nkumba and Nyamutera districts. The government gave a figure of 4 deaths and several injuries. But an investigation commissioned by General Dallaire, commander of the UNAMIR talked of 21 deaths. The Minister of Defense and the priests of Ruhengeri Diocese (under the association known as *Fratres in Unum*) put the blame on RPF for the massacres. Mr. Paul Kagame refuted that version on radio BBC denying any attack by his troops in those regions. He suspected FAR for the attacks and requested for a UN inquiry. In its final report, the UNAMIR was not able to say who between FAR and RPF was responsible for the 17th-18th November 1993 killings.

The region was infested with weapons that had been distributed by the MRND government. Other assassinations were reported in Mutara District in November 1993 and Kinihira Sub-Province in March 1994).

5.2.8 Maneuvers to block the Arusha Accords

The regime used political polarization was a weapon to block the process of the negotiations. It did it by radicalizing ethnic identities and mobilizing the population by means of stereotypes that denounced the enemy of the “Hutu” people.

Nsengiyaremye’s government got a three months’ extension period after the Prime Minister reconciled with President Habyarimana. For the appointment of the Prime Minister of the

transition, MRND, MDR, PSD and PL parties agreed that MDR should propose a candidate to submit to the Cabinet and if his candidature was approved, the candidate's name would be sent to Arusha (art. 51 of Arusha). The Cabinet meeting of 22nd June 1993 examined Mr. D. Nsengiyaremye's candidature for the office of Prime Minister of the Transitional Government. "The meeting found that his candidature was unacceptable." Since then, a state of confusion among the Kigali politicians prevailed. Opposition parties suspected Mr. D. Nsengiyaremye of seeking to continue "dishonestly." Actually, Mr. D. Nsengiyaremye had ignored the procedures and submitted his own candidature to Arusha without going through the government.

The Cabinet accepted Mr. F. Twagiramungu's candidature for the post of Prime Minister of the transition and M/s A. Uwilingiyimana as the Prime Minister who was supposed to organize the establishment of new institutions. Both of them, together with other MDR ministers who accepted to be part of the government were expelled from this party by the Kabusunzu extra-ordinary congress. In spite of the reconciliation between Mr. D. Nsengiyaremye and President Habyarimana, the latter opted for the Twagiramungu/ Uwilingiyimana faction.

Mr. F. Twagiramungu's candidature for the post of Prime Minister in the transitional government was accepted in July 1993. This took place during the Kinyira negotiations facilitated by the Tanzanian Foreign Affairs Minister. Observers saw peace prospects on the horizon: "Prospects of peace are taking shape".

Before the diplomatic corps, President Habyarimana said that he was ready to sign the agreement. Two dates had been proposed, i.e. 19th and 24th. The President and CDR were opposed to some articles, especially article 11 which provided for the prosecution of the President of the Republic in case of violation of the fundamental law. The signing of the Arusha agreement took place on 4th August 1993 in the presence of the Presidents of the sub-region. CDR and MDR/ PARMEHUTU did not send representatives to Arusha.

The signing of the Arusha agreement was warmly received by the displaced persons, civil society and the recognized political parties. The latter signed a political code of ethics, with the exception of MRND, CDR and MDR – PARMEHUTU. These were

opposed to it since the beginning of the negotiations. For many people, the Arusha agreement constituted a factor of national reconciliation and hope. An editorial of Radio Rwanda¹⁴⁰ reported: “An unforgettable day, a day to say farewell to decayed ideas, a day of pride for the Rwandese who will henceforth live in unity and peace”. A Rwandese priest proposed to celebrate the memorable day annually as a grand event from then onwards as “an anniversary to be called a day marking the end to revenge”¹⁴¹. The Prime Minister invited the population to celebrate that event which put an end to the war and its problems. The national radio devoted a series of transmissions presenting the different protocols of the Arusha peace agreement.

The period agreed upon to put in place transitional institutions was 37 days after signing the agreement. That period was not observed for several reasons. From 10th September 1993, the country entered an institutional vacuum that the forces which were opposed to the agreement took advantage of to render the latter unoperational. Since the signing of the Arusha agreement, the government had only to handle day -to-day affairs¹⁴². It was less efficient than the previous government due to the insecurity that was created by the Habyarimana camp which was determined, more than ever, to fail the peace agreement.

The first problem was created by the delay in deploying the UN forces whose arrival was expected on 31st October 1993. A joint RPF government delegation criss-crossed some capitals of the West and went to the UN to sensitize the international community and the Super Powers on “the necessity and urgency of the rapid deployment of a neutral international force prior to establishing the transitional institutions”¹⁴³.

In September, General Dallaire said in his report that conditions had been met for the arrival of the “*Blue Helmets*”. On 5th October 1993, the Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 872 on the deployment of 2,500 UNAMIR soldiers to maintain peace in Rwanda. Their mission was to supervise the transition process up to the elections. It had a budget of US \$ 62,618,000. The deployment

¹⁴⁰ “Umunsi utazibagirana, umunsi wo gusezerera burundu ibitekerezo bishaje, ni umunsi wishema ry’abanyarwanda bagiye kubana mu bumwe n’amahoro” (3rd August, 1993)

¹⁴¹ “Isabukuru yitwa iy’umunsi wo guca inzingo” (Padiri G. Mudashimwa).

¹⁴² J. Kavaruganda, the Chairman of Constitutional Court to the Prime Minister, 30th September, 1993.

¹⁴³ Press Communiqué, 12th December, 1993.

of these forces was supposed to be progressive and spread over three months after the approval of the Security Council. UNAMIR started its functions officially on 1st November 1993.

The second pretext for blockage by the president and political parties that supported him was the discord and break up of the opposition parties that were invited to participate in the transitional government. In accordance with the agreement, MDR, PSD, MRND, PL and other smaller parties had to hold elections of parliamentarians to the Transitional National Assembly as well as ministerial candidates of some parties like PSD. The choices made were not respected because of manipulations by the President.

From October 1993, MRND and CDR were involved in a series of violence and blockages, i.e. massacres and assassinations. For example, the assassination of F. Gatabazi that took place on 21st February 1994. There was also meddling in the problems of Burundi, taking advantage of divisions of some political parties, unauthorized demonstrations to prevent the swearing-in of ministers,¹⁴⁴ etc. Whenever decisions related to the establishment of institutions were supposed to take place, violence and terrorism by the MRND *Interahamwe* and CDR *Impruzamugambi* militia increased in intensity. On February 1994, the Former Rwandese Army (FAR) laid an ambush against RPA in which one person was killed and two were injured. It was intent on killing the RPF delegation which should have taken oath on a date that had been decreed unilaterally and illegally by President Habyarimana. The objectives of these maneuvers were on the one hand, to torpedo the Arusha Peace agreement by blocking the establishment of a transitional government and the Transitional National Assembly (TNA). The presidential Camp openly asked for renegotiation of certain protocols and CDR's representation in the TNA¹⁴⁵. On the other hand, President Habyarimana wanted to tilt in his favor the balance of political forces projected in the Arusha Peace Accord. He made lists of members of Parliament of his own choice with the complicity of some political leaders of PL, MDR, PDI and PDC who had changed camp. He deployed all his forces to have them take an oath. RPF considered that situation unacceptable because it was a result of a climate of intimidation and terrorism contrary to the spirit and Arusha Protocols. RPF accused President Habyarimana of manipulating

¹⁴⁴ RPF, Rwanda: Reasons for the current political deadlock, April 1994.

¹⁴⁵ M. Ngirumpatse, Le point sur les négociations entre le gouvernement rwandais et le Front Patriotique Rwandais (FPR), 9 novembre 1993.

political parties in order that the latter should represent him in the institutions of the transition¹⁴⁶. In his capacity as President of the Constitutional Court, J. Kavaruganda submitted to the Prime Minister a list of recognized parties as well names of personalities who met the conditions that were required to enter the TNA.

On several occasions, the Prime Minister and the representatives of the UN Secretary General summoned the Transitional Government and Members of Parliament to take oath¹⁴⁷. Only the President was sworn-in on 5th January 1994. The UN representative or the Prime Minister of the Transitional Government convened several meetings to unravel the situation but all of them failed. President Habyarimana did the same but with no right. Embassies too, notably German and the US Embassies organized meetings in order to break the deadlock. CDR was happy with the blockage of the application of the Arusha agreement. According to CDR, the problem was reduced the Hutu-Tutsi factor aimed at controlling power. As long as this problem was not resolved, there would be no peace. Furthermore, according to CDR, several clauses of the agreement were “anti – democratic, unrealistic and therefore inapplicable”¹⁴⁸.

RPF refused to renegotiate matters that were covered by the agreement and warned against any attempt to deviate from the Arusha process. The position of RPF on the lists that were submitted for approval was the following: “RPF only recognizes the list of Parliamentarians who were elected during the period that was prescribed by the Arusha Peace Agreement¹⁴⁹. RPF will not be party to a government which compromises with people who, like Mr. Justus Mugenzi, despised the Arusha Agreement. CDR claimed that RPF rejected its participation in transitional institutions. According to RPF, “this marginal group which has never supported the provisions of the Arusha Peace Accord and whose behavior was marked by violence and slanderous remarks (...) will not qualify for the TNA representation”. This was according to article 61 of the Arusha Accord¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁶ RPF communiqué of 28th Feb.1994.

¹⁴⁷ On 29th and 30th Dec.1993;1st Jan.1994; 5th Jan.1994;8th Jan.1994;15th Jan.1994;2nd Feb.1994;22nd Feb.1994;23rd Feb.1994;10th Mar.1994 and 21st Mar.1994.

¹⁴⁸ Mr. Bucyana’s letter addressed to the President of the Republic, on 10 Sep.1993.

¹⁴⁹ Announcement of 28th Feb.1994.

¹⁵⁰ The reasons of the deadlock, op.cit., p. 9.

CDR which did not sign the agreement changed its mind and signed the code of conduct claiming that it respected the agreement. It did this in order to enter the Transitional National Assembly. It signed as a matter of principle but kept its sectarian ideology. Pressure was exerted on RPF to compel it to renounce its intransigence towards CDR but RPF remained firm on its position¹⁵¹. As for RPF, the principle of a state of law prohibited sectarian practices and any form of violence which were characteristic of CDR. The Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Rwegasira tried to disentangle the situation during his one week visit, i.e. from 17th March 1994 by meeting several political stakeholders, but to no avail.

The donors, who were begged for finances during the transitional period, became more and more impatient to see the formation of a new government in order to release their aid. Many joint RPF-government meetings were held during September 1993 to solicit for aid. Hon. W. Claes, the Belgian Foreign Affairs Minister said that the International Community as well as Belgium would not accept further delay in the application of the Arusha Agreement¹⁵². The Belgian Defense Minister, Hon. L. Delcroix, affirmed that Belgium could not wait indefinitely for the establishment of transitional institutions. The UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali also warned the Rwandese factions. He said, "If the agreement is not put into force, we shall consider withdrawing UNAMIR forces".

It was against the backdrop of this very tense social climate, marked by insecurity and a power vacuum, that extremists made their final preparations for the genocide and massacres. It was necessary to eliminate all natural or ideological allies of RPF so that during the elections, the latter in turn would be eliminated from the political scene. Faced with that climate of insecurity, RPF took a decision to send to Mulindi the biggest part of its civilian cadres who were not indispensable to CND.

¹⁵¹ RPF, The possibility of allowing CDR to join into the Transitional National Assembly (TNA), Kigali, 29-3-1994. Prime Minister A. Uwilingiyimana declared that CDR cannot be excluded since it meets the conditions set by other political parties: "*ntawaheza CDR...yemeye ibyo andi mashyaka ayisaba*" (5th January 1994).

¹⁵² L'Echo newspaper of 23rd February 1994.

VI

THE GENOCIDE PERPETRATED AGAINST THE TUTSI (APRIL-JULY 1994)

By Faustin Rutembesa

In Rwanda, between April and July 1994, there was a terrible genocide in which more than one million people lost their lives¹. Since 1994, the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis has been a subject of numerous studies and publications. Some authors have made an effort to reconstitute the event with sufficient precision while others have focused on analyzing the causes of this genocide. In this perspective, the ethnic trap and hatred propaganda perpetrated by the media have been rigorously studied and sufficiently analyzed.

Through their reports, international organizations have undertaken to retrace the steps that were taken in the preparation and execution of this genocide. In the meantime, individuals have provided oral testimonies of the events. In addition to the above testimonies, there are investigations that were carried out; some were done by the Belgium Senate on Rwanda. Others were done by the French Parliamentary Commission, the United Nations (UN), and the Organization African Unity (OAU), as well as symposia and seminar reports.

Furthermore, there was a National Commission that was constituted to collect evidence with the view of exposing the implication of France in the genocide that was perpetrated in Rwanda in 1994. Furtherstill, a report on the investigation of

¹ The latest estimates from the Gacaca courts put the number of genocide victims to 1,050,000 (Service national des juridictions gacaca, Rôle Central des Juridictions Gacaca, Kigali, Septembre, 2007).

causes, circumstances and the persons who were responsible for the attack on the Rwandese presidential aircraft was published. The information on genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis was further enriched by witness accounts given to the International Criminal Court on Rwanda (ICTR) as well as Rwanda's Gacaca courts.

Through these mass publications, it is worth noting that explaining the details of this genocide calls for conditions that are extremely difficult to establish. Among such conditions, the following are outstanding: the capacity to resist foreign influence while carrying out studies, knowledge of methodological debates and established facts, difference in interpretation and constant worry to reach synthesis of the genocide events.

In spite of the abundant literature available, the process of explaining the genocide that was committed against the Tutsi is faced with numerous obstacles. Some of these obstacles are of epistemological character while others are connected with foreign stakes. How can the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis be understood and how can it be explained? The nature of this question presupposes that nothing should be taken for granted. Studies carried out on genocide in other countries show the need to question the genesis of the crimes, the factors that made it possible to carry out the genocide with efficiency and least opposition as well as the structure and strategies that were deployed to carry out the genocide.

By investigating all the above phenomena, it becomes possible to understand and explain how "*so many people were killed and how other people became organized killers*"². To this key question, several others are added in order to obtain some clarification, especially on the meaning that the executioners gave to their commitment to the genocide. Relying on written and oral sources, this chapter therefore seeks to propose an introductory appraisal of the main factors that make it possible to understand the genocide against the Tutsis.

² Chrétien, J.P., "Un génocide africain: de l'idéologie à la propagande", in Verdier, R. et al., *Rwanda. Un génocide du XX^{ème} siècle*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1995. P.46.

6.1. Definition of terms and key concepts

Before analyzing the theme, it is important to define precisely some concepts and terms which will be used as follows: “*war crime*”, “*crime against humanity*”, *genocide*”³. These terms are frequently abused. In some publications, they tend to be used synonymously. They therefore cease to apply to cases for which they were intended.

According to the Geneva Convention of 1906 and Hague Convention of the 1907, *war crime concerns* inhuman acts which are committed against civilians and wounded or captured soldiers in the time of war between nations. Subsequent processes of codification of this crime determine the acts that constitute it. It is mainly about torture and inhuman treatment. It is also concerned with causing terrible suffering intentionally. Other acts include illegal detention, forcing any person to serve in an army of the enemy, destruction and unjustified appropriation of property for military purposes. The above acts were carried out on a large scale, etc.

The London Agreements which were signed by Allied States on 8th August 1945 aimed at prosecuting Nazi criminals defined as a crime against humanity. It essentially concerns inhuman acts committed against civilians in a systematic manner during the time of war or even peace. Since the Nuremberg proceedings, the concept of crime against humanity has been a subject of constant evaluation.

Thus the Rome Statute of the International Penal Court of Justice enumerated more than ten categories of acts that constitute crime. These acts include large scale murder or extermination of some ethnic groups, deportation or forced transfer of communities, imprisonment or any other form of serious deprivation of freedom in violation of fundamental rights of international law. Others are persecution of an entire group or community for political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious reasons or sexual discrimination as well as extensive systematic kidnap followed by death.

³ On the process of codification and definition of these crimes read Ternon, Y., *Guerres et génocides au XX e siècle*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2007, pp. 49-104.

Etymologically, *genocide* is a neologism formed from a Greek term *genes* which means origin, specie, race or ethnic group. *Genos* is combined with a Latin verb *caedere* which means to assassinate, to torture or kill. The term genocide was used for the first time in 1944 by Raphael Lemkin in his book entitled “*Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*”. It refers to physical extermination of nations as well as ethnic groups according to a well coordinated and systematic plan⁴.

The above term was used for the very first time in an official document during the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. At this level, the term *genocide* is defined to mean double willingness as far as the International Community is concerned. On the one hand, it is a manifestation of the determination to punish a crime hitherto unknown in the vocabulary of criminal justice. On the other hand, it shows that the systematic elimination of Jews by Hitler is termed as a criminal act. The term *genocide* was therefore invented to designate a new and an unprecedented category of crime.

Genocide was redefined in legal terms by the Convention on Prevention and Repression of the Crime of *Genocide* which was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly on 9th December 1948. The convention which came into force in 1951 defines *genocide* in article II, in its intentional nature to eliminate wholly or partially, a national, ethnic racial or religious group”. Genocide means any of the following acts that are committed with the intention of exterminating wholly or partially, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group:

- a. Mass murder of members of a group;
- b. Physical or mental aggression of members of a group;
- c. Submitting a community to living conditions capable of leading the group to total or partial destruction;
- d. Occasioning birth control measures to a group that are aimed at curtailing population growth;
- e. Forced transfer of children from one group to another”⁵.

⁴ Ternon, Y., *L'état criminel. Les génocides au XX^e Siècle*, Paris, Seuil, 1995, p.17.

⁵ Convention sur la Prévention et la Répression du crime de génocide, in Ternon Y., 1995, op.cit., p. 44; see also Nations unies : service d'informations, *Qu'est-ce que*

From the “extent” of destruction and political implications, the two notions of *crime against humanity* and *genocide* tend to be used in a confused manner. If a war crime presupposes confrontation between nations, crime against humanity and genocide may be about conflicts within nations. The main difference between these two crimes is in the motive of each of them. A criminal acts with the intention of eliminating the victim due to ethnic reasons or political connections. If the perpetrator of the crime is willing to exterminate totally or partially, a national, racial, ethnic or religious group, such an act constitutes genocide.

It follows from the above definitions that the qualitative aspect takes precedence over the quantitative one in understanding genocide. The basic element of the definition is not the number of victims and the means used to terminate them, but proof of willingness or intention of a State or underlying structures used to plan the elimination of a human entity that is taken as a threat to the objectives or ambitions of that State. Although the intention of eliminating a national group as such is not easy to prove before the judiciary because it is not always supported by written material, concrete elements can permit to prove it.

The similarity in time and space of massacres that are orchestrated against a designated population offer first hand proof of the intention of a State to commit genocide. Underlying structures meant to achieve complete disappearance of a population from the territory and sphere of influence of that State offer additional proof.

It should be noted that the concept of *genocide* is not easy to define. The extension that is made of it and the stakes that are linked to the definition of genocide further complicate the issue. Among the stakes linked to the abusive use of this word, there are first of all those that valorize the identity of a particular category of population. In this perspective, genocide is used to recognize and confirm the massacre that was suffered by that category of population in the past.

le génocide? Une convention des nations unies pour prévenir et punir la destruction délibérée d'un groupe national, racial, religieux ou ethnique, New York, 1959 ; Dupaquier J.-F. (dir), *La justice internationale face au drame rwandais*, Paris, Karthala, 1996, p.120.; Nations Unies, *Statuts de Rome de la Cour Internationale*, 2000.

Then, there are humanitarian issues. The latter are mainly advanced by some non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The use of the word *genocide* is connected with strategies aimed at arousing emotions, provoking shock in people's minds in order to obtain recognition for international intervention. The use of the word "*genocide*" is therefore inscribed in issues of memory identity.

Some of these issues surface in the way of understanding this particular genocide against the Tutsis. One case to remember is that of some publications which, after having described how one part of the Rwandese population pounced on another in a feat of excessive anger with the intention of exterminating it, consider that the responsibility for crime falls on those people who provoked the so called anger⁶. This kind of assertion shows how the definition and explanation of the genocide against the Tutsis are not always solely motivated by interest for knowledge.

However, according to R. Lemkin and the 1948 Convention, remarkable progress has been made with great consensus as to which acts constitute genocide. These acts do not concern a number of victims but the intention to exterminate a human entity together with planned and concerted efforts to carry out the extermination. Studies carried out on genocide in the twentieth century show that every genocide was invariably preceded by long ideological and technical preparations with the help of the bureaucratic machinery of the State. In this text, the term "*Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis*" is used on several occasions. Its preference as opposed to "*Rwandese genocide*" is based on two constitutive elements of the genocide logic. First, the victims were individualized as an ethnic group and the elimination of the ethnic group was comprehensive. Then, the killers perceived and identified themselves as Hutus and targeted their victims because they belonged to a group perceived as Tutsis.

⁶ Reyntjens, F., "Rwanda, Ten years on: From Genocide to Dictatorship", in *African affairs*, 2004, 103, pp. 177-210. See also Lugan, B., *Rwanda, contre-enquête sur le génocide*, éd. Privat, 2007, p.273.

6.2. Beginning and execution of the genocide against the Tutsis

6.2.1. Attack against the presidential plane and execution of the genocide

On 6th April 1994, the plane on which President Juvénal Habyarimana and Cyprian Ntaryamira of Rwanda and Burundi respectively were travelling was shot down near Kanombe Airport, beyond Masaka Village. The circumstances of that attack which cost lives of two presidents and some of their collaborators such as the Army Commander of the Rwandese Armed forces, Colonel Deogratius Nsabimana is a subject of hot debate. This debate revolves around three explanations.

The first explanation implicates RPF in the organization and execution of the attack against the presidential plane⁷. Defenders of this version are particularly French officials. Others are dignitaries of the fallen Rwandese regime as well as members of various political groups in exile and certain individuals who were close to the French military. They are convinced that RPF purposely carried out the attack for three reasons.

RPF sponsored and carried out the attack on President Habyarimana in order to undermine the negotiations agreement that RPF had signed with the Rwandese government in Arusha on 4th August, 1993. RPF also wanted to remove the president who posed as an obstacle to its total military victory. Finally, RPF wanted without any let or hindrance to win total political power instead of sharing it with other political forces which were active in Rwanda at the time.

This explanation is the basis for the reasoning that the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis was a result of spontaneous anger of the Hutus. They were provoked and reacted because of agony and the feeling of powerlessness which they endured as well as the injured pride they were supposed to defend. Let us point out that this explanation was propagated by the self proclaimed interim government. This government came into being on 8th April 1994. The explanation justifies the genocide committed against the Tutsis as well as the massacre of 10 Belgian soldiers

⁷ Prunier, G., *Rwanda (1959-1994). Histoire d'un génocide*, Milan, Ed. Dagorno, 1997, pp. 259-261.

who were part of the UNAMIR contingent and some members of the opposition⁸.

The second explanation of the attack against President Habyarimana's plane throws light on the responsibility of his close collaborators, especially his in-laws, with the help of military trainers or foreign military technicians⁹. Those people who were close to the president acted for two reasons. First of all, they were not happy with him because he had signed the Arusha Peace Accord on 4th August 1993 under pressure from RPF, Heads of State of the Great Lakes Sub-Region as well as the International Community. The logic behind his assassination was therefore to create disorder and confusion which was likely to prevent the implementation of the protocols related to the sharing of power in a broad-based Transitional Government as well as integrating the armed forces.

The second reason concerns the link that existed between the logic to retain power by the Hutus and the genocide against the Tutsis. The latter were considered to be disturbing elements who threatened to implement the above logic.

Planners of the genocide saw in the death of the president a precious occasion to carry out a general massacre of the Tutsis as well as physical and ideological elimination of Hutus in the opposition. By piecing together witness reports from various sources, the report of inquiry on the attack against the presidential plane established that the latter was shot down in the Kanombe military zone by some elements of the Rwandese Armed Forces who were in control of that zone¹⁰.

On this point, Etienne Sengere, the Rwandese Ambassador to Kinshasa in former Zaire, together with President Habyarimana's close friends confirmed a day after the attack on the presidential plane that it was shot down by Belgian soldiers of UNAMIR. Etienne Sengere had relied on the fact that Belgians could have acted on behalf of RPF and that on the day of the air-crash, the Belgian soldiers of UNAMIR were patrolling the surrounding areas of the plane crash¹¹.

⁸ Belgium was considered by the Kigali regime as having supported RPF in the preparation and execution of the attack against President Habyarimana's plane.

⁹ Prunier G., 1997, op. cit., pp. 266-267.

¹⁰ République du Rwanda, Rapport d'Enquête sur les causes, les circonstances et les responsabilités de l'attentat contre l'avion Présidentiel rwandais, Kigali, 20 Avril, 2009, p. 183-186.

¹¹ Prunier, G., 1997, op. cit., p. 258.

Colette Braeckman maintains that President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane was shot down by missiles that were launched by elements of the French army or those that were trained by them. She insists that she received a document that gave details of a commando unit that shot down the presidential plane¹². Even though they have not yet been identified, foreigners sponsored and executed the attack against President Habyarimana.

In spite of lack of the proof on the identity of the authors of the attack, some people go a step further to affirm that the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis was a result of the attack on President Habyarimana. Authorities of the Interim Government and genocide perpetrators make good use of this assertion. They portrayed genocide as an act of self defense by the Hutus against the Tutsis. They claimed that the Tutsis had ruined the country and had plotted with an *external* enemy, namely RPF.

After the attack on the presidential plane, the *Hutu-Power* movement served as a stepping stone to call for the extermination of the Tutsi. The leaders of the Hutu-power movement fronted the death of President Habyarimana as an act of provocation on the part of the Tutsis and a prelude to the extermination of the Hutu. President Habyarimana's death enabled two major objectives to be achieved. They were to avenge the Hutus of Burundi and to forewarn the Hutus of Rwanda against the plan that was put forward by the Tutsis to destroy them.

Thus, the exploitation of emotional shock provoked by the simultaneous death of the Burundian and Rwandese presidents logically justified the extermination of the Tutsis and to determine several engagements. Referring to Tutsis as perpetrators or sponsors of the double tragic attack on the presidents of Burundi and Rwanda by leaders of the care-taker regime and perpetrators of the genocide changed the conviction of the local population considerably. Accusations that were labeled against RPF and its "*accomplices*"¹³ convinced the Hutus of the necessity to exterminate the Tutsis as quickly as possible.

¹² Prunier, G., 1997, op. cit, p. 258 ; *La nuit rwandaise*, no. 2, 7, avril 2008, pp. 400-401.

¹³ The term accomplice meant all Tutsis who were inside the country and Hutus of the opposition.

Shingiro Mbonyumutwa's call that was retransmitted on radio RTLM a week after the double presidential attack is typical in this regard. The former president's son aroused emotions of the Hutus who were still hesitant when he warned them to wait for their own extermination by the Tutsis who were outside the country if they did not exterminate those who were inside the country as quickly as they could. He emphatically said that "imagine therefore these Tutsis in the Diaspora who once in Rwanda would start avenging themselves against their enemies who kept them out of the country for thirty years! I confirm to you, as they declared themselves, the problem of a very big population in Rwanda shall be resolved soon. They are going to exterminate, exterminate and exterminate. They are going to exterminate you until they remain the only ones in the country. They will do this in order to keep power for a thousand years. The power that their fathers had kept for four hundred years (...). And that it is why you who have reasoning capacity, saying that it will be enough to clap as they attack (...) you are wasting your time! And nobody should take this for granted"¹⁴.

It then appears that the 6th April attack was used as pretext and not as cause to put into motion the genocide machinery which had been planned some years before. The structures of the genocide were made up of parliamentary groups, military units and militia who were trained to arrest and kill massively. They had made an experiment of their plan from October 1990 in Kigali, Kibirira, Mutara, Kazeze and Gashora in Bugesera. The media portrayed the idea that the Tutsis constituted a necessary danger and therefore they deserved to be fought. When the message was repeated as the genocide was taking place, the idea was to justify what was happening. It also served as an encouragement to the execution of the genocide.

The murder on 21st October 1993 of President Melchior Ndadaye of Burundi deserves mention. It allowed extremist factions of the so-called opposition democratic parties to rally together for the outright refusal of the Arusha Peace Accord. By exploiting the assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye, the positions defended by these extremist factions became consistent. Very rapidly, they provided an account that gave meaning to the events that were going on and defined the battle to wage against the Tutsis.

¹⁴ RTLM, Appel de Shingiro, M., in Chrétien, J.P 1995, op. cit., pp. 299-300.

During the last term of 1993, the extremist factions extended their grip on the institutions and organs of the regime. This created a favorable context to activate the apocalyptic scheme announced by the media but denounced by some human rights organizations. This shades light on the profound link between the context created by the regime of the president and the attack on the presidential jet. This link is mainly based on the radicalization of the violence and the extreme brutalization of the society as a strategy to regain influence and reinforce the MRND political power. By signing the peace agreement and committing himself to put it into force, President Habyarimana manifested his weakness and amplified doubts as to the survival of the system. In these conditions, his elimination was foreseeable for two reasons.

First, it would assure full and immediate receptivity of the *Hutu people* who had been betrayed and unjustly aggrieved. In other words, it was of the nature that would reactivate Hutu identity and permit large scale violence. Then, the elimination of President Habyarimana was in itself a shock of considerable force. It allowed the use of whatever tool that was available in form of rumors, lies, hatred and fear in order to fail definitively the gains from Arusha and lead the country in the direction of those who totally rejected the idea of compromise especially with RPF.

“In March 1994, the Belgian Ambassador to Kigali called Belgian journalists and gave us a breakfast briefing. He could not be quoted at the time but he made an extremely precise and circumstantial exposé about what was in the offing. He explained the whole phenomenon of recruitment of the militia, their deployment in various locations, distribution of arms and lists of persons who were deemed to die. His information corresponded with testimonies that had been gathered by journalists. As far as I am concerned, at the end of March, I wrote quite a long article in my newspaper to say what was about to happen in Rwanda. That is why on 6th April when the plane was shot down and the following day when information about the death of the Prime Minister was dispatched, I was not surprised. I was equally not surprised when on 7th April, the first killings of political personalities in Kigali took place. This was because the massacre plan was inevitably carried out”¹⁵.

¹⁵ Témoignage de C. Braeckman, in Coret, L. et Vercshave F.-X., *L'horreur qui nous prend*

Hastily attributed to Belgian soldiers first, then to RPF, the attack on the presidential jet should not be disassociated with all the elements that constituted the massacre plan. According to other testimonies that were compiled by the citizens' commission of inquiry, the French and Belgian intelligence services were perfectly aware of the plan to commit genocide practically a month before it started¹⁶. It is clear enough that the elimination of President Juvénal Habyarimana constituted one of the grounds for the preparation of the massacres. It enabled to attain maximum emotion which was indispensable for extreme and widespread violence to be accepted. Evidence submitted to the Rwandese Investigation Commission on the role of France in the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis confirms this explanation¹⁷.

6.2.2 Generalization and systematization of Tutsi massacres.

The execution of the genocide against the Tutsis started immediately after the presidential plane crash. Around 21.00 hours in the night of 6th April 1994, Kigali city was grief-stricken. The massacres of Tutsis and political personalities of the opposition took place. Sporadic shooting echoed in the neighborhood of the Kanombe Military Camp where soldiers of the presidential guard were confined¹⁸. The presidential guard besieged neighborhoods of the city including Kimihurura and Kacyiru. They forced people into their houses, arrested and savagely killed them. They thus launched a vast operation to exterminate the Tutsis.

Under the pretext of avenging President Habyarimana's death, soldiers of the para-commando battalion and the militia of the Presidential mobile Brigade immediately started tracking down Tutsi civilians and members of the opposition. They attacked their residences which they destroyed before killing their occupants. Stories of the beginning of large scale massacres of Tutsis were revealed in the early morning of 7th April 1994. Fear had already gripped the majority of residents of Kigali city.

au visage. L'Etat français dans le génocide au Rwanda, Paris Karthala, 2005, p. 342.

¹⁶ 16 Idem., p.461 ; J. Morel, *Témoignage*, in *La Nuit Rwandaise*, op. cit., p. 411.

¹⁷ République du Rwanda, *Rapport de la Commission Nationale chargée de rassembler les preuves montrant l'implication de l'état français dans le génocide perpétré au Rwanda en 1994*, Kigali, 2007, pp. 323-330.

¹⁸ At that moment, Kigali City and its surroundings had around 7,000 soldiers of whom about 1,500 were elite troops that constituted the Presidential Guard. Others were paramilitary commandos and reconnaissance units.

The crackling of fire arms, cries of agony by victims in different parts of the city and songs of the executioners who were massacring Tutsi civilians worried inhabitants of the capital city, very few of whom had learnt about the death of the President. Fear and consternation overcame people's hearts as locating and massacring victims were taking place simultaneously. From the early hours of 7th April 1994, key political personalities of the opposition were killed, in most cases with their families¹⁹. Other soldiers as well as militias known as *Interahamwe* and *Impuzamugamba* participated actively in the massive massacre of the Tutsis. By the mid-morning of 7th April, 1994, the genocide movement had already spread to various regions of Rwanda.

That generalization of the massacres responded to two objectives. The first objective was to massacre the Tutsis and annihilate internal political opposition with the view of forwarding ethnicity as the only viable political and social organization. It was also aimed at pushing RPF into renewed hostilities in order to decisively fail the Arusha Accord that was signed on 4th August 1993.

The resumption of hostilities by RPF, hours after the beginning of the general massacres of the Tutsis and Hutus of the opposition, allowed ideologues and perpetrators of the genocide to attribute to RPF the death of the president and thereby legitimizing the elimination of the Tutsis who were portrayed as internal *accomplices*. Extremist leaders, the private and public media incited Hutus to break ties with the Tutsis and exterminate them²⁰.

In the early hours of the massacres of the Tutsis, some Hutus did not know that it was all about Tutsis. Here and there, they tried to associate with Tutsi families in order to help and defend them.

¹⁹ The case in point was that of Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana who was killed together with 10 United Nations Belgian soldiers who were charged with protecting her. Others were ministers Landouard Ndasingwa, Faustin Rucogoza and Fredrick Nzamurambeho. The President of the Constitutional Court, Joseph Kavaruganda and Félicien Ngango, who by virtue of the Arusha Accord was supposed to occupy the post of speaker of the National Assembly were also killed.

²⁰ In the first hours of the Tutsi massacre, some Hutus did not know that only the Tutsis were concerned. Here and there, they tried to associate themselves with Tutsi families in order to help them defend themselves.

On 8th April 1994, while an open campaign to massacre the Tutsis was going on in Kigali city and other regions of the country, a new government was installed. The former president of CND and member of MRND, Théodore Sindikubwabo was made President of the Republic. Jean Kambanda, from the extremist wing of MDR known as *Hutu power* became head of the government that was exclusively made up of ministers belonging to extremist factions that were in favor of the genocide against the Tutsis. On 9th April, an official communiqué announced the formation of a new government made up of extremist leaders of five parties, four of which belonged to the so-called opposition (MDR, PSD, PL and PDC). The four political parties were represented in the government because of their “power” element that was favorable to the genocide.

As soon as they started exercising power, the new authorities spent time allowing the genocide to spread and materialize with efficiency. It was in this context that southern and central regions of Rwanda embroiled in genocidal violence from 9th April 1994. By installing a government comprising personalities from the south and center of the country, the genocide organizers were looking for submission of the regions as well as entangling them into the genocide²¹.

In order to prove their aptitude in executing their functions, the new leaders incited the population to exterminate the Tutsis from their regions of origin. During the meetings which were organized at various administration levels, these leaders put forward two ideas. The first one was to attribute to the Tutsis responsibility of the war and other misfortunes suffered by the Hutus. These ideas provided a fertile ground for resentment, aggravated hatred and justified the commitment to kill without any state of mind.

On 11th April 1994, Jean Kambanda, the interim Prime Minister convened a meeting of all provincial leaders at *L’Hôtel des Diplomates* in Kigali, apart from Jean Baptiste Habyalimana, the leader of Butare Province. That meeting was aimed at updating the new government authorities on how the massacres were progressing and at assessing the will of the administrators in perpetrating the genocide. From 12th April 1994, district, sector

²¹ Guichaoua, A., *Rwanda 1994. Les politiques du génocide à Butare*, Paris, Karthala, 2005, p. 256.

and cell leaders mobilized the population against the Tutsis who they accused of wanting to exterminate Hutus.

Except Butare province, all regions of Rwanda were rocked into mass killings. Until 16th April 1994, the Governor of Butare Province, Jean Baptiste Habyalimana had succeeded in ensuring security in his province. That very day, he was relieved of his duties and was replaced by Sylvain Nsabimana. On nomination of the latter, the interim President Théodore Sindikubwabo took the opportunity, in his speech to convince the population on the need to follow instructions of their leaders and to proceed as quickly as possible to exterminate the “enemy”.

“May be you did not know our instructions (...) or else you have not grasped the meaning of our orders or may be you understood but you have refused to obey. Only that we do not know the reasons for your refusal (...). Those who feel unconcerned, those who do not want to take responsibility, those who prefer to look at others doing their work, let them go... Let those who are charged with getting rid of us do it quickly so that those who have work at heart get the opportunity to start. My brothers, let me stop my speech but I wish to reiterate my desire to listen to me. Learn how to decode our messages and understand why it is useful like and not like that. Times are difficult. Stop joking and wasting time and start working seriously²².”

To ensure that the massacres were carried out rapidly and effectively some elements of the Presidential Guard were deployed in Butare Province. Thus, in the course of the week from 19th to 26th April, the province had already lost more than 150,000 Tutsis. On 2nd July 1994, when Butare town fell to the RPF Armed Forces, it had more than 230,000 genocide victims²³.

In order to accelerate the massacre and ensure extermination of the Tutsis, the government had distributed large quantities of arms and ammunition to the militia and local population under the guise of “*civil self defense*”²⁴. It was in this context that the so called *security* system was strengthened.

²² Sindikubwabo, Th., in Chrétien, J.P., 1995, op. cit., p.192.

²³ Ministère de l’administration locale, de l’information et des affaires sociales, Dénombrement des victimes du génocide et des massacres, rapport final, version révisée, p.19.

²⁴ Des Forges A., *Aucun témoin ne doit survivre. Le génocide au Rwanda*, Paris, Karthala, 1999, pp. 286-290.

Security measures consisted of mainly setting up road-blocks, checking identity cards and putting to death all Tutsis. The aim of this security action plan was to exterminate the Tutsis in the shortest possible time.

The security system allowed massive implication of civilians in the genocide. The latter, under pretext of civil self defense, hunted victims in various hiding places and finished them with machetes and clubs. That strategy equally permitted the government of the day to make people believe that the massacres were limited. This version relayed the one that pretended that Rwanda's misfortunes were a result of the beginning of the war in 1990. This enabled to divert attention from the genocide mechanism that was put in place by the Hutu power. Among others, this version contributed to paralyzing decisions of certain governments.

In the genocide venture, the role of the government, the military, the police, civil servants and MRND-CDR militia was a determining factor. They incited the population to participate in the massacres. They used fire arms to start widespread massacres. They executed certain victims to constrain opposers of the genocide into participation. The use of fire-arms broke resistance to the genocide. Bisesero and Nyarubuye can serve as good cases in point.

All along the genocide, RTLM and the National Radio guided the killings. They called upon the population to erect barriers and to proceed on a systematic search to ensure that no Tutsi escapes the massacre. They provided precise targets and zones to attack.

During this time, Western Embassies closed their doors and the UN reduced the number of the *Blue Helmets* to a strict minimum. The assailants therefore killed at free will in all regions that were not under the control of RPF²⁵. When RPF captured Kigali city and Butare town after defeating the Rwandese Armed Forces, more than a million Tutsis had been killed. The militia and Former Rwandese Army (FAR) took refuge in Zaire (present Democratic Republic of Congo). Others fled to Tanzania and Burundi and took with them more than two million people.

²⁵ Vidal, C., "Le génocide des Rwandais Tutsi: cruauté délibérée et logiques de haine", in Hériter F., *De la violence*, I, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2005, p. 349.

The ideology had diabolized the Tutsi to such an extent that when RPF took control of most of the country, those that had conceived and coordinated the genocide and those who did not have precise roles fused. That allowed to dilute the conscience of responsibility and established a link between new realities and the continuation of genocide dynamics.

6.2.3 Organization of the genocide perpetrated the Tutsis

a. Genocide structures

Execution of the genocide against the Tutsis reveals three structures which helped its generalization, rapidity and efficiency. First of all, it was the bureaucracy which, without constituting a parallel structure of authority, controlled the circulation of resources and operated a synthesis between ethnicity and its particular interests. When the war started in 1990, the necessity to preserve the 1954 achievements was ordered from within. Thanks to its networks of clients, that fraction of rulers who belonged to the presidential movement were busy putting in place an organization that was capable of large scale killing²⁶. The resort to kill the Tutsis was considered as a definitive means of resolving the problem that threatened the cohesion and security of the Hutus.

Among the initiators of the massacres or those who organized the genocide structures and distributed arms as well as giving orders to kill were army officers like the retired Colonel Théoneste Basogora.

The latter is considered by several people as the main organizer of The Tutsi massacres after the presidential air-crash that took place on 6th April 1994²⁷. While giving evidence to residents of Ngoma sector, when information on the organization and execution of the genocide was being collected in the country in general and in the former province of Butare in particular, a province that was under the military authority of Major General Marcel Gatsinzi, the Major General accepted that Colonel Basogora gave direct orders to the military to kill the Tutsis.

²⁶ Vidal in Heritier F., p. 345 here above.

²⁷ Prunier, G., op, cit p. 287; Des Forges, A., op, cit., p 233. In its judgment, the lower court of ICTR sentenced Colonel Bagosora to life imprisonment because of his involvement in the Tutsis massacres and Hutus of the opposition, namely the Prime Minister. The massacres followed the attack on President Habyarimana's plane and the murder of Agathe Uwiringiyimana, the Prime Minister.

Other military officers participated in the organization and execution of the genocide. These included General Augustin Bizimungu who was the Minister of Defense as well as Colonel Tharcisse Renzaho who was the Governor of Kigali City Province. There was also Lieutenant Colonel Aloys Ntabakuze who was the Commander of the battalion of parachutists who actively massacred the Tutsis. Lieutenant-Colonel Protais Mpiranya was the Commander of the Presidential Guard which was renowned for its murder operations as soon as the attack on the presidential plane was announced. Majors Bernard Ntuyahaga and Laurent Munyakazi as well as Captain Gaspard Hategikamana, etc²⁸. were also involved.

Not to be forgotten were MRND, MDR and CDR party leaders as well as their respective armed militia. These were the *Interahamwe*, *Inkuba* and *Impuzamugambi*.

Businessmen like Félicien Kabuga financed massacre structures when they created radio RTLM and bought machetes and supplied weapons to various killing squads. Finally, mention of militia leaders and political parties that played an important role in the organization and operations of the genocide should be made. Robert Kajuga, head of the *Impuzamugambi* CDR militia, Mathieu Ngirumpatse and Joseph Nzirorera, President and Secretary General of MRND (D) respectively, John Bosco Barayagwiza, George Rutaganda and their henchmen got involved from the onset of the attack on the presidential plane, in acts of pursuit and assassination of the Tutsis in their houses and identity-card checking points that were set up almost everywhere in Rwanda. Although the trial of these people is still going on and some of them have not yet been arrested and prosecuted, the charges against them indicate their role in the organization and execution of the genocide.

The second genocide structure was made of organs like radio RTLM, individuals like Ferdinand Nahimana and Valéry Bemireki. These organs and individuals relayed official talk and played the role of mobilization as well as “*spiritual*” preparation of the population. They operated a kind of synthesis between the will of the regime and people’s expectations in order to encourage a large number of Rwandese to participate in the genocide. RTLM, the National Radio and the written press completed the task

²⁸ Prunier, G., 1997, op. cit., p. 288. Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit. p. 233.

of spiritual preparation of the executioners of the genocide by aggravating hatred sentiments.

The role of local elites was a determining factor in this issue. Local leaders, journalists, traders and religious personnel as well as opinion leaders played on people's emotions by frightening them and provoking total commitment to the genocide through the rumor mill. Administrators, teachers, medical staff and, in brief, all those who had a certain level of social and economic influence on the population encouraged people to participate in the massacres²⁹. It is obvious that without 'moral' preparation of the executioners of the genocide on the part of the local elites, the genocide against the Tutsis would not have taken the proportions that are known to have been between April and July 1994.

The third genocide structure was made up of the local administrative staff. These included *Burgomasters*, Sector Councilors and cell leaders. Provincial governors like Clement Kayishema of Kibuye, Laurent Bicyibatura of Gikongoro, Sylvain Nsabimana of Butare and Godefroid Ruzindana of Kibungo sensitized people in their line of thought and they were involved in technical and '*spiritual*' preparation of the people in their regions of origin. Extremist ministers like Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, etc. were also involved. They used national resources like the Army, the Police, gendarmes and the militia to track down, assemble and kill the Tutsis. Local authorities equally passed on orders from the highest to the lowest levels and they incited the population to engage massively in acts of genocide. Some victims were killed from direct instigation by such authorities. Others were killed in public or official places under the direct control of the local authorities.

As already mentioned the state machinery, both human and material support was put at the disposal of the genocide perpetrators. The latter were recruited from the rest of the population. The youth were enrolled in the militia, adults and old people were recruited for the cause of the genocide or for economic gains. Among the executioners were 1500 soldiers of the Presidential Guard. They carried out massacres in Kigali right from the evening of 6th April 1994 before extending their

²⁹ Vidal, C. I., "Les politiques de la haine", in *Les temps Modernes*, no 583, 1995, pp. 30-31.

tentacles throughout the country. There were more than 50,000 militia namely, the *Intarahamwe* and *Impuzamugambi* who immediately joined the Presidential Guard in acts of hunting down, arresting and killing the Tutsis. The militia was backed up by local leaders, the District Police, some elements in the army, the Police as well as ordinary citizens.

The genocide perpetrators were numerous throughout the country³⁰. They were supported in their work by a big number of *accomplices* and *observers*. The latter participated in various activities. The accomplices showed hiding places to the killers and they aborted attempts by victims to escape. The *observers* or standersby were indifferent. They were spectators to the suffering of others. These can be referred to as “*witness of grief and agony of the victims*”³¹. Their attitude consisted essentially of indifference and lack of indignation towards the crimes that were committed on large scale. The accomplices and observers provided favorable conditions to actualize the plan aimed at exterminating the Tutsis.

The organization and execution of the genocide against the Tutsis prove the key role that was played by the Rwandese government. First and foremost, the State neither prevented nor punished anybody for the acts of violence organized against part of the Rwandese population. The abstention from or refusal by the State to protect its own citizens against discriminatory violence rendered it responsible for the atrocities. As it is known, the general responsibility of any State is to protect the population within its borders. It is for that reason that the State enjoys the monopoly of legitimate violence. But when a State uses force to destroy part of the population for the sole motive of its belonging to a particular group, then it puts itself in full perversion of norms and values (that it is founded upon and which justifies its existence). As it has just been shown, every stage of the destruction of the Tutsi required the support of government structures.

The role of the Rwandese State in the genocide was therefore obvious, given the fact that numerous victims were killed in public

³⁰ The latest estimates established by the Gacaca Courts put the number of genocide perpetrators to 1,015,000 (Service national des juridictions gacaca : Rôle central des juridictions Gacaca Kigali, septembre, 2007).

³¹ Temon, Y., 1995, op. cit., p.124.

and in administrative offices such as Kigembe, Nyaruhengeri, Runyinya and Gashanvu. Others were killed in government schools, like in Murambi and Chahinda. Places of entertainment and apprentice training centers like Kibuye Stadium and ETO Kicuciro also served as killing grounds. Places where people gathered and from where government forces could have ensured their security were used as slaughter houses as well. Such places included churches of Cyahinda, Kibeho, Nyamaseke, Nyange, Sainte Famille, Mugombwa, Ntarama, Nyarubiye, Nyamata, Nyunda etc.

Finally, the responsibility of the Rwandese State appeared in the dismissal, assassination and exclusion of some political and military leaders who were opposed to the genocide³². These measures strengthened the positions of the extremists and facilitated the accomplishment of the hunting and assassination of the Tutsis in various parts of the country. Assured of impunity, thousands of Rwandese killed victims without any remorse. One of the militias who participated in acts of hunting down Tutsis from houses and bushes and was involved in operations to assassinate the Tutsis at road blocks in Murambi³³ testified that the killers were merciless.

He also testified on the impunity which was guaranteed by the government authorities. He declared: “I had no shame whatsoever in participating in acts of killing during genocide. It looked a normal act because the Burgomaster, Semakwavu and the Second in Command of Gokongoro Police Post came to visit us regularly at the roadblocks. They gave us a word of encouragement The Burgomaster liked to use the Kinyarwanda expression: *‘Nimukomere, turabashyigiye’* (courage, we support you). Sebhura used to tell us: “you do not have to let the enemy escape from you”³⁴.

³² The Burgomaster of Nyabisindi District, Jean Marie Gisagara and the one of Ntyazo, Narcisse Nyagasaza, the Governor of Butare province, Jean Baptiste Habyalimana who were dismissed and assassinated between 16th and 19th April by Structures of the interim government serve as examples.

³³ More than 50,000 Tutsis who had hidden in the enclosure of what was to become Ecole Secondaire de Murambi were savagely killed by Militia, gendarmes, police and other Hutu inhabitants on instigation of the Local administrative authorities notably Governor Laurent Bucyibaruta, the Burgomaster of Nyamagabe, Semakwavu and the second in command of the local Gendarmerie, Sebhura

³⁴ Saleh Mbakuriyemo, in African rights, Murambi, “Go if you die, perhaps I will live”, 2006.

The monopoly to kill, the encouragement to exterminate and the impunity enjoyed by the murderers were, without doubt, the responsibility of the Rwandese government: “shortly before the genocide, the authorities told us that the Tutsis were ill-natured, that they had attacked us and that we should defend ourselves by killing them (...). I participated in the killing and looting squads. We started the massacres with the Karangwa and Karamuka families. We were in about six killing squads. We then moved towards places where many Tutsis gathered and we killed not less than 20,000 Tutsis. MRND and MDR leaders as well as sector and cell authorities were with us. They coordinated the massacre activities. We went to Karumugabo’s family. We killed him, his wife and his two children. We buried people that we had cut with machettes; some of them were buried when they were still alive. We buried them in paupers’ graves. In the evening, we deliberated on the techniques we had used during the day and the ones we would deploy the following day. In short, we killed them on the hills, in churches and in their houses. I personally killed Michel Murwanashyaka, Caroline and her two children with a machete and club. I also killed in a similar way, Madarubi and his three children, Mushingwe Etienne, his wife and their daughter as well as Uwayezu and her two children. We killed with mediation, we were conscious of our deeds; we hoped to have a country devoid of Tutsis. We thought that Rwanda would be a paradise if we got rid of the Tutsis. All Hutus participated in the genocide except the sick and disabled. Human consciousness had disappeared. All Hutus were eager to kill. The desire for economic gain also motivated us to commit genocide”³⁵.

b. Massacre strategies

Without a well articulated organization, the massacres would not have gone to such an extent. That organization was composed of a hierarchy and levels of operation. It also consisted of a collection of elements that can be termed as massacre strategies. These strategies can be categorized into three phases. The first phase, from 6th to 11th April, 1994, consisted of eliminating the Tutsis on the basis of pre-determined lists.

During that phase known as *priority targets*, the genocide organizers had already distributed to killer groups, lists of names of persons who were particularly targeted. The names were also

³⁵ Kaburame Ildephonse’s testimony, Kiramuruzi, 4th August, 2007.

announced on radio RTLM to ensure that the killers get their designated targets.

Tutsi families were targeted as a priority owing to their conditions of living, education, social and administrative status as well as their assumed collaboration with RPF. Their elimination was effected by killers who generally operated in small groups, killing victims, as it were, wherever they found them. This could be in their homes, on the street or at roadblocks.

The strategy of *priority targets* was visibly aimed at preventing educated Tutsis, prosperous businessmen and those who had connections with the outside world from organizing their escape, resistance or denunciation of the massacres. A former soldier of the Rwandese Armed Forces (FAR) gave typical evidence in this regard: "I saw nine soldiers of the Para-commando Battalion and the Presidential Guard and one civilian who was apparently guiding them. He was holding a list of names in his hands. It was a list of names of people who were to be killed. They went to the home of another neighbor and threw grenades. They forced the door open with gunfire. They killed the occupants of the home. They went back on foot. The boy I had sent to follow them later reported that the soldiers devastated several houses (four families)"³⁶.

Many Rwandese remember that strategy of compiling lists in the accomplishments of the sinister genocide program. It made it possible to hunt down and rapidly kill the most wanted persons. To ensure that no Tutsi escaped, roadblocks were set up at crossroads and Radio RTLM broadcasted the names and address of persons who were considered to be RPF internal *accomplices*.

The obligatory requirement to carry an identity card bearing the ethnicity of the holder's made it easy to identify people who were to be killed. If the names on the identity card matched those published in the press or the ones on the lists, then the executioners killed their victim there and then. This happened in Kigali city and in the peripheral regions like Gisenyi, Kibungo and Cyangugu as well as Central Rwanda. Everywhere, the Tutsis were identified, isolated and killed.

³⁶ Kaburame Ildephonse, op.cit..

During this phase, all Hutu personalities who were capable of legitimately taking power and oppose the genocide were also eliminated. In accordance with this logic, the Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana was murdered. Others who met the same fate included two probable candidates to the position of Speaker in the Transitional National Assembly, PSD's Félicien Ngango, Frederic Nzamurambaho and Joseph Kavaruganda. Having killed these opposition personalities, the genocide planners succeeded in creating cadres who were favorable in the pursuit of the massacres.

The second phase consisted of eliminating the Tutsi not for any specific reason but because they belonged to a particular ethnic group. That phase was between 12th April and 1st May 1994. This was shortly after the meeting of Provincial Governors with Jean Kambanda, the Prime Minister of the Interim Government. During this phase, massacre operations were pursued with terrific effectiveness. First of all, organization of the manhunt was reinforced in order to flush out Tutsis from their hiding places and kill them. The Tutsi were removed from swamps, sorghum fields, forests or bushes near villages. That operation followed and complemented the one during which roadblocks were set up. Then, the execution of Tutsis who had taken refuge in public places was done systematically.

It is important to remember that authorities used to call the Tutsi to gather in public places like district offices, stadia, schools and health centers. Declarations that were made by these authorities incited the Tutsis to stay together to facilitate their protection. During the second fortnight of April 1994, these places of asylum were cordoned off and attacked by the district police, gendarmes, soldiers and militia. They killed whoever attempted to flee. They killed the injured and looked for survivors from surrounding areas.

Finally, it is necessary to recall that the interim government had prohibited the local administrative authorities from issuing travel documents to all Tutsis in their areas of jurisdiction.

Those Tutsis who tried to look for asylum elsewhere were caught and killed instantly³⁷. Towards the end of April 1994, the Interim

³⁷ Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit., p. 245 ; Hatzfeld J., *Dans le nu de la vie. Récits des marais*, Paris, Seuil, 2000, pp. 15-17.

Government announced the end to the killings and a return to calm. That declaration was relayed by the local administrative authorities and this convinced survivors to come out of hiding. Unfortunately, whoever came out was instantly killed. The objective of this trick was obviously to recapture and exterminate the Tutsis who had previously managed to escape.

The third phase of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis started towards 2nd March 1994. It followed the killing of victims from their places of gathering and put to death those who left their hiding places. This phase was characterized by acts of combing hills abandoned houses and ruins of buildings. During this phase, citizens who had been armed by government in the name of *civil self defense* undertook to comb all localities in order to eliminate all the Tutsi inhabitants.

c. Failure of survival attempts and resistance

The way the genocide was organized and executed made people to believe that survival and resistance were next to impossible. The organizers and implementers of the genocide had put in place an effective mechanism that combed the whole country and prevented people from escaping the massacres. Acts of resistance were also doomed to fail due to three main reasons. First, the number of people who were committed to carry out the massacres was very high. In almost all cases, the victims were killed by a very big number of assailants. Those who managed to beat the vigilance of the killers were taken by surprise with day and night patrols.

In Rwanda, the victims and their killers lived together in the same localities. Most of them knew each other pretty well. That situation could not allow the Tutsis to mix with the masses in order to escape the massacre. One survivor from Bisesero described the atmosphere of killings by contrasting the numerical strength of the assailants who were trained to kill by the military and the civilian officials. He said: "On 13th May, soldiers and militia came aboard eight buses, pick-ups and trucks used in the construction of Kibuye-Gitarama road. Several other vehicles carried soldiers and administrative authorities. Many other people came on foot holding machetes. They came singing and whistling as they drummed.

That day, I saw the Governor of Kibuye Province in the company of Clément Kayishema, Eliezar Niyitegeka, Obed Ruzindana as well as the *Burgomasters* of Gishita and Gisovu etc. These people had camped in Bisesero primary school to see how soldiers and their militia were killing us. That day almost all women and children were killed”³⁸.

At Bisesero, another survivor pointed out the role of soldiers and the militia as well as their extreme enthusiasm to kill. On 13th May, the soldiers and militia jointly launched a murderous attack on the refugees who were hiding in the hills. “Many militia and soldiers from Gitarama, Gisenyi and almost the whole country came by bus and on pick-ups. They surrounded and shot at us relentlessly. That day, my wife Marthe Nyirahategeka, as well as my seven children and grand children were killed. That militia always was wearing white clothes and carried leaves on their heads. They looked like madmen. That day, they really exterminated us. Many villages were covered with dead bodies”³⁹.

The second cause of failure to resist genocide was in the strategy by the local administrative authorities to make groupings by choice from the early hours of the massacres. Under the pretext of *protecting* them, these authorities gathered all victims in public places. They were then guarded by the police, militia or soldiers in order to prevent them from escaping thereby killing them. That strategy which involved and was influenced by civilian and military authorities led to terrible mass murders in every corner of Rwanda in a space of just a few days.

The third reason for failure of resistance was the use of fire arms and the intervention of public security forces. In several gathering points like schools, stadia and community centers, the militia called upon the armed forces. The latter used their guns or threw grenades after which other killers finished the wounded victims.

In spite of the use of fire arms by soldiers and militia, the victims were able, here and there, to put up pockets of resistance for several days, if not weeks. In different places, there were body-to-body battles with the assailants. Bisesero appears to have

³⁸ J.-D. Nsanzimfura, in African Rights, *Résistance au génocide. Bisesero avril-juin 1994*, London, p.35.

³⁹ Siméon inr African Rights, 1994, op. cit., p. 35

been one place of exceptional resistance. The killings that were perpetrated in the village of Bisesero in April, May and June 1994 occupy a unique and important place in the history of the genocide of the Rwandese Tutsis. Numerous people who fled towards these hills situated in Kibuye put up a courageous struggle for survival amidst fear and hope. In the first place, they managed to defend themselves against the local militia and killed many of them. The majority of the people who were listed for extermination tried their best to defend themselves. Many of them fought in what the survivors described as ‘the war of stones against bullets’ before succumbing to death in their thousands. What made Bisesero conspicuous is the characteristic organization of the resistance and the fact that it lasted for a long time given the opposition force. In spite of their courage, finally, the refugees could not measure up with the forces of the opposition. They fought a prolonged battle and in fact intensified their suffering. According to estimates, out of 50,000, only 1000 people survived the massacres. Not only did they fight assassins who came from Kibuye and Gikongoro, but also those who came from Cyangugu, Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. They resisted until the end of April and killed several of their adversaries including policemen and the militia”⁴⁰.

Attempts to resist the genocide were tried in many areas of the country. But on every occasion, the murder machinery tended to amplify and adopt new strategies which the victims could not escape. Therefore, in the hills overlooking the Akanyaru, the hideouts in bushes and banana plantations or sorghum fields were detected with the use of hunting dogs.

Meanwhile, on the frontiers of Butare, Gikongoro, Cyangugu and Kigali provinces, the people who tried to flee to Burundi ran into patrols that were organized by inhabitants of both sides of the Akanyaru. In Kibungo Province, the borders with Tanzania were equally closed⁴¹. All this shows that the genocide organizers were keen to extend their destructive arm beyond Rwanda. This extension was directly linked to the extremist nature of speeches that called for elimination of the Tutsi threat in the region.

⁴⁰ African Rights, 1994, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

⁴¹ Rutazibwa, P. et Rutayisire P., *Le génocide à Nyarubuye*, Kigali, 2007.

While thousands of Rwandese were busy killing their compatriots, others, certainly fewer, tried to save lives. Some survivors narrate how some Hutus cooperated with the Tutsis to repel the militia. They also mentioned names of Hutus who risked their lives, protected, hid and helped the Tutsi to escape⁴². These life-savers were not only driven by their political opinions but also the close friendship and family ties which they held with the Tutsis.

The Hutu and Tutsi have lived together for centuries. Both Hutus and Tutsis have profound cultural unity. It is therefore not surprising that over centuries, the Hutus married Tutsi women and vice versa. That is how several Tutsi women and their children were able to survive. The institutionalization of the matrilineal tradition was intended to have children born out of the union of a Hutu father and a Tutsi mother to carry Hutu identity. By the way, some neighbors especially families of in-laws refused to reveal to the killers, i.e. Tutsi women who had married Hutus.

It is however worth noting that rescue missions were systematically discouraged by radio RTLM and Radio Rwanda. Some stories give an account of Hutu families which were mistreated from the beginning of genocide for having hidden the Tutsis. The ideology which led to genocide portrayed the Hutus who tried to save the victims as *traitors* and *accomplices* of the enemy. The climate of fear, denunciation and execution of the presumed accomplices meant that people no longer dared to help and protect the victims.

d. Passiveness and Complicity of the International Community

The genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi constitutes a bitter failure on the part of the International Community. It shows to what extent the global solidarity against the forces of evil that was extolled since the end of the Second World War and the genocide against the Jews had become very weak. It is quite obvious that if the international community, represented by the UN had intervened in Rwanda, with its 2500 peace-keeping forces, the genocide against the Tutsis would not have taken proportions similar to those that it took. The role of the International

⁴² Kabwete, M. C., "Le sauvetage de quelques rescapés du génocide dans les Communes Gishamvu et Kigembe au Rwanda", in *Etudes Rwandaises*, no13, 2007

Community can be analyzed at two levels: passiveness and complicity.

The International Community carries heavy responsibility for having refused to intervene in Rwanda although it had been informed about the preparation of the genocide. From December 1993, the United Nations forces and officials were in possession of enough information concerning the plan to exterminate the Tutsis. The UN was constantly informed of the proliferation of light arms in the population beyond the necessities that are objectively recognized. Young Rwandese got accelerated military training and they were prepared to commit genocide at any moment⁴³.

By virtue of its mission to preserve world peace and security, the UN was supposed to act very quickly in Rwanda before the genocide. The exacerbation of passions of identity, increase in acts of violence due to the distribution of fire arms to the population and propagation of hatred against the Tutsis were elements of violation of fundamental principles on which peace and security are based. The UN that had the right and was in position to intervene with enough troops failed in its duty by passively helping preparation of the massacres.

The preparation of the massacres was effected in close proximity of the United Nations peace-keeping force. The commander of that force reported signs of deterioration of the situation to his superiors. They ordered him only to respect the interpretation of his mandate in its strictest terms. "(...) Despite visible signs of imminent violence, France like the United States did not take any new initiative. On the contrary, they continued operating within the country with limited staff and this was characteristic of their policy in Rwanda for quite some time. (...) French diplomats and military officers discussed the risk of genocide at the beginning of 1990 and according to the former French Ambassador, Matres, the 1994 genocide was anticipated in October 1993"⁴⁴.

The second level of analysis of the role of the International Community is in its inaction concerning the killings. The UN in general and foreign powers that were involved in Rwanda in

⁴³ Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit., p. 175

⁴⁴ Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit., pp. 204-205., L. Melvern in *La Nuit Rwandaise*, op. cit., pp. 403-407.

particular cannot pretend to have been taken by surprise by the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda. They still cannot pretend to have set up any plan whatsoever intended to stop the genocide. The 2534 UN peace-keeping troops and various diplomats who were in Rwanda before 6th April rendered themselves accomplices by their indifference while massacres were going on. They could have anticipated the massacres and or stopped them.

Instead of utilizing UNAMIR forces to end the genocide, the UN, first and foremost sought to protect their troops. R. Dallaire received an order to avoid any risk to his soldiers and not to save Rwandese lives. On 21st April 1994, the Security Council withdrew the biggest part of the peace-keeping troops. Only hundreds of men were left behind to protect the civilians who were already under the protection of the United Nations⁴⁵.

The International Community again made itself accomplice of the genocide against the Tutsis by its refusal to use the term *genocide* in its description of the massacres perpetrated in Rwanda. They described that genocide by euphemistic terms like *massive killings*, *bloody tribal wars* and *civil war* by some organs and institutions, notably Radio Burundi, RPF's Radio Muhabura and some other foreign journalists.

The 8th April 1994 self-proclaimed Interim Government was able to perpetrate genocide without any let or hindrance because the International Community remained at the level of confused discussions due to euphemistic and revisionist declarations of Rwanda, the United States and France's representatives. In a country prone to chronic economic and social crises and which strictly depended on foreign aid, condemnation of individuals directly responsible for the genocide would have sufficed to restrain the Rwandese State to stop the massacres. Some Rwandese could also have withdrawn from the massacres and they would have disobeyed a government outlawed by the International Community. The latter chose to cooperate with a government led by members from factions responsible for the genocide. The Rwandese Ambassador had retained his seat and the Security Council received representatives of the Interim Government who were dispatched to New York to defend their point of view. Lastly, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 912 which provided for reduction of the

⁴⁵ Des Forges, A., 1999, OP. cit., pp. 30-31

UNAMIR strength to 270 men even though the situation required to reinforce and change UNAMIR's mandate to enable it stop the genocide.

All these decisions were not taken due to lack of information. General Romeo Dallaire updated the UN Secretary General on regular basis. He proposed measures that were required to stop the massacres and re-establish public order. More precisely, General Roméo Dallaire asked for reinforcement and modification of UNAMIR's mandate. UN's passivity and its decision to reduce UNAMIR staff facilitated the killers in their task. They are *ipso facto* indissociable with the history of the genocide of the Tutsis.

e. Operation Turquoise

More and more oral testimonies and written materials continue to implicate France in the genocide committed against the Tutsis in 1994. Between 1990 and 1994, France helped Rwanda to increase its army from 5000 to 50,000 men through massive recruitment. And as part of this recruitment program, France established training centers⁴⁶ in North-Western Rwanda.

In June 1994, France found another way of prolonging its military support to the Rwandese Interim Government. At the time, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) was making a lot of progress and its military victory was no longer in doubt.

Following its request to the UN Security Council, France got a vote on Resolution 929. The resolution was adopted on 22nd June 1994 and it authorized French military intervention in Rwanda with the possibility of using force. In reality, French troops were already in action on the Rwandese territory before the vote on the said resolution⁴⁷.

The *Opération Turquoise* “was marked by numerous ambiguities notably the contrast between known humanitarian ambitions and the nature of the engagement”⁴⁸. The two thousand five hundred soldiers who participated in the operation were battle hardened. They were capable of changing in a matter of hours from strict

⁴⁶ Coret, L., et Verschave, F. X. (dir), 2005, op. cit., p. 28.

⁴⁷ Saint -Exupery (de) P., *L'Inavouable. La France au Rwanda*, Paris, Editions des Arènes, 2004, pp. 101-102

⁴⁸ Braeckman, C., 1994, op. cit., p. 293.

neutrality to violent engagement. “An impressive arsenal was delayed in preparation for war. It included war planes, attack and transport helicopters, heavy mortar batteries, hundreds of vehicles, etc. In the early days, it was envisaged to move up to Kigali. These orders were cancelled at the last minute. If the ‘colonial expedition’ did not take place it was for one reason: it was too late. On 4th July 1994, Kigali, the Rwandese capital fell into the hands of our enemies, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). We were overwhelmed, over taken. We remained with only one option: freeze the confrontation, take sanctuary in the zone still held by our allies, the killers. It was the only means of creating a secure humanitarian zone”⁴⁹.

At the time when they were trying to solicit support for “the *Opération Turquoise*”, the French diplomats displayed a map which proposed a zone to be under the control of France. As mentioned in various witness accounts, the creation of the security zone was to serve as a base to recapture areas that had been taken by RPF and therefore prevent it from controlling the entire country. The project to come to the rescue of the Interim Government and the FAR preoccupied the French authorities. This project failed because of RPF’s determination. RPF was advancing so rapidly that leaders of the *Opération Turquoise* were forced to reconsider their plan. From then, the security zone served to facilitate hundreds and thousands of civilians fleeing to ex-Zaire. FAR and other genocide culprits also fled.

Certainly, some hundreds if not thousands of Tutsis were rescued. This helped the French government to justify the humanitarian argument. According to official talk, France came to the rescue of people who were under threat. France was the only country that reacted and did not have any other objective except to protect the people who were threatened and insecure. But behind that objective, there was a hidden one. The hidden objective was that France, under the guise of humanitarianism, wanted to assist FAR to rectify the situation, re-establish the interim government’s authority over the whole of Rwanda and then fight RPF⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ Saint-Exupéry (de) P., 2004, op. cit., pp 102-103.

⁵⁰ Dallaire, R., *J’ai serré la main du diable. La faillite de l’humanitaire au Rwanda*, Libre Expression, 2003, pp. 526-530.

That objective was definitively in line with what can be termed as “the general theory of France’s security”. François Mitterrand thought that leaving a single regime to be overthrown by a faction, especially a minority faction that was supported by a neighboring country, would be enough to create a chain of reactions which would compromise the security of countries linked to France. That would discredit France’s guarantee⁵¹.

Thus, at the UN, like at the top of the French government, the massacres were considered to be a consequence of renewed fighting. But the massacres had preceded the fighting and were in their own logic constituting genocide. It is understandable why France considered the revival of the Arusha process a priority even though the urgency was obviously to preserve people’s lives. The French officials thought that stopping the genocide was not their business. They refused to recognize the existence of the genocide and they did not hide their desire to fight RPF.

During the first fortnight of July 1994, the “double ambition” that constituted the “*Opération Turquoise*”, namely the humanitarian and military ambition failed. A new strategy with two components was deployed. Deeply linked to the creation of a ‘security zone’, the first component consisted of organizing an exodus towards ex-Zaire. “This movement of people was reasonable, organized and coherent. The second night, the Rwandese army calmly took refuge in ex-Zaire. Entire columns crossed with arms, vehicles, tractor- drawn guns, light armored cars, armored Panhard (...) . The following night saw the turn of officials, governors and ministers. They took with them the reserves of Rwanda’s Central Bank, the national radios - so useful in the mobilization of their people - as well as administrative cadres. (...) It was not over yet. A withdrawal was envisaged and a rear base would be created. From here, the operation to retake Rwanda would be launched⁵²”.

During all this time, France continued delivering arms as well as infiltrating the genocide perpetrators towards Goma town. From the eve of “*Opération Turquoise*”, Goma was considered as the place of re-groupment and re-organization of the Rwandese Armed Forces. It was in this logic that the second component of the ‘*Opération Turquoise*’ consisted of focusing the world towards Goma, a town that had been ravaged by cholera.

⁵¹ Saint-Exupéry (de) P., 2004, op. cit., p. 121.

⁵² Ibid., p.500.

Short-lived but enjoying a lot of media coverage, cholera completely overshadowed the genocide discourse. Due to the terrifying population exodus and the number of cholera victims, some French official indeed launched a humanitarian effort to help the victims. The French official minimized the atrocities perpetrated against the Tutsis by giving prominence to the suffering of the Hutu majority. That strategy consisted of making murderers and their accomplices appear as if they were the victims. The latter finally took the only convenient image, the portrait of the victim⁵³. At the same time, when the population fled, and as RPF troops were advancing and given the excesses that were attributed to them, it was possible to launch the idea of a “double genocide”.

All this shows the domains where France’s responsibility was particularly geared. A large number of documents and other evidence allow us to understand the nature of France’s responsibility. It was first of all, to organize a military engagement⁵⁴. Secondly, it was a question of political responsibility. During the genocide, France had close relations with the interim government and other genocide culprits. Jean Bosco Barayagwiza, an RTLM shareholder and CDR Chief as well as Jérôme Bicomumpaka, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs were received in the African Wing of the Elysée (Seat of French Presidency) by the Prime Minister Edouard Balladur as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alain Juppé.

The passiveness of the UN and the active complicity of France masked the planning of the genocide and facilitated its implementation. Since the end of the genocide, the most intriguing question still remains to know what drove the Rwandan population to destroy part of itself. How did it come to that decision? Why did the genocide take place with such terrific efficiency? What factors favored the massive involvement of the population in the genocide?

⁵³ Brauman, R., *Devant le mal. Rwanda, un génocide en direct*, Paris, Arléa, 1994, p.83.

⁵⁴ Testimony by P. Brana quoted by Coret, L. et Verschave F.-X., 2005, op. cit, pp. 464-466.

6.3. Mobilization as a tool to exterminate the Tutsi

6.3.1 Presentation of the 1990 war as a threat to the existence of the Hutu

There is a close relationship between the war that was started by RPF in October 1990 and the tense rifts of identity. From October 1990, reference to people's groupings resurfaced with rare persistence in order to give meaning to the RPF attack. It was also aimed at facilitating communication by using coded words as well as resolving problems of unity of the shaken Hutu people.

On 1st November 1990, a month after the beginning of the war, President Habyarimana made the following declaration. "Rather than abandon a piece of our territory, however small it may be, (...), we prefer to fight up to the last man before letting our country to be destroyed and allowing installation of an elitist feudal and monarchical regime.(...). They want to re-instate a feudal regime of the ancient age in our country. They want us to return to the past and fuse into a super- regional setting..."⁵⁵.

This extract illustrates one of the greatest convergences of the studies on political language⁵⁶. The objective of this particular speech was to facilitate overcoming divergent interests and thus mobilize maximum support. More specifically, the mobilization strategy appears through the language in which the war-mongers were identified by their "ethnicity". That was intended to sustain tension and to go beyond factional or regional rivalry.

Beyond the amalgamations and projections that it realized, the above declarations show the foundation on which identity manipulations were built. It was about direct transmission of information to the ins-and-outs of the war. However, the proposed information tended, in a quasi unilateral manner, to operate around the "Hutu- Tutsi" divide. The information given also tends to anchor this divide in history and associate it with positive or negative qualifications for one camp or the other.

⁵⁵ President J. Habyarimana, Extract of the Head of State's speech. "We prefer to fight up to the last man" of 1st November 1990, in *La Relève* of 2nd-8th November 1990. p. 3 and p. 6.

⁵⁶ Bon, F., "Langage et politique", in Grawitz M. et Leca J., *Traité de science politique*, Paris, PUF, 1985, t.III, p.37, 55.

Thus, the Hutu and Tutsi were identified according to antagonisms assumed to have governed their relationship. Grouping the people and positioning them differently in the political arena constituted the matrices of these antagonisms. Added to the general difficult conditions, the war thus crystallized passions and led to the search of a scapegoat.

Because of its great visibility but also due to its capacity to weigh negatively on the lives of people, the war constituted the prime condition of massive mobilization. Like everywhere by the way, this one is not limited to recruitment and putting the forces in a state of alert. It involves calling for support, adapting the administration and economy to the prevailing situation as well as instilling a sense of restraint and reducing resistance that may crop up.

An analysis of Rwanda's situation from 1990 to 1994 and Nazi Germany permit us to note that the genocide option is an escape in advance of weak regimes which fight an internal and external enemy at the same time. These types of regimes concentrate their resources to destroy the internal enemy at their doorstep. They also fight the accomplice of the external enemy who takes time to be militarily defeated. They use war to conceal their weakness and take advantage of the situation to get rid of their enemy.

In spite of the invisible signs of a serious crisis, the citizens did not always have fixed opinions of the problems that they faced. The mobilization consisted of uniting intellectual resources that were adaptable to the desired end. "[...] the regime looked for whistle-blowers. It encouraged the creation of competing newspapers which were highly engaged in ethnicity and the struggle against the internal and external enemy. The objective of the newspaper was to have a louder and stronger voice than any other media, hence the appearance of large quantities of extremist newspapers. The papers handled the same "business" of ethnic hatred and at times used the same cartoons, if not same articles..."⁵⁷.

According to the positions that were taken by these newspapers, the functions they were supposed to perform may be known. The first function was to produce an arrangement of attitudes and behavior by reactivating responses that were already in place.

⁵⁷ Chrétien, J.P., 1995, op. cit., p.44-45.

The second function was to ensure an explicitly ethnic base that would in turn ensure efficient and protracted resistance and struggle against RPF. In both cases, a resort to thematic division of the people crystallized emotions of those who felt that their belief and identity was injured.

The article written by Innocent Nsengimana can serve to illustrate the above point: “The aggression of Rwanda which started in October 1990 was a myth which was unlawful; it is the feudal nostalgia which is set and armed to fight democracy. It is an attempt to revive the historical dream of the restoration of hegemony, the hegemony of the minority Hamites against the Bantu masses”⁵⁸.

The choice and asymmetrical use of sharp words showed that the war was given an ethnic touch and that the composition of the Rwandan people was politicized ideologically. In other words, it rationalized particular whims in general terms⁵⁹. Thus, Martin Bucyana denounced the virulent attitude of Hutu leaders. According to him, these were “leaders who are just concerned with satisfying their personal and egoistic ambition instead of caring to unite the popular majority who are faced with a threat from feudalists seeking revenge”⁶⁰.

The “*Umurwanashyaka*” newspaper editorial asked everybody to specify a camp and put the events of 1959 and 1973 in mind⁶¹. Obviously, that memory carried images that were demeaning to the Tutsi. “The Batutsi are blood-thirsty and power-hungry. They want to impose their hegemony on the Rwandese people with the barrel of the gun”⁶².

It is convenient to note that the extract was recapturing President Habyarimana’s speech which he gave on 1st November 1990.

⁵⁸ Nsengimana, I., “La guerre d’octobre: Le mythe s’en prend-il au droit?“, in *La Relève*, no 165, mars 1991, p.4; Ngirira, M., Nzitabakuze J. B., Mugabo, P., “Les visées politiques du Front patriotique rwandais“, in *La Relève*, no 159, février 1991, p.8-12; E. Nsabimana, “Une agression sous prétexte...”, in *La Relève*, no 143-144, octobre 1990, p.10.

⁵⁹ Boudon, R., *L’idéologie. L’origine des idées reçues*, Paris, Fayard, 1987.

⁶⁰ Bucyana, M., “Discours prononcé à l’occasion de l’agrément du parti CDR”, in *Kangura*, no 9, p.2

⁶¹ *Umurwanashyaka*, no. 4, mars 1991, p. 2; no7, Juillet 1991, p. 4.

⁶² *Kangura*, dec. 1990, p.6; no51, oct. 1993; p.14; F. Nahimana, “Le génie cruel des pays de la source du Nil”, in *Vérités d’Afrique-Impamo*, no2, 26 août, 1992.

The extract gives an account of the processes of production and diffusing beliefs. An article that had appeared in one of the newspapers was reproduced in other newspapers under new signatures. By returning the same article at regular intervals on the same subject, the newspapers showed what was really making the occasion. In other words, the newspapers imposed an image of realities upon which public authorities and the population were supposed to intervene. The hesitation or passivity *vis-à-vis* the fundamentalist line that was chosen by the regime was denounced by authors of newspaper articles as complicity to the aggression. The purpose of that denunciation was to make everybody side with the partisans of the regime in place.

“Rwandese intellectuals have courage; help the President to defend the motherland. I think that the silence of Rwandese intellectuals on the October –November war is becoming increasingly glaring and perhaps criminal...People are beginning to disown the president’s entourage which has created an iron curtain around him. The Batutsi have their spokesmen. The Batutsi have the right to complain anywhere and get international audience with the Westerners [...] The Batutsi do not even have the right to say that they are Hutus and that they are threatened. Rwandese intellectuals do not remain marginalized from the current Rwandese politics which must remain peasantry and therefore defend the achievements of 1959 and 1973 revolutions. Do not leave all the work to the President of the Republic of Rwanda and his National Council for Development. They have several constraints and have a right to tiredness”⁶³.

It is clear that resorting to terms like “ambition or Tutsi provocation,” “peasant suffering”, “popular anger”, war/return to feudal system, war/ Hima-Tutsi invasion, etc., led to the problematic of self-defense. On this subject, H. Ngenze, one of the journalists who were committed to the exacerbation of ethnic passions wrote: “what we know is that, thanks to the revolution, the majority was able to recover its country which had already been stolen by a group of Tutsis who exploited it for more than 400 years [...]. If things continue like this, we shall need another revolution, like the one of 1959 for the majority, to recapture what is due to them”⁶⁴.

⁶³ Kangura, no. 5, novembre 1990

⁶⁴ Ngenze H., “Le 4 août, journée de la guerre ethnique”, in *Kangura*, no48, 1993, p.10.

By contrasting the effects of the domination that was exercised by the Tutsis, the press was trying to give meaning and coherence to the events that were taking place. By directly contrasting political classification such as democracy and feudality, majority and minority, natives and foreign, the ideological work of building identities achieved maximum visibility and even rationality. In an issue published in March 1991, that is, five months after the war which was started by RPF, Kangura, the extremist newspaper relied on pretentious scientific and cultural arguments in order to radicalize this opposition of identities.

“Let us understand each other. The Hutu-Tutsi problem is a reality in Rwanda even if we do not have to kill each other with machetes. According to teachers of Nyakinama campus, the current war is that of Tutsis who have attacked the Hutus. Winning the war politically and militarily requires that the two camps are clearly identified and recognized. Thus, we shall have a dialogue like we are. Otherwise, we cannot achieve anything by continuing to mix things that do not mix. I think it is the enemy’s trap. Hutus, take care, stay united, times are difficult; do not let the majority to be exterminated. And you Tutsis, have courage to be what you are. Defend yourselves but do not seek to conceal yourselves”⁶⁵.

Thus, on both sides, identity traits were strengthened and they separated very clearly the two Rwandese societies. On this subject, Murambi, a genocide survivor had this to say: “The genocide tragedy struck us at Karamuzi even before the death of President Habyarimana. Before the genocide in April 1995, the Tutsis of Murambi district suffered regularly from violence. Soon after the RPF attack in October 1990, hundreds of Tutsis, including my husband were arrested and taken to Byumba on a district vehicle for imprisonment, torture and death. My husband escaped narrowly from the soldiers who were taking him to Byumba. On his return home, he was severely beaten and he lost some teeth. The *Interahamwe* who had attacked us left him to die. We took him to Gahini hospital. From 1992, we decided to spend the night in the bushes and return home during the day. On 15th August 1992, the *Interahamwe* who were armed to the teeth and the majority of whom were our Hutu neighbors attacked us. They destroyed our banana plantation and our house property. They beat the children and threw

⁶⁵ Kangura, no12, mars 1991.

stones on the roof of our house. In July 1993, they came back, led me to the road and beat me almost to death. They drove me naked to Nyamarebe, in unprecedented cold saying that they were mounting guard against the *Inkontanyi*. All the house property, children's books, clothes, tables and chairs were burnt and the house was partly destroyed. The following morning, the children went to Gatete, the *Burgomaster*. The latter scoffed at them, calling them "traitors". He said that they should wait for reprisals from the people because it was them "like, the Tutsis" who had started the war. The cell leader and our neighbors made surprise checks to ensure that nobody worked for us in the house. After this violence, our Hutu neighbors with whom we used to collaborate started running a way from us when we approached them to ask for help. In the end, they participated in looting and destroying our property when the *Interahamwe* attacked us⁶⁶.

6.3.2 Mobilization against the Arusha Peace Accord

It would be unfair to think that the majority of the Rwandese expected a language of hatred or tense identity tones. The hope that accompanied the Arusha negotiations and the joy which manifested when the final peace agreement was signed in August 1993 bear testimony to the people's inclination towards a negotiated settlement. It should be admitted, however that other Rwandese dreaded war out of the knowledge and belief under the influence of a complex process.

They were thus tempted to exacerbate conflicts and passions that were susceptible of deviating their beliefs on politics. A good part of the press spent time convincing people about the correctness of this point of view.

The osmosis of expressions and images offer proof of it. Functionally, the press worked desperately to emphasize the dangers which threatened the gains of 1959 and 1973 revolutions. That threat did not only concern the rulers but also the Hutus who had been the engine behind those achievements.

On that ground, a new orientation could be observed from the beginning of 1991. The press ceased to confine itself to its traditional role of transmitting information. It assumed the role of defending

⁶⁶ Uwamariya Annonciata's testimony, Kiramuruzi (Gatsibo District) 4th August, 2007.

interests of a specific category of the Rwandese population. In order to block the credulity of opposing views, the press did not hesitate to give prominence to secular antagonisms between the Hutu and Tutsi in addition to the dangers ahead of them. To this end, the press mobilized indicators which were situated in the true dynamic of imposing the deeds and their actors. At the centre of that dynamic, two methods were particularly solicited. The first approach consisted of designations that valued the Hutu while the Tutsi were devalued. These designations were aimed at arousing sentiments or consciousness of belonging to opposed groups. Thus, the following designations were attributed to the Hutus: the majority⁶⁷, children of *Sebahinzi* (land clearer)⁶⁸, fearless and strong⁶⁹. As for the Tutsis, they were mainly labeled under the following titles: minority and accomplice⁷⁰, enemy of the people and intruder⁷¹, snake or double dealer etc.⁷²

The second approach consisted of building an ideologically strong identity. It meant weighing on the reality by refusing to tolerate anything that made any projection between the rulers and the citizens. The press contributed by attributing to the Hutus of the opposition labels that equated them to the Tutsis who were accomplices of RPF. Suspects and accomplices were defined from principles that governed the functioning of the Rwandese regime. On that basis, the emergency of the multiparty initiative during the war, and the Arusha peace process, were both perceived as elements towards the rupture of the basic pact of the Rwandese political system.

Bitter criticisms by the leaders of opposition parties and the signing of the Arusha peace pact which took place on 4th August 1994 dealt a hard blow to the government leaders who were concerned with safeguarding their benefits and privileges. By proclaiming and establishing principles of political and ethnic cohabitation, opposition parties and the Arusha Accord especially, the clauses related to the repatriation of refugees,

⁶⁷ Kangura, (tous les numéros) ;Umurwanashyaka, no. 4, 1991

⁶⁸ Médaille Nyiramacibiri, no.18, 1994.

⁶⁹ Ijambo, du numéro. 64 et 65, 31 janvier et 14 février 1994;Isibo, no. 52, 1992; Zirikana, no. 2, 1992, no. 71, 1992; Médaille Nyiramacibiri no11, 1992; Zirikana, no. 2, 1992, Kangura, no10, 1991.

⁷⁰ Isibo, no. 52, 1992, n71, 1992, 1992; Médaille Nyiramacibiri no. 11, 1992; Zirikana, no 2, 1992, Kangura, no. 10, 1991.

⁷¹ Ijisho rya rubanda, no2, 1992; Isibo, no. 52, 1992; Kangura no. 4, 1990.

⁷² Zirikana, no. 4, 1992; Umurava, no. 7, 1991.

re-integration of RPF combatants in the Rwandese army and sharing of power in a broad-based transitional government undermined the ethnic base of the regime in place.

Faced with both political and military pressure and the enthusiasm that was manifested by several Rwandese *vis-à-vis* the Arusha Peace Accord, it was difficult for the regime to maintain ethnic leverage without undertaking a campaign by the media to manipulate people's sentiments. The media went one step more than the defenders of the above mentioned peace accord in order to break the political opposition and plunge it into the genocide logic.

In a sea of difficulties of all sorts, safeguarding the 1959 Revolution achievements or refusing the Tutsi hegemony was portrayed as an issue of national urgency. It was in such conditions that a political party known as of "*Coalition pour la Défense de la République*" (CDR) (translated as 'Coalition for the Defense of the Republic') and a movement in the name of "power" were created to assess the problems that were to be handled and decide on the course of action to take in order to solve them⁷³. It was a question of obliging the Hutu to get involved in the battle that these parties were engaged in and to oppose any attempt to compromise.

In the process of setting up interests that were to be defended, these structures played a decisive role. They participated actively in the exacerbation of identity sentiments. They did this with two objectives in mind. On the one hand, they wanted to break multipartism and the Arusha process. On the other hand, they wanted to instigate an alliance of Hutus against Tutsis. The first objective was through manipulation of difficulties brought about by the war so that some individuals could rely on those who were prepared to face the enemy. Their second objective revolved around the threat posed by the Tutsis. The stereotypes that were designed at the beginning of colonization served to contrast their mischievousness as well as their thirst for power.

It is here that the role played by the so-called democratic opposition parties during the crucial period between 1991-1994, should be evoked. Focus will be on three parties: MDR,

⁷³ On the issue of how intruding parties manipulated the political game, refer to BRAUD Ph., *Le jardin des délices démocratiques*, Paris, Presses de la FNSP, 1992.

PL and PSD. Created in a context of crisis, these parties took a critical approach towards the regime in place. They advocated for a democratic change in institutions. They were for power sharing and wanted to fight against ethnicity. They stood out by denouncing the handling of problems linked to war, the economy, population and social justice.

These positions led the people to perceive these new political parties as a credible alternative to the politics of MRND. But shortly afterwards, the get-rich-quick attitude, rivalry and individual strategies to get into power became more visible. The departure from the initial objective was glaringly obvious. All the support that the new parties had won evaporated rapidly.

Extremist movements rekindled arguments of betrayal and complicity of the opposition with RPF which was generalized as a party of the Tutsis. The extremism of MRND and CDR echoed that of radical MDR. Extremist movements came closer to the presidential movement and positioned themselves as a popular force on the chessboard of Rwandese politics.

During their meetings, they showed that the Arusha Accord was simply a means for RPF to enter the country, obtain a considerable part of power and finally carry out its policy of reconquest and total occupation of Rwanda. They also called for unity of all Hutus against Tutsis. It was in this context that after signing the Arusha Peace Accord, President Habyarimana delayed putting it into force. On this subject, Jordane Bertrand wrote "The President is finally adopting a three faceted strategy. He is increasing obstacles to halt its implementation. He is criticizing its content on the basis of false democratic arguments, but at no moment is he envisaging quitting power. In fact, the regime hardliners are in a more delicate situation as peace and instauration of a democratic regime would constitute a danger to the assertion and justification of their power. Besides, it is this clan which is increasingly militarizing through the militia"⁷⁴.

Generally the anti-Arusha campaign denounced the posts that were obtained by RPF and opposition parties. On the ground, that campaign was accompanied by increased violence against Tutsis and preparation for war. This makes it possible to understand

⁷⁴ Bertrand, J., *Rwanda : Le piège de l'histoire. L'opposition démocratique avant le génocide (1990-1994)*, Paris, Karthala, 2000, pp. 241-242.

how manipulation about the Arusha Accord accelerated, in a lapse of time, the transition towards the genocide against the Tutsis.

“1993 and 1994 were marked by concomitant evolution of the two factors. On the one hand, there was ethnic radicalization. On the other hand, there was bipolarization of politics around two belligerents (...). But manipulation of different political groups led to the determination of positions in accordance with these objectives according to ethnicity. That bipolarization of politics translated into a continuous process of simplification. From a situation of multiple antagonisms which were used as political games, arose a single situation which was conspicuously and existential in nature, the ethnic antagonism (...). The later was no longer a political stake as such since it was based on eliminating an adversary who was portrayed as being political but in actual sense was defined in ethnic terms (...). It is clear that ethnicity denies any form of viable political organization. That is what would have emerged, with MDR, on critical analysis of the history of Kayibanda’s party and the political as well as ideological organization that was put in place by the two successive Republics”⁷⁵.

6.3.3. Mobilization done in the murder of President Ndadaye

There is a profound link between maturation of the genocide in Rwanda and the October 1993 Burundi crisis. President Ndadaye’s assassination on 21st October 1993 had serious repercussions on identity mobilization in Rwanda. Media propaganda that was built around the death of the Burundian President created a perverted climate that favored the descent to the genocide.

Before determining the role of the Burundi crisis in the radicalization of identities in Rwanda, we should remember that President Melchior Ndadaye was a former Burundian refugee in Rwanda from 1972. He came to power at the beginning of July 1993 following the Legislative and Presidential elections which were largely won by his party: “*Le front pour la démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU -translated as: The Front for Democracy in Burundi). His assassination and that of other members of his political party including the speaker of the National Assembly

⁷⁵ Bertrand, J., 2000, op. cit., 256-257.

in the night of 20th October 1993 provoked a social and political crisis in Burundi.

In many regions of Burundi, the militia and followers of FRODEBU, on instigation of the local leaders of this party indulged in massacres of Tutsi civilians⁷⁶. Some Burundian Hutus who were exiled in Rwanda resorted to the use of Radio Rwanda to incite systematic massacre of Burundian Tutsis. They also used the same airwaves to incite sentiments of hatred against Rwandese Tutsis.

Demonized by politicians and overtaken by the complexity and rapidity of events, the Burundian army could not stop the massacre of Tutsis as well as some Hutu, members of the *l'Union pour le progrès National* (UPRONA - translated as: the Union for National Progress). When the army regained control, at least 50,000 people, the majority of whom were Tutsis, had been killed⁷⁷. The proximity of Ngozi, Kayanza, Cibitoke, Muyinga and Bubanza provinces played a decisive role in the mobilization of identities in Rwanda.

After the massacre of the Tutsis and the Hutus of UPRONA, several thousand Burundian Hutus took refuge in Rwanda. The unexpected arrival of refugees, two months after signing the Arusha Accords between the Rwandese government and RPF and the presence of these refugees caused, like in 1972, a climate of panic that was amplified by the genocide ideologues. In the Burundian crisis, the latter found a pretext to reject the Arusha Peace Accords and they hardened their talk against the Tutsi enemy.

Jordane Bertrand rightly pointed out that the assassination of the Burundian president served as a catalyst for Rwanda to radicalize identities by strengthening structural ideological alliances which had started earlier on. "From that moment, a climate of intense fear developed and it was exploited by extremists who intensified it further (...). It was the whole interpretation and ever increasing ethnic divide that were made about the event that contributed to the sealing of new alliances and reorganizing movements according to a line of division based on ethnicity (...). Fear was

⁷⁶ Refer to Jean Minani's speech who was a Member of Parliament then. A day after the assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye, Jean Minani through Radio Rwanda called upon the Hutus of Burundi to act in solidarity and kill their Tutsi neighbors.

⁷⁷ Guichaoua, A., 1995, op. cit, p.554.

extremely manipulated leading to greater sensitivity regarding the argument for ethnic solidarity. Thus, arguments which had been developed for more than a year by CDR and the ethnic interpretation of PARMEHUTU resumed more vigorously. This led to the resurgence of the confusion that had been maintained since the 1950s between ethnicity and politics⁷⁸.

Alison Des Forges remarked as well, that start of the genocide machine found favorable ground in the Burundi crisis for its maturation. The frenzy of the “Hutu Power” movement which was an intellectual stepping stone of the genocide which was “*built on Ndadaye’s dead body*”⁷⁹ gained more credibility. The Burundi crisis favored winning over extremist factions of the MDR, PL and PSD parties to the MRND/CDR coalition. Exploitation of the emotional shock that was provoked by the death of the Burundian president and the presence of Burundian refugees in Rwanda gave more sense to the extermination of the Tutsis.

That extermination was fronted as the ultimate means of the struggle for survival of the Hutus. President Melchior Ndadaye’s murder made it possible to present the Tutsi extermination as an act of double advantage. On the one hand, it sought to warn the Rwandese Hutus about the invasion of the destructive Tutsi. The theme of complicity between RPF and the assassination of the Burundian president contributed to accept the idea of large scale vengeance.

For instance, a *Kangura* journalist called on army chiefs of the Rwandese armed forces to support the Rwandese people in the revenge they were about to carry out against RPF because of its crimes against the Rwandese. “If Ndadaye had not been killed, the Tutsis could have been able to continue hiding their game indefinitely. The Tutsis shall pay for the death of Ndadaye up to the end of times whether they like it or not (...). Officers, it is with great sorrow that we want to let you know about the atrocities which RPF fighters are preparing against the people in their project to exterminate the innocent people. Rwandese army officers, (...) I would like once again to give my contribution by asking you not to listen to this government but to help the population among whom are your parents and brothers”⁸⁰.

⁷⁸ Bertrand, J., 2000, op. cit., pp. 245-247.

⁷⁹ Des Forges, A. 1999, op. cit., p.166.

⁸⁰ *Kangura*, no. 52, décembre, 1993.

Caricatured images of some so-called *independent* newspapers⁸¹ as well as inflammatory broadcasts by RTLM radio associating the RPF forces with the assassination of the Burundian President dashed the hope which some Rwandese had in the Arusha Accord until then. Progressively, the genocide logic prevailed over the logic for dialogue and democratic change. The Burundi crisis therefore gave chance to the genocide ideologues to trace unshakeable differences between Hutus and Tutsis.

An analysis of other genocide situations shows us that the logic of portraying an entire national group as an enemy is associated with the quest to justify in advance the violence against such a group. Jacques Sémelin explains that assertion of maliciousness or treachery constitutes an imaginary space in which persecution against a member of a designated national group is legitimized in advance. According to Jacques Sémelin, “such analyses which are based on radical identity assertiveness contribute to highlighting the differences such as Jews/Aryans or Hutu/Tutsi (...) they legitimize confrontation between the “them” and the “us”. It is the ‘them’ identity that is put forward by the ‘us’ as of being of threatening nature. There is therefore no room for negotiation since the difference is made to appear intangible”⁸².

That logic of presenting a national group under an evil mask was of the nature to revive resentment and to cultivate ground which was favorable for committing atrocities. Labeling the Tutsis as naturally bad and at the same time attributing to them all misfortunes of the people competed to reinforce their exclusion from the Rwandese community. And, as shown by Yves Ternon, radicalization of the exclusion of the Tutsis in turn facilitated the implementation of the plan to eliminate them physically. Ternon Yves adds: As it is common in all undemocratic societies, exclusion of a minority group by discrimination transforms insensibly the views of the majority. It creates a difference and puts emphasis on deviance. The discrimination prepares for persecution. It has the double effect of strengthening the hostility of the majority towards the excluded minority and rendering that minority clearly visible. These structural conditions harness the possibility of subsequently expressing the will to destroy a group”⁸³.

⁸¹ Kangura, no. 48-58 ; Le courrier du peuple, nos 11 et 12

⁸² Semelin, J., 2005, op. cit., p.88.

⁸³ Ternon, Y., 1995, op. cit., p.97.

6.3.4 Manipulating of fear and resentment

The analysis of the political speech relayed by the official and private media shows that from 1992, the feeling of probable failure was developing within the Rwandese regime. It appeared to the regime that indeed the demand for multipartism and war could undermine the foundations of its power. On the one hand, the emergence of multipartism showed that ethnicity could no longer assure the basis of its legitimacy. On the other hand, pressure by RPF strengthened the sentiment of a possible military failure.

As it can be observed from other genocide processes, there exists a profound relationship between the conscience of failure and resorting to violence. When a regime admits its vulnerability, it tends to resort to violence in order to impose its authority so as to regain its prestige. It is obvious that democratic demand and war cannot solely be a prelude to commit mass murder. It is here that the ideology appears like a decisive mobilization in a situation of serious crisis. The ideology works by building the identity of those who are under threat and those who are responsible for or are perpetrators of the threat. This process of building identities produces reactions of reciprocal mistrust. It legitimizes and operationalizes violence.

On this subject, Alison Des Forges shows how this type of mobilization favored the dynamic of destruction. He points out: "The Rwandese genocide is unique in the way its organizers strove to mobilize the population to participate massively in the killings. Far from hiding their objective, they announced in fanfare, in the press and on radio, their intention to exterminate the Tutsi citizens of Rwanda. They urged the Hutu to participate in the massacre campaign insisting that everyone was concerned (...). By directing fear and hatred against the Tutsi, the organizers of the genocide hoped to forge solidarity among the Hutu. But beyond that, they had the intention of planning collective responsibility for the genocide"⁸⁴.

It is important to remember that in order to obtain support of the population regarding the violence organized against a group designated as such, the processes may vary according to particular situations. Generally, it is known that ideological

⁸⁴ Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit., pp. 891-892.

propaganda plays a decisive role. It progresses by elaborating or justifying motives of the massacre. In Rwanda, between 1992 and 1994, that propaganda worked by arousing sentiments of the threat to exterminate the Hutus by the Tutsis.

The extract of Léon Mugesera's speech at Kabaya in November, 1992 is characteristic in this regard. He said, "You know what vigilance is. Ladies and gentlemen, there are some *Inyenzi* in the country. They sent their children to the front to give a hand to the *Inkontanyi* (...). Why don't we exterminate all these people who are sending the youth to the front? Tell me, are you waiting happily for them to come to massacre you? Our constitution stipulates that justice is done in the name of the people. We shall see to it ourselves that we massacre that gang of bastards. As you know, the gospel says that (if) the snake comes to bite you and that if you let it linger in your midst, it's you who will perish. All foreign elements at cell level must be noted. If they are in connivance with the *Inyenzi*, they must perish without any other form of trial. (...) I repeat we must set the ball rolling"⁸⁵.

As it can be noticed, Léon Mugesera's speech was attempting to capture, to the advantage of the Tutsi massacre project, the trauma of the war by proposing a solution that would ensure the survival of the Hutus. As we know, construction of a threatened identity operates at the cost of rejecting the other person who is portrayed as fundamentally different and bad. It is generally in this perspective that the other is vilified and is given names of animals. This animalization of the other is aimed at stressing the hostility and preventing any slight desire of affection or compassion. An article of the Kangura newspaper can help us illustrate this point of view: "A cockroach produces another cockroach (...). The history of Rwanda shows us clearly a Tutsi has always kept his identity and that he has never changed. Malice and mischief are what we know in our country (...). Who can make head and tail of the *Inyenzi* who attacked in October 1990 and those of the 1960s? They are all linked. The latter are grand children of the former. Their wickedness is the same (...). The unimaginable crimes that the *Inyenzi* of today are committing against the citizens remind us of those committed by the former *Inyenzi*. They kill, loot and rape young girls and women. If in our language we call them snakes, that is appropriate for them alone

⁸⁵ Léon Mugesera's speech at Kabaya delivered on 17th September 1992 in Chrétien, J.P., 1995, op. cit., p.56.

(...). A Tutsi is someone whose mischief is incommensurate (...). In our language a Tutsi is called a cockroach because he takes advantage of the night to hide and achieve his objectives. The word *Inyenzi* also reminds us of the dangerous snake whose venom is extremely powerful. The fact that the Tutsis chose these names is significant for those who want (sic) to understand (...). If the Hutus are not careful, the Tutsis are likely to steal their revolution which was accomplished in 1959”⁸⁶.

In the genocide process, this type of mobilization generally produces two results. Firstly, it fixes, before hand, the exclusion of victims. The victims are radically cut off the rest of the human community. Secondly, it prepares the future tormentors morally for the dirty “job”⁸⁷. Manipulated about the horrors awaiting them, the latter become more disposed to commit massacres.

In order to definitely break the indifference and immobility of some Hutus who were still hesitant to commit the massacres, the ideological discourse resorted to rumors with the view of sowing seeds of fear. “The Tutsi plans are indeed bearing fruit in Burundi and Rwanda and are still wrecking havoc.

The Hima-Tutsi expansion is already sure to devastate neighboring countries like Uganda and Burundi. The Bantu races of Eastern Zaire, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and part of Tanzania are therefore expecting that Machiavelic enslavement. When the minority dominates the majority, it is hardly interesting”⁸⁸.

That last type of mobilization produced a considerable emotional shock. Evoking the next enslavement of the Hutu by the “Hima-Tutsi minority seated on genocide and extermination of the majority Hutu”⁸⁹, defeated the inertia of most Hutu. To achieve total commitment, the genocide organizers designed a framework from which the Hutus could understand the suffering that was awaiting them. Thus, Valérie Bemmeriki declared, “We have received reports how the *Inyenzi* took pregnant women, clubbed them to death and sliced open their bellies to remove the fetuses, which they in turn placed on the ground and killed after having

⁸⁶ Kangura, no. 40, mars 1993, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁷ Coded language used by the genocide ideologues to mean extermination of the Tutsis.

⁸⁸ Kangura, no. 40, mars 1993, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁹ Association des Femmes parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de l’Enfant et de la Mère(AFEPADDEM) ; L. Mugesera, “Toute la vérité sur la guerre d’octobre au Rwanda”, in *La Relève*, du 1 au 7 février 1991, p.3.

opened their bellies as well. (...) You have likewise heard that they threw mothers into water with their children on the back. You have also heard that they threw them into Lake Muhazi and that even right now, their bodies are still floating on water; (...) in such a way that some of them are floating on River Nile. Even Europeans can see some of these bodies which are pouring into the Mediterranean Sea. You therefore understand that the cruelty of the *Inyenzi* is irreversible. The cruelty of the *Inyenzi* can only be cured by their total extermination, i.e. putting all of them to death and achieving their total extinction”⁹⁰. Hence then, massive commitment of the Hutu to commit genocide against the Tutsis was a result of an ideological propaganda which portrayed all Tutsis as a threat to the extinction of the Hutus. According to Sémelin J, “it appeared as if it was a question of an imperial security dilemma. The individual who is preparing to commit genocide presents himself as the victim; his destruction enterprise is akin to a preventive and survival operation of his group”⁹¹.

The scope of this propaganda was made up of the totality of representations which led to perceive the Tutsis as a threat that had to be discarded or eliminated. Since Rwanda’s accession to independence, these representations underlay putting in place the practices of exclusion. The regime’s principle was indeed that the Hutu were the incarnation of democracy. After the war exploded in 1990, these representations constituted a set of background speeches aimed at preparing massive destruction of all the Tutsis. All this shows that before being an act of physical destruction, genocide followed a process of mental preparation which developed into a vision of eliminating others⁹².

The second section of this chapter has sufficiently explored the central role of propaganda. This propaganda developed and maintained a climate of tension. It used two factors: resentment and fear. Finally, it employed the word extermination to qualify what could have happened to the Hutus if they refused to defend themselves. In its broadcasts of April to June 1994, RTLM radio made regular appeals to the effect that the extermination of the Tutsis was necessary for the protection of the Hutus. “Let

⁹⁰ Valérie Bemeriki, 3 Juin 1994 quoted by Chrétien, J.P., 1995, op. cit.

⁹¹ Semelin, J., “Eléments pour une grammaire du massacre, in *Etudes Rwandaises*, no 9, 2005, p.110.

⁹² *ibid.*

the Rwandese support each other, let the Hutus support each other, let the Nduga support the Rukiga (...). As in the past, in addition to the Hutus, let all the population support the FAR. Let us consider the possibility of distributing arms to the population in order to fight these *Inyangarwanda* (...). If you do not want to have the Rwandese exterminated (...) stand up, act (...) and do not worry about international opinion, etc.⁹³

In his analysis of the role of the media, J. Sémelin shows that the basic principle of propaganda is always the same. Its aim is to cause war, pride, resentment and then provoke the reaction of vigilance and vengeance. He also shows that it is through its influence on emotion that propaganda ends up winning support. This is what the propaganda said: “No choice, we all have to defend ourselves against the other people. It is question of identity, it is for our survival”⁹⁴.

6.4 Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) stops the genocide

6.4.1 Military operations

RPF hoped that the International Community would participate in the defense of civilians if massive killing restarted. From 6th April 1994, since nobody showed the intention to stop the systematic massacres of Tutsis and Hutus of the opposition, RPF proposed a joint operation with UNAMIR and the Rwandese army to stop the massacres on 9th April. Each party was supposed to provide 300 men. The Rwandese army rejected that proposal and the UNAMIR forces were reduced. In any case, even before their reduction, they had seen violence of all sorts which was committed under their watch, without reacting.

Unwilling to tolerate that impasse, RPF started moving its troops to defend the battalion that was blocked to CND. RPF forces also moved to stop the massacres and break the capacity of the genocide forces composed of the FAR soldiers and partisan militia.

RPF forces took three axes: the East, West and Central axes (towards Kigali). The central axis troops occupied Byumba

⁹³ RTL, 15 avril 1994, Déclaration de Jean Barahinyura, in Chrétien, J.P., 1995, op. cit., p. 194.

⁹⁴ Semelin, J., 2005, op. cit., p.97.

and the two other axes joined the battalion that was in CND headquarters, three days after the resumption of fighting. As they advanced, RPF forces discovered horror scenes: people outrageously mutilated, the injured who were agonizing, survivors with serious injuries as well as traumatized escapees. RPF's advance was also slowed down by traps of all sorts such as mines, ambushes, broken bridges, etc. Faced with continuous massacres of this magnitude, the Kigali negotiations failed. These were negotiations on the ceasefire between RPF's Mugambage and Gatsinzi of the government side under the chairmanship of Dallaire. It was a dialogue of the deaf. The RPF representative called for a cessation of killings while the government envoy insisted on the cessation of hostilities before stopping the killings on the civilians.

RPF had inferior numbers in terms of soldiers (25,000 men) compared to those of FAR and its heavily armed militia. Its tactic entailed minimizing losses by utilizing different maneuvers in order to avoid direct confrontation with the enemy. The RPA-RPF forces infiltrated the enemy lines encircled them and harassed them with mortar fire. Alternatively, they occupied supply routes and just left an exit for withdrawal. That way, the FAR, some of whose troops were very busy massacring the Tutsis and looting their property, were attacked from the sides and from the rear. Constantly put on the defensive, their morale suffered enormously. They thus retreated, thereby enabling RPF to save lives of some genocide survivors.

To some observers, RPF's strategy allowed them to achieve military victory but gave very little chance to save the victims of the genocide⁹⁵. In reality, these accusations were embodied in the global plan to discredit RPF. That accusation which neither bothered nor evaluated the strength of the forces present nor evaluated RPF's respective strategic objectives put aside one reality. It is obvious that RPF, by using that military tactic of assaulting the FAR from various corners had a double strategic objective.

It was necessary to feign a threat on distant regions of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi in order to confuse the FAR by enticing them to concentrate in those regions. That tactic would allow rapid completion of military operations in eastern (Kibungo), central

⁹⁵ Des Forges, A., 1999, op. cit., pp. 813-814.

(Kigali, Gitarama) and southern (Butare, Gikongoro) regions. These were the regions that were highly involved in the massacres of the Tutsis. Thanks to this military tactic, RPF soldiers saved dozens of thousands of Tutsis and arrested many culprits. Thus, RPF ended the genocide by inflicting defeat on civil and military authorities who were responsible for the killings together with their accomplices⁹⁶.

6.4.2 Diplomatic Action

At the same time while genocide was going on, its planners and their accomplices were busy doing all they could to deny their crimes. A campaign of lies and falsification orchestrated by the Interim Government and its supporters attributed responsibility of the genocide to RPF. The central theme of that campaign consisted of saying that the war by RPF was an invasion which was unjustly imposed on Rwanda by Uganda under the sponsorship of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni⁹⁷.

The thesis of anger and blind obedience of the people attempted to camouflage a genocide that was meticulously organized. “President Habyarimana’s death in effect created surprise and amazement among the Rwandese population as well as fury among certain soldiers who reacted spontaneously by attacking some personalities who were suspected or assumed to be responsible or accomplices in the assassination of the Head of State. Unable to restrain themselves, some soldiers of the Former Rwandese Army attacked alleged accomplices of RPF among whom was Madam Uwilingiyimana Agathe, the then Prime minister, as well as three members of her government. As for the masses who were terrorized, following the announcement of the massacres which were raging in the zones controlled by the RPF, they got distressed and shocked by the murder of the Head of State, hence, they organized themselves in self-defense”⁹⁸.

RPF counteracted that negation of the truth on the genocide through strong diplomatic and media action. During and soon

⁹⁶On 22nd May, 1994, the RPF took the Airport and Kanombe Military Camp. Kigali City and Butare town were liberated from the genocide forces on 4th and 5th July. On 18th July, RPF declared the end of the genocide and re-establishment of order. On 19th July, RPF installed a Government of National Unity.

⁹⁷ Declaration of the Rwandese government delegation on the situation prevailing in Rwanda on matters regarding the respect of human Rights.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.7.

after the genocide, RPF representatives' crisscrossed big European and North-American cities as well as some African Capitals to explain how what had happened in Rwanda constituted genocide. It was necessary to convince the International Community to acknowledge the genocide and then reprimand it.

Between April and June 1994, an RPF delegation comprising G. Gahima and Ch. Muligande and sometimes Cl. Dusaidi, concentrated its efforts on the UN in New York and Washington. In fierce competition with the representatives of the Interim Government, they pleaded for recognition of the genocide. They also campaigned against biased French military intervention. They also sought reinforcement of UNAMIR in order to face the chaos left behind by the genocide. They pleaded for the creation of an International Criminal Tribunal in charge of trying crimes against humanity and the genocide committed in Rwanda.

The RPF delegation finally won its case at the Security Council⁹⁹. Before this intervention from the Security Council, several delegations were bent on talking to the RPF delegation. In some UN resolutions which were voted on Rwanda during the genocide¹⁰⁰, RPF's voice was more or less taken into account. In June 1994, the UN Secretary General daringly used the word "genocide"¹⁰¹.

In the USA, 20 members of the Senate constituting the committee on foreign relations wrote a letter to President Clinton on 16th June 1994, in which they recognized "a *planned campaign of genocide*" in Rwanda. They requested for immediate intervention. They wrote: "we believe that the ongoing genocide in Rwanda justifies, indeed, requires, an urgent response pursuant to the genocide convention.... Hundreds of thousands of lives still hang in the balance." They also demanded that the representative of the Interim Government should no longer have a seat on the Security Council.

⁹⁹ G. Gahima's message to the Secretary General of the UN, 12th May, 1994.

¹⁰⁰ Resolution no. 912 adopted on 21st April, 1994 readjusted the UNAMIR mandate and reduced the number of the forces to 270. Resolution no. 918 adopted on 19th May, 1994 authorized increasing the number of UNAMIR forces to 5,500 and extended its mandate, namely to protect the civilians in danger and support the humanitarians. Resolution 925 adopted on 18th June 1994 concerned the program of deployment of UNAMIR II.

¹⁰¹ Secretary General's letter to the President of the Security Council on 19th June, 1994.

At the beginning of June, Cl. Dusaidi requested, on behalf of RPF, to create a tribunal to try planners of the genocide against the Tutsis: “(...) urges the Security Council to formally declare atrocities in Rwanda as genocide and therefore create a war crimes tribunal to try their perpetrators of this heinous crime”¹⁰². On their own behalf, J. Birara and A. Munyaneza also launched an appeal to the OAU “to rapidly create an *ad hoc* tribunal, a new Nuremberg”¹⁰³.

The campaign to recognize the genocide in Rwanda went on at the same time as denunciation of the planners of the genocide and their spokesmen on the international scene was taking place. Cl. Dusaidi requested for denial of the seat at the Security Council¹⁰⁴ to the representative of the Interim Government. Many letters were also dispatched to some African presidents to ensure that the Interim Government which was committing genocide should not participate in the proceedings of the OAU summit in Tunisia¹⁰⁵.

In their final communiqué, the African Ministers of Foreign Affairs who met in Tunisia in preparation for the OAU summit of June 1994 in Tunis, made a declaration that they were “*concerned with the pursuit of massacres and killings of innocent civilians*”¹⁰⁶. The Tunis ceasefire declaration was clearer. It stipulated that “*all parties condemn without reservation, the massacres, the systematic killings and the genocide that took place in Rwanda*”¹⁰⁷. RPF and the Rwandese government convened a meeting to create a commission of inquiry charged with the identification of the perpetrators of the crimes who were to be tried and sentenced in accordance with international law.

On the ground, RPF systematically continued to gather material proof and testimonies on the genocide. International inquiries which took place afterwards relied on this evidence. It is also thanks to the gathering of such evidence that genocide sites like

¹⁰² Letter to the Secretary General on 3rd June, 1994

¹⁰³ Letter to the Secretary General on 3rd June, 1994.

¹⁰⁴ Refer also to P. Bizimungu’s letter to the OAU Secretary General on 4th June, 1994.

¹⁰⁵ Colonel Kanyarengwe’s letters to President Mubarak, the acting chairman of OAU on 20th may 1994 requesting him “not to recognize the group of criminals, self proclaimed in government”; letter to the president of Burkina Faso on 31st may 1994, and letter to the president of Ivory Coast on 31st may 1994.

¹⁰⁶ Bill on the resolution on the situation in Rwanda.

¹⁰⁷ Tunis declaration, 15th June, 1994.

that of Nyamata and Nyarubuye were erected. Ambassador Degni Segui, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights also made use of these materials.

In his report, he talked of “*unprecedented massacres in the history of violence of the country*”¹⁰⁸. The atrocities were deeds of the *Interahamwe* and *Impuzamugambi* militia against the Tutsis and moderate Hutus. René Degni Segui incriminated the Interim Government for having orchestrated the massacres and he proposed, like RPF, to create an International Tribunal to try the culprits. Soon after, the UN adopted a resolution on the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis¹⁰⁹.

René Degni Segui concluded his report by saying that “the nature of accusations is threefold: a genocide resulting from the massacres of Tutsis, political assassination of the Hutus and violation of human rights. It is genocide according to article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Repression of the Crime of Genocide of 9th December 1948”¹¹⁰. *The perpetrators of the genocide are high level political cadres at national level. They are made of security forces, State organs, and some foreign States*¹¹¹.

The OAU sponsored report was slightly different. It said, “It is therefore unrealistic to deny the responsibility of RPF in serious violation of human rights in the months during and after the genocide. These men were involved in a deadly civil war which was rendered more perverse by the genocide that was ordered by their enemies against their ethnic group”. Young recruits who were not accustomed to the discipline of their elder combatants were difficult to control. The account of acts of violence, human rights violation and death escalated. “But we are neither able to determine how many nor be more precise about the figures”¹¹². The opponents direct “the monstrous allegations advanced by the sympathizers of the ‘Hutu Power’ in the world towards the

¹⁰⁸ Report on the situation of Human Rights in Rwanda submitted by M.R Degni-Segui, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in enforcement of paragraph 20 of resolution 1994 S-3/1 of the Commission, dated 2th May, 1994.

¹⁰⁹ BBC, 30th June, 1994; BBC, 2nd July, 1994.

¹¹⁰ Report on the situation of Human Rights in Rwanda submitted by M.R. Degni-Segui, op. cit., p.10.

¹¹¹ He refers to France without naming it and with the support to the Rwandese government implication of the French soldiers in the massacres and the influenced exercised on the representative of the UN secretary general.

¹¹² Rapport du groupe international d’Eminentes Personnalités, op. cit., p.271.

current government (...) But we have no proof whatsoever to support them”¹¹³.

In spite of the accusations pointing to some of its military cadres like the murders and persecutions against the Hutu population in some regions of the country, the accusations acknowledged by RPF and which it attributes its young recruits in the quest for vengeance of their people who were killed during the genocide. RPF will enter the history of Rwanda for having been the only force to have politically and militarily opposed the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis in 1994. In some places, the militia and government soldiers left agonizing victims and runaway when they received news, true or false, of the arrival of the RPF.

Only the malicious and negative minded people do not want to acknowledge this historical fact. The rapid evolution of the political and security situation refutes any intention by RPF to systematically eliminate the Hutus.

6.5 Denial and Revisionism

The word “negationism” was created by the historian Henry Rousso in 1987 to refer to a language which consisted of contesting or denying the reality of the genocide against the Jews. According to this language, the genocide against the Jews was fabricated to serve Israel interests and to ensure them political and financial support. Denial was thus inscribed in an ideological war aimed at concealing the real nature of the genocide and to obliterate all its traces. It proceeded by the denial of the reality, extent of the disaster, modalities used in the genocide as well as the willingness to commit it¹¹⁴.

Since the Second World War, the word “negationism” has been extended to all processes aimed at deforming the truth so that the accusation of genocide may not be upheld. Negationism is different from revisionism. The latter does not deny the reality of the genocide. It consists of revising the explanation. Frequent in historical and philosophical plans, this approach may lead to the reversal of responsibility and therefore constitute a shrewd form of denial. Negationism is a pseudo-scientific approach which

¹¹³ Ibid, p.272.

¹¹⁴ Vidal –Naquet P.V., “Un Eichmann de papier”, in Vidal –Naquet P.V., *Les assassins de la mémoire*, Paris, Seuil, 1987, p.31.

constitutes the justification of conditions in which the murder of which it denies existence was prepared and perpetrated. Today, the term “*negationism*” denotes practices and talk of objection to the genocide which has been proved by the International Community. Under all its forms, it threatens the establishment of the truth. It kills the memory of the genocide victims. It troubles commemoration of the genocide and prepares for the repetition of this collective murder¹¹⁵.

As it has been said several times, denial is always at the centre of the genocide logic. There is no possible genocide without negation. On this subject, J.F. Dupaquier wrote: “*before the genocide, the preparation is hidden, during the genocide its reality is denied, after the genocide the nature itself is denied*”¹¹⁶. A month after the beginning of the genocide against the Tutsis, the process of its negation started. It was about facing severe disapproval which was raised thanks to the work of some journalists and researchers. It was also a question of outlining elements around which the language of denial was to be organized.

6.5.1 Denial mechanism of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis

From April to July 1994, there developed talks and practices that led to the belief that there was no prepared and programmed genocide but that what happened were massacres resulting from a civil war started by RPF in October 1990. This move aiming at trivializing and denying the crime which was committed brought together individuals and associations from near and far that were associated with the ancient regime of President Habyarimana. These included dignitaries, members of Non Government Organizations (NGOs), the media and religions denominations.

Inherent to the genocide process, the denial mechanism in Rwanda functioned on two elements whose common ground was the willingness to deny the genocide committed against the Tutsis. The first element consists of refusing to name the genocide. This refusal appears in the resort and preference for euphemism. Concepts like ‘massive killings’, ‘bloody events

¹¹⁵ Ternon, Y., *Du négationnisme. Mémoire et tabou*, Descellée de Brouwer, 1999, pp. 14-15.

¹¹⁶ Duparquier J.F., “Rwanda: le révisionnisme, poursuite du génocide par d’autres moyens”, in Verdier R. et al., 1995, op. cit., p. 128.

of April-July', 'civil war', constitute so many elements which compete to conceal the nature of the committed crime. This phenomenon was observable in other genocides. In the case of the Armenian genocide for example, the word "deportation" replaced that of "genocide". It was a way of saying that in the end, there had never been any programmed death.

The second element of the mechanism consists of disguising the victims' identity and transmission of a wrong version of events. Thus, for instance, in Rwanda the victims are taken for actors of their misfortunes and the tormentors are taken for marionettes of their target. The Tutsis were accused of being responsible for their death. In a letter addressed to Pope John Paul II, for example, some Rwandese priests wrote: "The resumption of the war by RPF after the assassination of the Head of State and the abstinence to recognize the Interim Government are factors that should be considered in the analysis of the phenomenon and prolongation of the war (...).RPF must understand that its behavior could incite the population to massacre the Tutsis unless they are using that element as a pretext to take over power"¹¹⁷.

The denial propaganda is inspired by strategies of various techniques. These include denial of facts, modification of the motive and circumstances, toning down mixture of the truth and lies, camouflage, biased interpretations and generalizations¹¹⁸. By proceeding like this, denial fabricates well structured counter-truth and it constitutes anti-history. Among the tools of negationism, pointless tales, the screen and the mill are very important.

Pointless tales are used to erase facts and troublesome characters. Thus, facts did not take place and persons never existed. The screen ensures filtering the information. Only the information that spreads a desired truth is accepted. Any other information is either destroyed or concealed. Finally, the mill crushes contradictory arguments and reduces them to shreds¹¹⁹. In addition to the classic channels of mass communication such as the radio and television, denial is spread by books and other written materials like newspapers. In the recent past, denial messages enjoy exceptionally the massive exploitation of the Internet which allows widespread denial messages without legislative constraints.

¹¹⁷ Le 'Collectif de Goma, cité par Dupaquier J.-F., "Rwanda: le révisionnisme, poursuite du génocide par d'autres moyens" in Verdier R. et al. op. cit. p. 127.

¹¹⁸ Vol off, V., Petite histoire de la désinformation, Edition du Rocher, 2000.

¹¹⁹ Volkoff, V., 2000, op. cit.

6.5.2 Forms of Genocide denial against the Tutsis

a. Trivialization and denial of crime

Denial of the genocide against the Tutsis of Rwanda assumed several stakes and forms. The stakes were mainly of political, judicial and economic nature¹²⁰. On the political level, the negativists demonized the current Rwanda regime with the view of discrediting it internally and externally. It is in this perspective, by the way, that judicial stakes were embedded. The advocates of the denial theory aimed at diluting the criminal responsibility of the Rwandese as well as acquitting the International Community of its complicity in the genocide.

On the economic level, under the pretext that some of the current leaders committed exactions, some international organizations advised various donors to break economic ties with Rwanda. That maneuver was aimed at discrediting the regime in order to obtain the suspension of International Aid. The negationists hoped to take advantage of that situation of diplomatic and economic weakness to oblige the Kigali regime to compromise with the genocide forces as well as its allies. It is in this logic that some forms of genocide denial, including horror balance, memory manipulation and revisionist attitudes started to spread out some years after the genocide committed against the Tutsis in 1994.

These forms of denial prolonged the attitudes which were observed from both initiators and executioners of the genocide. These attitudes were based on anonymity in the perpetration of the crime. Thus, humiliated by the disgraceful act of killing persons known to them, the killers hid their identity and faces by mixing with the masses and removing all traces that could lead to their heinous crimes. They thus went on rampage to kill in groups, put on hoods or dressed in banana or eucalyptus leaves. They colored their faces in kaolin or went to kill in distant places. In order to hide the reality of the extent of the crime, the killers tried to hide the identity of their victims. The latter were either buried in common paupers' graves or they were burnt with fuel. In some other cases, the victims were thrown into rivers and lakes.

¹²⁰ For a further study on the challenges of forms of denials of genocide against the Tutsi, refer to Murwanashyaka, J., "Processus de négation du génocide des Tutsis du Rwanda": 1994-2005, Butare, UNR, 2006.

In the ranks of the planners, the refusal to name the genocide (silence or resort to euphemism) is one of the most current strategies. It is well known that during the genocide against the Jews, the Nazi used the term “final solution” as their code to mean all the measures aimed at exterminating the Jews. On their side, those responsible for the genocide against the Armenians talked of “deportation” to camouflage the reality of the genocide.

For the case of the genocide against the Tutsis, the refusal to name the genocide is characterized by the use of usual terms like “*gukora* = to work” “*gukuraho Umwanda* to remove dirt”, “*gutema ibihura* to clear the bush”, etc. In an interview with a Belgian newspaper, *De Volleskrant* of 26th June 1995, the former Bishop of Ruhengeri, Mgr Phocas Nikwigeze, declared that: “what happened in Rwanda in 1994 was a very human thing. When someone attacks you, you must defend yourself. In such a situation, you forget that you are (sic) a Christian. You are therefore human before anything else (...)”¹²¹.

This refusal to correctly name the ongoing crime was especially observed within the international community¹²². All these remarks show that the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis was portrayed as a normal reaction of self-defense. The strategy of normalization appeared very early and largely contributed to concealing the causes of the genocide. It did not therefore favor reflection on premeditation and organization of the crime, the responsibility of the State and the Church in the ideological process which led to the genocide.

Refusing any involvement in the preparation of the genocide and putting the responsibility on RPF’s back, the *Rassemblement Démocratique pour le Retour des Réfugiés* (RDR) (translated as: the Democratic Assembly for the Return of Refugees) , in its communiqué of 22nd October 1996 presented the genocide committed against the Tutsis in 1994 as a “violent reaction of the angry Rwandese people” who were faced with political ambitions of RPF. “It was the discovery of RPF’s brigades and arms caches that partly explains the violence and the intensity of the reaction of the population and not the premeditation of genocide (....) such reaction is rather done out of self-defense”¹²³.

¹²¹ Phocas Nikwigeze quoted by Bizimana, J.D « *L’église et le génocide au Rwanda. Les Pères Blancs et i.e. négationnisme* », Paris, L’Harmattan 2001, P.21.

¹²² Dallaire R., *J’ai serré la main du diable*, Montréal, Libre Expression, 2004.

¹²³ It was discovery of RPF brigades and arms caches that partly explains the violence

b. Double genocide theory

The form negotiationism took through the theory of double genocide or horror balancing in Rwanda can be summarized as follows: in Rwanda two genocides took place. First, in 1994, there was the genocide against the Tutsis that was committed by the Hutu, and then in the years that followed, there was the genocide against the Hutus that was committed by the Tutsis. On the one hand, the theme is centered on crimes which were committed by the Rwandese Patriotic Army (APR) between 1990 and 1994 against the Hutus in the territories that APR controlled. On the other hand, arguments turned around the theme of massacres and other crimes which were perpetrated by the armed forces of the RPF against the Hutus since 1994, inside and outside Rwanda, notably in Zaire (present day Democratic Republic of Congo).

In his speech during the France-African summit held in Biarritz (France), on 8th November 1994, the French President, François Mitterand evoked the “genocides which took place in Rwanda”¹²⁴. In the press communiqué published in Brussels on 3rd December 2004 by the *Association Victimes du Génocide de l’Est du Rwanda* (ASBL)¹²⁵ declared: “The crimes committed in Rwanda in 1994 and after 1994 against the Hutus in Byumba, Umutara, Kibungo and Bugesera and surrounding regions, constitute a genocide committed by extremist Tutsis against innocent “Hutu” victims”¹²⁶.

Like the strategy that the Nazi had fabricated when they evoked the genocide in reference to the Dresde bombardments and human losses by their army on the front following strikes by the allied forces, it is classifying war crimes as genocide. The *osservatore romano artide* of 25th May 1994 is characteristic in this regard. It affirms that there were two genocides in Rwanda:

and intensity of popular reaction and not premeditated genocide...such a reaction is rather of legitimate defense”. RDR, Press Release no 97 of October 22, 1996, quoted by Ndahiro T., “Ten years of Organized Genocide Laundering”, in *Dialogue*, no 178, *Le génocide des Tutsi du Rwanda. Dix ans après, avril-Juin 2004*, p.54.; voir aussi Dallaire R., *J’ai serré la main du diable*, Montréal, Libre Expression, 2004.

¹²⁴ Agir Ici Sur vie, « Rwanda la France choisie le camp du génocide » in *Dossiers noirs de la politique africaine de la France*, no. 1-5, L’Harmattan, 1996, p.29.

¹²⁵ L’Association “*Tubeho Victimes*” based in Brussels regroups “all Banyarwanda Tutsi and Hutu victims of the genocide” see the 3rd Dec 2004 declaration of the Association.

¹²⁶ Association Tubeho Victimes, Extract of the pres communiqué Brussels 3rd December 2004.

“The genocide against the Tutsis and some moderate Hutus that was perpetrated after 6th April 1994, which claimed more than 500,000 victims and the genocide against the Hutus from October 1990 until the Tutsi Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) took over power in July 1994. This genocide was further followed in the Zaire forest where fugitive Hutus were massacred for months without any international protection. The number of Hutu victims is about one million. Both genocides must be remembered, under the risk of unilateral propaganda”.

c. Written and oral revisionist remarks

Since 2001, written and oral revisionist remarks have blossomed. The latter are principally produced and propagated by Rwandese who expertly associate the critique of the current Rwandese regime, succession of events and minimization of criminal responsibility in the genocide. On 28th January 2002, Pascal Ndengejeho¹²⁷ declared, “From 1959 to 1990, the continuum is obvious. Besides, in both cases, the Tutsi started killing the Hutu. The Tutsi were committing mass suicide. The genocide was a spontaneous reaction of self-defense by the population”¹²⁸.

On 11th February 2012, Father Serge Desouter¹²⁹ justified the 1994 genocide by the October 1990 war. He said, “The ethnic element was introduced extremely in the politics and the army and these elements were disastrous for Rwanda”¹³⁰. In October 1995, he had already made a declaration minimizing the genocide against the Tutsi: “they talk of a million Tutsis dead; there have never been so many Tutsis in Rwanda”¹³¹.

On 5th February 2012, Faustin Twagiramungu¹³² made a statement at the ICTR saying that the genocide against the Tutsis had not been planned. According to him, there was no genocide

¹²⁷ The former Minister of information, Pascal Ndengejeho was invited as a defense witness in the trial against Laurent Semanza (ex-burgomaster of Bicumbi District) at the ICTR.

¹²⁸ <http://foundation.ntarama.free.fr/français/publications/négationnistes/htm>, visited on 7th August, 2005.

¹²⁹ Serge Descouter was President of the committee of Belgian missionary Institutes. He was invited as an expert in the trial of an Adventist pastor, Elizaphan Ntakirutimana

¹³⁰ <http://foundation.ntarama.free.fr/français/publications/négationniste/htm>, visited on 7th August, 2005

¹³¹ *Le vif express* : 13 Octobre 1996, p.61.

¹³² Soon after the 1994 the 1994 genocide, Faustin Twagiramungu was nominated as Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of National Union. In 1995, he resigned from this post and went into exile in Europe.

against the Tutsis. The former Prime Minister even intimated the theory of double genocide. He stated: “the people who were killed had no color. They were black Rwandese. The intention was not to kill Tutsis, but Rwandese belonging to the opposition. Both Hutus and Tutsis were killed. People did not sit to establish an emergency plan and phases of a master plan in order to kill the Tutsis. The genocide in Rwanda does not at all mean that Tutsis were killed. It is here that we are suffering most and we continue to suffer (...). If genocide means that only the Tutsis were killed, I cannot accept. I will never accept that there was a plan to exterminate only the Tutsis. The genocide against the Tutsis will never be valid if my brothers are not included. Let us talk of the Rwandese genocide not the Tutsi genocide. Was there then a general plan to kill the Tutsis and Hutus? Of course.”

The analysis of some recent publications¹³³, permits us to note that they converge on a certain number of issues:

- That the genocide against Tutsis was not planned by the Rwandese State before April 1994;
- That it was not based on a murderous eliminationist ideology;
- That it was preventive in nature; it was committed by Hutus in order to guard against their own extermination by Tutsis.

At the ICTR, revisionism is frequent. Some defense Lawyers and witnesses refuse to acknowledge the programmed nature of the 1994 genocide. Denial and revisionism still persist. These are fundamentally linked to foreign games in search and persistence of the genocide ideology. Negationism constitutes a formidable obstacle to the construction of memory and reconciliation of the Rwandese. It follows from all these different analyses and considerations that the genocide perpetrated against the Rwandese Tutsis was not a spontaneous action; it was a result of competing circumstances not owned by anybody.

It is difficult to understand why the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis was executed efficiently by economizing elements from which construction of identify representations was made. The execution of the genocide reveals the decisive role of the genocide

¹³³ The following can be quoted among the most recent publications: Nduwayo, L., “*Giti et le Génocide rwandais*”, Paris, L’Harmattan 2002; Musabyimana, G., “*La vraie nature du FPR/ APR*”, Paris, L’Harmattan 2003; Ruzibiza, A.; “*Rwanda. Histoire secrète* », Paris, Edition du Panama 2005; Pean, P. « *Noires fureurs, blancs, menteurs* », Paris, Editions Mille et Une nuit 2005.

ideology. This one was operated in favor of massive commitment of the Rwandese. That ideology was built around elements which allowed the creation of a perverse climate that was favorable to the progress and legitimization of the massacres.

In Rwanda, like in other countries which experienced genocide¹³⁴, the genocide ideology is presented as a syncretism capable of ramifying in all directions and producing great consensus. That ideological discourse which preceded and accompanied the genocide against the Tutsis ramified in all directions and was nourished by the 1959 *revolution*. To understand this situation better, it is important to remember that the 1959 revolution was portrayed as a stage of Rwanda's renaissance. The authorities were fond of referring to it in order to obtain more legitimacy and maintain the Hutu masses in permanent tension with the view of eliminating any divergent thought.

The dynamic brought about by the 1959 Revolution favored identification of two categories of Rwandese citizens, friends and enemies of the regime in place. The category of friends was composed of the Hutus in general for whom the regime expected to exercise power. As for the category of enemies, it consisted of all Tutsis who were globally considered as enemies, i.e. Hamites, feudalists, conspirators saboteurs, power hungry and blood thirsty people or a threat to the unity and existence of the Hutus, etc¹³⁵. From October 1990, references to people's identities re-appeared with rare persistence in order to give meaning to the attack by RPF. These references were also aimed at facilitating communication by using passwords as well as strengthening the unity of the shaken Hutus. The ethnization of the war started by RPF in 1990 constituted one of the conditions of great mobilization of the population. Value judgments attributed to ethnicity indeed accelerated the process of socialization around ethnic "value" as well as the development of habits of hatred which favored swinging into genocide.

As anywhere else, war is not limited to recruitment and putting the forces in a state of alert. It also implies to call for and coordinate support. It involves adapting the administration and

¹³⁴ Burrin, Ph., « *Hitler et les Juifs : Genèse d'un génocide* », Paris, Seuil, 1989; Bougarel, X., « *Bosnie : Anatomies d'un conflit* », Paris, la Découverte, 1996.

¹³⁵ See the leaflet published by the Presidential Information Service under the title. "Ingingo z'ingenzi mu mateka y'Urwanda. Imyaka cumi y'isabukuru y'ubwigenge", Kigali, 1972, p 9-15.

the economy to the prevailing situation as well as imposing the sense of checking and reducing any resistance that may crop up. Despite visible signs of a serious crisis, the citizens did not still have fixed opinions on the problems they were facing. The mobilization had then to consist of putting together intellectual resources that were adoptable to the desired end.

Newspapers had to fix attitudes and behaviors by reactivating responses that were already in place. They also had to ensure an explicit ethnic base so that the resistance or struggle against RPF becomes immediately efficient and capable lasting for a long time. In either of the two cases, resort to thematic identification of the population crystallized the emotions of those who felt that their belief and identify were attacked.

By coming back to the same themes at regular intervals, the newspapers showed what was causing a stir. In other words, they imposed an image of realities in which State authorities and the population had to intervene. Hesitation or passiveness *vis-à-vis* the fundamentalist line that was chosen by the regime was denounced by writers of newspaper articles as accomplices of the aggression. That was done with the aim of making everybody take sides with partisans of the regime in place.

Resorting to term like “*Tutsi ambition or provocation*” “*peasant suffering*” “*popular anger*” *war/return to feudalism, war/Hima-Tutsi invasion* induced the problem of self defense. An analysis of the political speech relayed by the official and private media shows that from 1992, there was a feeling of probable failure within the Rwandese regime. Indeed it appeared as if that demand for multipartism on top of the war could undermine the foundations of its power. On the one hand, the emergency of multipartism showed that ethnicity could no longer ensure the basis of the regime’s legitimacy. On the other hand, pressure from RPF strengthened the feeling of possible military failure.

As it can be observed from other genocide processes, there exists a profound relationship between the conscience of failure and resorting to violence. When a regime admits its vulnerability, it tends to resort to violence in order to impose its authority and thus recover its prestige. It is obvious that a demand for democracy and the war cannot solely be a prelude to commit mass murder. It is here that the ideology appears like a decisive mobilization appeal. In a situation of serious crisis, the ideology works by constructing the identity of those who are under threat

and those who are responsible for or are perpetrators of the threat. This process of building identities produces reactions of reciprocal mistrust. It legitimizes and operationalizes violence.

In the genocide process, this type of mobilization generally produces two results. Firstly, it fixes before hand, the exclusion of the victims. The victims are radically cut off the rest of the human community. Secondly, it prepares the future killers morally to do the dirty “job”¹³⁶. Manipulated about the horrors awaiting them, the latter become more and more committed to engage in the massacres. In order to definitely break the indifference and passiveness of some Hutu who were still hesitant to commit the massacres, the ideological discourse resorted to the rumor mongering with the view of sowing fear and hatred.

By evoking future enslavement of the Hutu by the minority “*Hima-Tutsis, who would perpetrate genocide against the majority Hutu*”¹³⁷ was a fact that overwhelmed the inertia of most Hutus. In order to achieve total commitment, the genocide organizers designed a framework from which the Hutu could understand the suffering that was awaiting them. The massive commitment of the Hutu in the genocide against the Tutsi was the result of an ideological propaganda which portrayed all the Tutsi as a threat to exterminate the Hutu.

This propaganda led to sentiments that perceived the Tutsi as a threat to be discarded or eliminated. Since Rwanda’s accession to independence, these representations underlined putting in place the exclusion practices. The regime’s principle was indeed based on revenge against the Tutsi and the idea that Hutus were the incarnation of democracy. After the start of the war in 1990, these representations constituted a series of background speeches aimed at the massive destruction of the Tutsi. All this shows that before being an act of physical destruction, the genocide followed a process or mental preparation which developed into a vision of elimination of others.

¹³⁶ Coded language used by the genocide ideologues to refer to the extermination of the Tutsi.

¹³⁷ Association des Femmes Parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de l’Enfant et de la Mère (AFEPADDEM) Mugesera, L., « Toute la vérité sur la guerre d’octobre sau Rwanda » In La Relève du 1-7 février 1991, p.3.

VII
RWANDA DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD
(July 1994-September 2003)

By Charles KABWETE MULINDA

In terms of politics and governance, the transitional period marked the end of one era and a beginning of another. In other words, new institutions were put in place after those which were previously imposed had failed.

The civil war and massacres that started on 1st October 1990 and culminated into genocide and chaos in 1994 provided an obvious proof for the collapse of the existing political ideology at that time. This was coupled with the collapse of the country's administrative system that had been in power since 1962. Among other things, the transitional period introduced two major changes, namely the rebirth of Rwandan citizenship and a new constitution that was to characterize the rule of law.

Thus, all Rwandans were bound to enjoy their rights and duties. These rights belonged to them not as a result of their identity as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Nor were they a result of their birth places. They enjoyed these rights because they were citizens of Rwanda. Besides, the constitution was promulgated and the new laws stipulated in the constitution were henceforth seen as a reference point in terms of state management. This basic principle removed the practice of conducting state affairs exclusively on the wishes of the Head of State. It was this principle that was to determine the management of the transitional period and the creation of structures that characterized the Third Republic.

7.1 Political evolution

The process of reconstructing Rwanda politically was full of obvious challenges. It was a formidable task that could not be overlooked. It was necessary to seriously embark on political reforms which followed. The outcome of these reforms was a key factor in the survival of the country.

7.1.1 Political Program of the Government of National Unity

Faced with these formidable but expected challenges, and faced with the chaos created by the deposed regime, the new government in power made reference to the following documents in order to formulate its program: the constitution of 10th June 1991, the RPF declaration of 17th July 1994 and the Arusha Peace Accord together with all its protocols.

In addition to these documents, there was an agreement between political parties: the agreement of November 1994. This agreement was adopted on 24th November 1994 before the Transitional National Assembly was set up. Lastly, there was the fundamental law (the 1991 Constitution and the Arusha Peace Accord) which were gradually enriched by other legal texts in order to conform to the realities of the transitional period. The objective was to clarify some contradictions raised by some of these laws.

Of all the documents mentioned above, the Arusha Peace Accord constituted a major source of inspiration for government action. This was especially because it integrated two essential principles in the management of the state, namely the establishment of the rule of law and the power-sharing arrangement. However, some modifications made in the RPF declarations of 17th July 1994 were enshrined in the Arusha Peace Accord to meet the challenges of the new situation:

- The duration of the transition, initially fixed at 24 months, was extended to a five-year period and was later extended to 4 years;
- MRND and its sympathizers as well as the members of other political parties which were supporters of the “Hutu power” or those who were involved in the 1994 crimes were disqualified from participating in the institutions of the Transitional Government. According to the Arusha

- Peace Accord, their posts were to be given to RPF;
- The principle of the formation of a national army was adopted. However, only the former Rwandan Armed Forces who had not participated in genocide and other crimes were to be integrated in the new armed forces.
- The introduction of soldiers into the Transitional Parliament;
- Independent people who did not represent any political party were to be accepted in government;
- Apart from RPF, integrating other political representatives into the institutions of the Transitional Government was not automatic. It was necessary to ensure that the latter were not associated with the forces that committed genocide and that they did not conform to the fascist and sectarian ideologies that had destroyed Rwanda;
- A review of the powers of Head of State was to be done and reinforced;
- The post of Vice President of the Republic was created; it was to be occupied by RPF; this post was to carry another ministerial portfolio.

In June 1994, RPF organized a working team in Mulindi. Its agenda was to brainstorm on the issue of managing the country after genocide. This group also made contacts with genocide survivors who represented political parties that were invited to take part in the establishment of institutions for the Transitional Government. On the request of the Prime Minister designate, an *ad hoc* committee that brought together various mandated political forces was invited to establish transitional institutions and to set up a government program. This program was significantly drawn from the ideas of RPF. On 19th July 1994, the government program was presented by Mr. Faustin Twagiramungu. He was the Prime Minister designated by the Arusha Peace Accord. The latter rotated on the following points:

- Restoration of peace and security;
- Organization of central and local administration, i.e. provinces, districts, sectors and cells;
- Restoration and consolidation of national unity;
- Settlement of refugees and returning their property;
- Improvement of living conditions of the people and solving the social problems that resulted from war and genocide;

- Revival of the country's economy;
- Redefinition of the foreign policy;
- Consolidation of democracy.

In his speech, the Prime Minister specified the government line of action that was to be followed in order to achieve each of the eight points above. It should be noted that this government program reflected, for the most part, the major political orientations by RPF, namely the consolidation of national unity, restoration of democracy, reconstruction of a dynamic national economy, fighting against corruption and embezzlement of public funds, creation of social services, solving the refugee problem, cooperation with foreign countries and support to other movements that were struggling to defend human rights in their respective countries.

As far as political leaders were concerned, Joseph Kavaruganda, in his capacity as the government official who was charged with the code of political ethics, addressed a letter to the Prime Minister at the beginning of January 1994. It contained a "list of politicians who fulfilled the requirements to participate in the Transitional National Assembly" as well as the definitive official list of Members of Parliament (MPs) who would constitute the Transitional National Assembly". These political parties were 15 in number. They are stated below according to the order in which the Chairman of the Constitutional Court presented them: MRND, FPR, MDR, PSD, PL, PDC, MPBP, RTD, UDPR, PPJR/RAMA RWANDA, PECO, PDI, PADER, PSR and PARERWA.

In accordance with the Arusha Protocol on the power sharing arrangement, the letter of the Chairman of the Constitutional Court stated that each of these parties, i.e. MRND, FPR, MDR, PSD and PL were entitled to 11 MPs whereas PDC was entitled to 4 MPs and each of the other parties was supposed to have 1 MP. In the same letter, the Chairman of the Constitutional Court specified that: "the task of inviting these parliamentarians to the swearing-in ceremony was to be done by the state and its protocol department".

CDR was not on the above official list. Yet, those who accused RPF of blocking institutions of the Transitional Government insist on RPF's refusal to include CDR among the political parties that fulfilled the conditions to participate in the Transitional

National Assembly. This refusal cost Kavaruganda his life. He was assassinated early in the morning on 7th April 1994 by members of the Presidential guard under the command of an officer who acted on the orders of the President¹.

During the establishment of the transitional institutions in July 1994, only RPF, MDR and PSD, PL, PDC, PSR, UDPR and PDI were officially recognized. What was the real weight of each of these political parties? Many peripheral political parties were weakened by the fact that many of their senior members had joined the wave of the 'Hutu power' and many of them lacked leadership since their senior cadres had been killed by genocide perpetrators. This is what is stated in the RPF declaration of 17 July 1994: "meanwhile given that some political parties lacked leadership and given that the reason for their existence had been undermined as a result of a systematic liquidation of their members by genocide perpetrators, consequently, the political climate at that time was different from what was obtaining at the time of signing the Arusha Peace Accord regarding the power sharing arrangement". Lastly, the educational level or the political experience of political cadres for these peripheral political parties was also questionable.

As for RPF and its military wing, its political organization was intact and its members who were spread worldwide provided an endless reservoir of leadership, ready to bring their contribution to those who were present on the ground. RPF had ousted the regime that was responsible for genocide and had embarked on restoring peace and security both within the country and along its borders, particularly the borders with Zaire. It should be noted that RPF provided political education for its cadres. In addition, all along the civil war, its political and military cadres constantly made a political reading of events by seeking to provide solutions to the challenges of all sorts that came about in the process of the civil war. Many witnesses who attended the Arusha Peace Negotiations unanimously agree that the RPF delegation played a key role during this process, to the extent that that the Arusha Peace Accord and all its protocols perfectly reflected the ideas of RPF.

¹ Duraquier, J. F., (dir.), *La justice internationale face au drame rwandais*, Paris, Karthala, 1996, p. 237.

For all these reasons, by subscribing to the principle of the power sharing arrangement, RPF imposed itself as a dominant political party. This position was clearly expressed in its declaration of 17th July 1994 that provoked heated debate *vis-à-vis* its political partners who, on the one hand, thought that the RPF declaration did not bring them on board and, on the other hand criticized the modifications proposed by RPF in the Arusha Peace Accord. Some sources even talked of a “coup d’état” and of “hijacking the democratic process” because none of their ideas was retained in the protocol.² It was only when RPF threatened to manage the Transitional Government alone that many of these political parties lowered their tone or abandoned their demands either out of conviction or perhaps owing to tactical withdrawal.

At least, RPF had three possible options: governing the country alone and applying its political program; bringing on board some politicians who were not RPF members but who were chosen due to their merit and considering the latter’s spirit of nationalism and conviction regarding RPF’s major guidelines and political orientation. The last option was to form a broad-based government that brought together political figures identified during the Arusha Peace Accord on condition that the latter were not involved in crimes of the deposed regime or did not subscribe to the ideology that led the country to chaos and disaster. This latter option was eventually adopted. It was therefore not a question of automatic inclusion into government and the Transitional National Assembly as provided by the Arusha Protocol in the power-sharing deal.

It should be noted that irrespective of their political beliefs, the political figures brought on board were aware of the situation after genocide. All joined hands in designing programs on a common platform of sorts with the following guiding principles: condemning genocide and the ideology which occasioned it and the restoration of national unity. All the parties agreed on the following five pillars: fighting against genocide and its prevention, ensuring equality of all before the law, promoting human rights, setting up a culture of democracy, unity and reconciliation.

Following an investigation by Transitional National Assembly which was conducted towards the end of 2002, MDR was

² Gasana J., Nkiko, Nsengimana, *Bâtir une nouvelle espérance pour le Rwanda. Eléments de propositions pour un contrat social*, Lausanne, avril 1995, p. 24.

excluded from the recommended political parties in the country. This was because it still held to a divisive ideology and had active structures and an underground operation not only at the level of its cadres in the public service and other organizations, including, religious organizations, but also at the level of school youth. Some people wanted to discern a maneuver intended to exclude a serious competitor in the forthcoming Presidential and Parliamentary elections, namely RPF. The parliamentary report was however detailed enough to distance itself from this accusation.

It was on the basis of this position by RPF that some people wanted to discern a maneuver intended to exclude a serious competitor in the forthcoming Presidential and Parliamentary elections. And, insofar as RPF was associated with a Tutsi regime in these areas or a regime of the Tutsi minority and, by extension, the Hutus who joined this government were considered as “the Hutus serving other people’s interests”. The adoption of the Protocol that allowed political parties to function strengthened such criticisms not only because of the introduction of the forum for parties whose main objective was to enable political circles to study all the major problems and to arrive at a consensus before taking important decisions but also they argued that the role of political parties was limited to a politburo style of decision making. For these reasons, multiparty democracy was often considered as a facade during the transitional period.

7.1.2. Restoration of state structures

As a result of the chaos provoked by the interim government which was on the run to Zaire, a political and administrative vacuum ensued. Hence, as the vacuum continued to be felt, RPF put in place an administrative structure to respond to the most urgent needs. These included, among others, dealing with the problem of the displaced people, the wounded, the sick, single children and the refugees who were returning home. But above all, the government aimed at ensuring peace and security in the country.

From its inception, the government was supposed to set up administrative structures from the top to the bottom. Due to lack of time to produce the most appropriate administrative framework, it maintained those left behind by the deposed

regime, i.e. central government, provinces (*prefectures*), districts (*communes*), sectors and cells.

The power-sharing deal was equally concretized because it was necessary to have negotiations between different political partners in order to organize the distribution of posts. The civil servants who wished to reoccupy their former posts were given a period of two months to do so. However, very few of them were able to do it. Since it was necessary to revive the administrative apparatus, the government recruited civil servants without considering their level of education or qualifications.

The appraisal report on the government apparatus established in 1995 - one year after setting up new state structures - indicated the following facts: insufficient numbers of civil servants, lack of equipment for civil servants, lack of motivation by civil servants owing to the fact that they had neither salary nor accommodation, a judicial system that had come to a standstill due to lack of adequate qualified personnel, cases of embezzlement of public funds, districts without leadership (*bougmetres*), inexperienced police force, MPs confined to Kigali, lack of unity in government, several ministries without sectoral programs, cabinet meetings poorly organized, etc. The appraisal report for the following years noted a gradual improvement in the functioning of different state institutions, especially at the level of the executive, the legislature and civil service. All these facts are analyzed in the lines below:

With the help of UNDP, the government started to conduct a census of all the necessary posts, making all job descriptions for all available posts as well as classifying them. This helped in identifying the personnel who lacked the necessary qualifications for every post. Ghost workers and posts were identified as well.

Still with support from foreign donors, the government put emphasis on capacity building of its staff in the civil service by organizing seminars and training sessions. Gradually, the working conditions improved. This was achieved through provision of regular salaries, establishing transport and communication facilities, repairing office equipment, providing accommodation, etc. In 1996, the state was able to increase the salaries of its employees by 20%. In this sector, there was wild competition between the local civil servants and employees in

international organizations as well as expatriate staff who had better salaries and working conditions.

In order to motivate civil servants, the state adopted several strategies such as introducing accommodation and transport allowance, giving adequate accommodation to senior staff, provision of health insurance to civil servants and their families from 1999, etc. Hence, the government was able to revive a stable and more performing civil service with staff that was gradually qualified and motivated. The Transitional Government embarked on introducing new things. These included: computerization process of files for government employees, formulation of a law on the status of civil servants with a salary scale, classification of jobs, setting up a new system of assessment of performance contracts, etc.

7.1.3 Restoration of peace and security for people and property

Confronted with an administrative and political vacuum, the country experienced a lot of insecurity and a series of acts of violence and crimes, especially the massacres committed by *Interahamwe* and the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) who were still living in the country. They camouflaged themselves among the population or sometimes escaped from the camp of the ‘Safety Humanitarian Zone’ created by the infamous “*Operation Turquoise*” of the French. Furthermore, there were acts of revenge and other crimes committed both by civilians and RPF’s undisciplined soldiers. In addition, there were sporadic pockets of resistance launched by the Former Rwandan Army (Ex-FAR) and *Interahamwe* militia as well as some armed elements from refugee camps in Zaire. In this domain, the government program aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Putting an end to war and creating a national army;
- Putting an end to all problems and conflicting situations created by the *Interahamwe* and other factions which had plunged the country into chaos and mourning;
- Restructuring security organs;
- Consolidating security for all in the entire country;
- Conducting serious studies and prosecuting all suspected perpetrators of genocide and those who were responsible for massacres, vandalism and looting;

- Reorganizing the country's courts in order to ensure the independence of the judiciary and the enjoyment of rights for every citizen.

The establishment of peace and security was therefore one of the priorities of the new government because without security, no other activity would be possible. The actors involved in maintaining peace and security were the army and police as well as the political and administrative leaders. The security forces and agents responsible for justice attended intensive seminars in order to carry out their duties efficiently.

Other aspects that attracted bitter criticism against the Transitional Government included the mysterious assassination attempts, disappearance of people, massive arrests and imprisonment of suspects of genocide. Many people talked of a "syndicate of informers" and denounced the conditions in which people were arrested and imprisoned. They also complained of cases of prisoners who stayed in custody for a long time without any file; they complained of overcrowded prisons and the appalling conditions of detention centers. These criticisms emanated from the critics of the new regime and sometimes from people and organizations of good faith but who never considered the realities on the ground, especially during this very difficult post- genocide period.

The major challenge that the new regime was confronted with was to ensure that people of divergent backgrounds lived harmoniously together in one village, i.e. genocide survivors, refugees of the two First Republics who were largely Tutsi. They were expected to live with their Hutu brothers and sisters, some of whom were described by the globalization events as genocide perpetrators. To these was added the 1994 refugees who were basically Hutu for the most part. This challenge was so intricate because the security agents at that time were basically non-existent or inadequate and they had limited means. There was still a big number of criminals who were still at large; some sought to destroy all possible evidence; there were also those who witnessed their crimes. Others tried to take advantage of the situation to do revenge, seize other people's property or commit other crimes.

Two other formidable challenges were supposed to be solved. On the one hand, there were camps established in the 'Safety

Humanitarian Zone' of the French. On the other hand, there were murder incursions organized especially from Zaire and, to a lesser extent, from Burundi and Tanzania.

There were camps of displaced people in which local populations were held hostage. Here, they served as human shields and provided political capital to lure humanitarian organizations. The camps also served as a hiding place for thugs and crooks and military training camps for the former Rwandan Armed forces (Ex-FAR) and *Interahamwe*. These acted as rear-bases for criminal incursions intended to capture state machinery. These camps created a situation of 'a state within a state' because they were completely beyond the control of government authorities.

The UN Mission for Rwanda (MINUAR) could not take the risk of entering these camps and the humanitarian organizations which were working in the country did not understand properly the nature of activities conducted in these camps. Some of these organizations were party to the ideology of the forces that were manning these camps.

At the end of 1994, thanks to the sensitization campaigns on the return of the displaced people to their former places of residence which were conducted by the Rwandan government, 38 out of 46 camps were closed. Others were gradually closed. The last camp of displaced people was one in Kibeho which had become a sanctuary for criminals. The government of Rwanda resorted to the use of force on 22nd April 1995 and unfortunately, there were heavy human losses, to the tune of 300 people - according to government sources - and between 4,000 and 8,000 according to the critics of the Kigali regime and RPF in particular. The report of the International Committee on Research on the Kibeho events rejected the hypothesis of a Tutsi plan to exterminate the Hutu and leveled criticisms against MINUAR and the NGOs which tolerated criminal activities that were organized in these camps. The report proved that there was shared responsibility between government and its partners, MINUAR and NGOs. Besides, the report also showed a concerted plan between the government of Rwanda and its international partners, particularly MINUAR and NGOs, regarding the closure of camps of the displaced people. After publishing this report, Belgium, Holland and the European Union resumed their cooperation with Rwanda.

7.1.4. Challenges of unity and reconciliation

In the field of “reconciliation and consolidation of national unity”, the government identified the following tasks and duties:

- Informing the Rwandan population about the causes of division and hatred that took place in recent times;
- Preventing those suspected of committing genocide, massacres, looting and destruction of property from occupying posts of responsibility at whatever level;
- Setting up a National Commission charged with unity and reconciliation;
- Ensuring that nobody should take advantage of criminal acts in which they had participated.

In its major guidelines, this program aimed at long term achievements because the losses caused were enormous and repairing them required a long period. In this connection, some points had to be clarified, especially the clarification on whether the Rwandan people have ever formed a Nations-State? If yes, why, how and by who? Secondly, we shall show when this unity collapsed? Then we shall analyze why and how we should reconstitute national unity, showing the factors that influenced or prevented the reconstitution of this unity?

The proposal for the National Political Charter of 1990 is very clear on this point. This is what it states: “For more than a Millennium, the Rwandese people formed a Nation-State in the sense that lineages of agriculturalists-herdsmen recognized themselves under one common heritage founded on history, language, culture and economy; this was a complex and precious heritage that was transmitted from one generation to another. Every Rwandese participated in the social and economic management of their lineage. Gradually, there were lineages that struck alliances between themselves whereas others quarreled about who preceded the other. In short, that is how kingdoms came to be formed”³. The meeting held in Urugwiro Village of 1998-1999 revisited this clause by basing itself on the politics of reconciliation and the existence of Rwandan unity before colonization.

³ La relève, no 154 of 28th December 1990 to 3rd January 1991

However, this unity was undermined during the struggle for power that took place in the 1950s and during the establishment of the Hutu Republic in 1962. We have seen how history was manipulated with a view of entrenching the politics of ethnicity. This politics explains the fate that was reserved to the Tutsi and Hutu “traitors” during the First and Second Republics⁴.

Those who transcended the boundaries of ethnicity were terrorized by the partisans of perverted solidarity. The Hutu were called upon to be in solidarity with their ethnic lot even in cases of committing crime. The Tutsi who still believed in peaceful coexistence between the Rwandese and especially beyond ethnic circles were considered as naive⁵.

Under President Kayibanda and President Habyarimana, the Executive confiscated all the power to the extent that it was abusive and even erroneous to state that all Hutus were accountable for the crimes and acts of violence committed in their name; and that this was done without the consent of their neighbors, their Tutsi friends and allies, both in towns and villages. It is difficult to assess the percentage of Hutus who effectively were party to the ideology spread by the elite to maintain themselves in power. The local populations were often weak compared to those in power. The former did not always condone the injustice committed against the Tutsi. In all phases and particularly in 1994, the organizers of crime did everything possible to give cover to Hutus as much as possible.

However, it should be remembered that during all the periods of the Tutsi persecution and the persecution of Hutus opposed to genocide and during the worst moments of genocide, it was established that there were Hutus who risked their lives – indeed some of the latter effectively lost their lives. They protected the Tutsis who were on the run and gave them sanctuary. A lot of ink has been poured on the stories of criminals. These stories continue to make fresh revelations. The story of anonymous heroes who were many in number should be hailed because it constitutes a strong foundation on which the rebirth of the Rwandan nation can be built.

⁴ Présidence de la République, « Ingingo z’ingenzi mu mateka y’uRwanda Imyaka cumi y’isabukuru y’ubwigenge 01/07/1962 – 01/07/1972, Kigali, 1972

⁵ Sebasoni, S., *Les origines du Rwanda*, Paris, L’harmattan, 2000, pp. 160-161.

Besides, personal relationships continued to exist despite the distinction between Rwandans living in the country and those in the Diaspora and this, despite ethnic distinctions. Some entire families of Hutus experienced the same life in exile like that of the Tutsis and some of their children in Rwanda joined the liberation struggle. This constitutes another strong point in favour of unity and reconciliation.

Divergent views have been advanced in the quest for the restoration of national unity. Some people proposed that Rwanda should be placed under a new UN Trusteeship for a period of 5 years. This proposal seems not to have enjoyed success. One should ask why this new Trusteeship would succeed better than the mandate of the former Trusteeship supervised by Belgium on behalf of the UN. It was the UN which questioned the process of granting independence to PARMEHUTU. Lastly, the above proposal came at a wrong time because the behavior of the UN, represented by MINUAR on Rwandan soil was contested. The UN was not able to prevent genocide and massacres despite all the information it had on the matter. The drastic reduction of MINUAR forces at that time rendered the UN less credible in the eyes of Rwandans and before informed observers. Instead, they were supposed to increase the number of UN troops in Rwanda in order to stop the genocide and massacres.

Other voices have echoed the fact that in order to facilitate the return of refugees and ensure national harmony, it was necessary to grant a general amnesty to all those who committed crimes. Others finally proposed a political dialogue between the representatives of refugees, in particular the interim government in exile in Zaire and to apply the terms of the Arusha Peace Accord, albeit with minor modifications. They forgot all that happened between the period of signing it and the establishment of institutions of the Transitional Government in July 1994.

In general, although the program set by the Government of National Unity to achieve reconciliation was expected to produce long term results, some of its achievements already made and the strategies identified for future programs started to produce tangible results. First of all, many aspects of this program differed from the past experience. This was the case regarding the removal of identity cards with ethnic inscriptions introduced in the 1930s by the Belgian Trusteeship. Aware of the danger that

these identity cards would cause to the Rwandan people, UNAR proposed to withdraw them. However when the Hutu movements interpreted this to be a Tutsi maneuver, they strongly supported the retention of the ethnic inscriptions. Without hesitation, the Government of National Unity decided to remove them. Not only were the inscriptions on identity cards used at roadblocks during the PARMEHUTU regimes up to the tragic months of April-July 1994 but they were also used to make discriminative appointments during the First Republic and during the politics of regional and ethnic balance⁶.

The removal of these cards that symbolized the politics of ethnicity in the political life of Rwandans was a move in the right direction. It is clear however that political decisions and administrative documents cannot easily remove an old policy that had existed for more than 30 years, including all the psychological feelings and behavior that went along with it.

This explains why in the current administration of the Transitional Government, this factor was taken seriously. In effect, in reorganizing ministries and the public service and, in restructuring parastatal organisations, the Hutu-Tutsi divide continued to be felt. This had a dual advantage of avoiding government departments to be dominated by either Hutus or Tutsis. At the same time, this strategy ensured that these ethnic groups complemented each other positively in a spirit of teamwork among people who have always evolved together in different contexts and environments.

The restoration of national unity was supposed to pass through reconciliation. This would be achieved by removing the politics of impunity which was the basis of all failures. In the new political dispensation, there was need to correct the manipulation that the Rwandan people had been subjected to for a long time, having been corrupted and downtrodden upon by poor leadership. For all intents and purposes, the major instrument of achieving the policy of reconciliation and restoration of national unity was the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC).

⁶ Habyarimana, J. ,Ikiganiro Perezida wa Republika Perezida-Fondateur wa MRND yagiranye na na ba Mitans bo muli za prefegitura zose z'u Rwanda, 16 mata-6 Gicurasi 1976, p. 70.

The program of the above commission fitted well within the entire agenda of the Transitional Government. Created On 12th March 1999, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission set out to achieve the program designed by the government. It established constant contact with the population who informed it on the causes of division and the calamities that had characterized the recent history of Rwanda. NURC sought to identify and analyze the failures of regimes which denied and destroyed national unity and the consequences that followed. Lastly, it sought to present and explain a new political direction regarding national unity and reconciliation. The long trips conducted by the Commission across the country helped to explain the importance of justice to the population. The Commission also helped the courts to engage the Rwandan people in dialogue on various issues of genocide.

The Commission was also charged with the task of organizing solidarity camps (*Ingando*) for various categories of people and the public. These included: the youth who were preparing to join higher institutions of learning, soldiers who were preparing to return to civilian life, former soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces and *Interahamwe* militia who wished to be reintegrated to the new national army and return to civilian life, officials in charge of local and national administrative posts, teachers, etc. The commission was charged with organizing periodic meetings between the Rwandan Diaspora and the Rwandese within the country. NURC also was finally tasked with organizing international consultancies, conferences and debates and to conduct research on various thematic areas.

Today, the commission has an upper hand in the annual commemoration of the national mourning event. It oversees the search for and dignified burial of the remains of genocide victims. It inaugurates genocide sites and establishes contacts with survivors. The annual reports of the commission provide data on the current debate on genocide matters. NURC also establishes contacts between various members of the Rwandan population and foreign partners under the framework of the policy of restoring national unity and reconciliation.

7.1.5. Justice in the post-genocide context

Genocide resulted from an institutionalized culture of crime, based on ethnic racial discrimination that started in 1959. Nobody was able to predict the extent of the drama that unfolded. In the first place, nobody imagined the magnitude of this violence. Secondly, the state of generalized impunity ended up convincing a big portion of the population which that, in the name of ethnic majority, people could do anything they wanted with impunity and that the life of Tutsis was worthy nothing.

As far as restoring the judicial system was concerned, the new government had an enormous task. For instance, the judicial system which was rendered vulnerable before 1994 could not easily handle the post-genocide situation. There was lack of qualified personnel, the executive held a tight grip on the judiciary, the conditions of work were particularly difficult, etc. This was confirmed by the report compiled by an International Commission appointed two years before genocide was committed. The Commission reported: “the major weakness of the judicial system was that the people who were responsible for violence continued to move with impunity. After consulting of the file on the penal proceedings (...), the commission concluded that the judicial process had been paralyzed”⁷. In any case, like in all dictatorships, the Rwandan judicial system was controlled by the executive.

The situation became worse after genocide and the massacres of April- July 1994. Many magistrates and employees of the Ministry of Public Service were killed or imprisoned. Others escaped to exile. In any case, everybody agreed that without equitable justice, reconciliation between the Rwandan communities could not take place. The number of people arrested, often without respecting the normal legal procedures, reached an approximate figure of 120,000 people in January 2003, 80,000 of whom were prisoners who were kept in central government prisons and the rest, in district prisons. Owing to the lack of proper investigation, the army arrested whoever was reported. According to the Ministry of Justice, in such conditions, it was difficult to avoid excesses. Given the situation that the country was going through after genocide, some of the criticisms made were sometimes malicious and irresponsible.

⁷ International Commission, Communiqué issued on 22nd January 1992

The acts of revenge coupled with the extrajudicial executions and illegal detentions and disappearances committed after the war were almost inevitable. Although they were regrettably condemnable, these acts did not match the magnitude that they were given by the smear-campaign of the new regime. The latter was manned by stalwarts of the former regime and their accomplices. However, these acts gradually reduced as new institutions were put in place.

The government was confronted with the problem of overcrowded prisons. Instead of stopping to arrest presumed suspects, the Transitional Government did everything possible to expand the capacity of its prisons in Rilima, Nsinda, Kimironko, and Gikondo. This was done to improve the living conditions of prisoners. Government supplied prisons with material and trained its staff. The table below gives a comparison of the state of the judicial manpower between 1994 and 2002.

Table 18: The state of the judicial personnel between 1994 and 2002

Judicial personnel and public prosecution offices	State of affairs in December 1994	State of affairs in December 2002
Judges of the Bench	244	700
Magistrates	12	246
Court Clerks	59	325
Secretaries in Public Prosecutor's Office	56	123

Source: *Data provided by the government of National Unity*

Despite these efforts, justice became a major preoccupation for many Rwandans. Thus, the survivors felt that the government was not doing enough to help them in terms of justice, in compensating them and protecting them. They also felt that the process in place was not done in a satisfactory manner.

As for sympathizers of the former regime and those who were minimizing or denying the nature of genocide massacres of

April-July 1994, they had no confidence in the judicial system set up by the Transitional Government which was identified with the Tutsi community. Many reports spoke of a “justice favoring the winner” or a “pseudo-justice” because they thought that it aimed at avenging the Tutsi community. For people with such sentiments, they argued that judging the Hutu for genocide implied that RPF leaders who were also responsible for war crimes should also concurrently face judgment. They were worried to see “almost all the Hutus who had held posts of responsibility since independence pursued by the long arm of justice”⁸. Lastly, many of these did not support the idea of prosecuting all of them before justice. Similarly, there were other sentiments expressed to the effect that millions of peasants who had killed their compatriots were too many to be imprisoned.

The government understood that the amnesty given by an official order was not a protective measure for committing a second crime. Neither was it a guarantee for reconciliation. The amnesty was to be granted after confession, punishment and compensation. In order to speed up the process of handling files of criminals, several selection committees were set up. This was followed by the creation of mobile groups. The latter handled 23,418 files; they liberated 4106 people, 352 of whom were minors, 762 were elderly, 302 were sick and 2,690 people lacked proof of being guilty. These figures were smaller than expected.

Later in September 1996, the Rwandan Government promulgated a law on genocide. It aimed at bringing all the suspects of genocide crimes before justice⁹. The major characteristic of this law was to categorize the nature of responsibility of crimes. There were four categories at the top of which were planners of genocide. These fell in the first category. Another challenge dealt with how to pardon those who had admitted the crime they had committed.

The law did not produce the expected results. Almost 2,000 cases were judged up to 2001. Those who confessed were 20,000 even if the process continued up to the eve of establishing Gacaca courts. It was necessary to solve this problem which was paralyzing the

⁸ Bulletin d’information africaine du 12 octobre 1994

⁹Rwanda government, The organic law no. 8/96 of 31st /8/1996 on the organization of legal proceedings against genocide crimes and crimes against humanity committed from 1st October 1990

entire process of social and political reconstruction. This point was considered with utmost importance by the discussions held in Urugwiro Village. These discussions encouraged the government to explore the possibilities of using Gacaca as a solution to the above problem. Gacaca was proposed by Rwandan researchers as a suggestion proposed by the Commission of inquiry set up by RPF. It was indeed discovered to be the most appropriate method¹⁰. After several consultations with a team of experts and consultants coordinated by the Ministry of Justice, the solution in favor of Gacaca started taking shape. It culminated into a law which was adopted by Transitional National Assembly (TNA) on 12th October 2000¹¹.

a. Gacaca Jurisdictions

Gacaca was introduced as result of recognizing the failure of the judicial system at that time. The judicial system had been paralyzed by a heavy backlog of legal proceedings that were still pending. Gacaca was seen as another method of concretizing and trying another system of justice, namely moving from an exclusively punitive system of justice to one that would restore confidence, one in which all the Rwandese society was involved. The Gacaca formula was received with enthusiasm by the Rwandese who viewed it with a lot of hope¹². However, it was looked at with varying sentiments regarding its performance and expected results both by the genocide survivors and prisoners¹³ as well as foreign observers. More than 70% of the Rwandan population found that Gacaca was an appropriate measure, including even the survivors who had associated the system with disguised amnesty. This group later softened its criticism towards Gacaca. However, paradoxically, the law on Gacaca and its procedures were known to a very small minority.

The results which were expected from Gacaca courts were as follows: revealing the truth associated with the genocide, making speedy trials, encouraging the participation of the population as a method of removing the culture of impunity, involving the

¹⁰ President of the Republic, Report on the reflection meetings held in the office of the President of the Republic from May 1998 to March 1999, Kigali, August, 1999.

¹¹ Cahiers du centre de gestion de conflits, "Les juridictions Gacaca et le processus de réconciliation nationale", no 3, 2003

¹² Les évêques catholiques, Pour une justice qui réconcilie, 13 juin 2002

¹³ National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Opinion Survey on participation in Gacaca and national reconciliation, January 2003

population in punishing those who had committed crimes with the view of reinforcing unity among the Rwandese, reconstructing the country's social fabric, drawing from the Rwandan culture in order to manage conflict resolution to lead to development.

Gacaca courts respected national administrative boundaries, namely cells, sectors, districts and provinces. These were numbered approximately 106,84 instead of 12 specialized chambers provided by the Rwandan organic law of 1996 which was manned by approximately 260,000 men and women who acted as judges of integrity (*Inyangamugayo*).

Gacaca trials which started in June 2002 mobilized the efforts of government and civil society organizations. There were worries at the beginning of 2003. These were associated with the following factors¹⁴: the declining interest of the population, some judges elected by the population were also accused of committing genocide, there were cases where, for fear of being denounced and arrested, some people preferred to flee the country, some judges did not know how to read and write, many meetings were boycotted for unidentified reasons, there were witnesses or accused people who feared for their life and security; there was a tendency to systematically exonerate presumed suspects especially by families of the detained; some judges were demanding salary; there were families whose members were killed by RPF soldiers and the former wished that the latter be judged; some complementary legal tools on the law establishing Gacaca courts had not yet been passed, for example there was no legislation on compensation.

It was agreed that the process of testifying before Gacaca courts could succeed on condition that a sensitization program was conducted before the population. This was because, during the first meetings, some people gave false or incomplete information on the proceedings of Gacaca courts, its objectives and its phases. However, there was a lot of optimism about Gacaca. Those who admitted and confessed their participation in the massacres were exonerated. But there were some who were set free as soon as they were liberated¹⁵.

¹⁴ African Rights, *Gacaca justice, a shared responsibility*, , November 2002”.

¹⁵ Ministère de la Justice, “Dans cinq provinces, ceux qui ont fait des aveux qui sont en liberté”, in *Kinyamateka* 1614, Mutarama II 2003.

A new development in the process of Gacaca was introduced by the presidential decree of January 2003. It required all qualified instances to free people who had admitted their crimes albeit, under some conditions. Other people who were to be set free included: those above 70 years, the sick and the minors at the time of committing crimes. It was agreed that more than 40,000 people be handled under this clause. Lastly, according to the report of the Ministry of Justice issued on 4th February 2003, 21,410 people were set free. A big part of these participated in solidarity camps for three months before joining their families. This decision was neither amnesty nor political tactic as some people have put it. It was simply a measure intended to implement what was previously decided at Cabinet level regarding Gacaca courts.

Having said this, the sensitization campaign conducted by the government did not appease the survivors and their cohorts. This was because everybody was surprised by the period served by criminals which was very short. Lastly, there were some abuses noticed regarding the implementation of the presidential decree on the matter. There were some people who were set free but, when their cases were revisited, they were returned to prison.

b. Role of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)

Confronted with the nature and magnitude of the Tutsi massacres which the country experienced, RPF chose to invest itself in a campaign to convince the International Community that the massacres which took place in Rwanda were tantamount to genocide. Thanks to this campaign, the international reporters and researchers were sent to Rwanda to observe the facts on the ground. This was done amidst pressures exerted by some countries which minimized or even denied that this event qualified to be genocide. However, after admitting that genocide had taken place, a campaign was conducted under the auspices of the UN as well as the Diplomatic Missions accredited to Rwanda to set up an international court. They demonstrated that without this court, there would be more serious consequences. These consequences included a repeat of a similar atrocious event in the future intended to avenge the dead.

From the beginning, it became apparent that the project of the UN to establish an International Tribunal differed from the position

of the Rwandan government on many points. The government made many protests on the issue but to no avail.

After a lot of legal ramifications, the UN Security Council finally adopted Resolution Number 955 that created ICTR on 8th November 1994. Some of its clauses are still irrelevant. They were criticized at that time by the Rwandese government. Thus, Rwanda which had taken the initiative to request the UN to set up the International Tribunal was later against its establishment. Rwanda not only criticized the conception of the said tribunal but it also criticized its *modus-operandi* on many accounts.

Hence, the essence of the International Tribunal was not only to try persons who had committed crimes against humanity, but also those who had participated in Rwandan genocide during the period between 1st January and 31st December 1994. For the Rwandan government and some national organizations of human rights, the period concerned was supposed to be extended, given that the genocide had been planned. The other criticisms pointed out dealt with, on the one hand, the location of the proposed headquarters of the Tribunal. Rwanda resented the location of the Tribunal to be in a foreign country, specifically in Arusha, arguing that the crimes were committed in Rwanda by Rwandans and that suspected criminals needed to be tried in Rwanda. Another criticism made was about the penalty given to the suspected criminals. In international law, a death sentence was not allowed. This was contrary to the Rwandan legislation at that time which granted a death penalty. Since then, the relation between ICTR, the Rwandese government and the association of genocide survivors (IBUKA) continued to worsen, leading to new developments and sometimes, stalemates.

In one press conference, the General Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of Rwanda accused ICTR of suffering from “political pressures emanating from some foreign governments”. There were people who wanted ICTR to judge RPA soldiers for crimes against humanity and war crimes¹⁶. The chairman of IBUKA requested that “the tribunal (...) should give assistance to genocide victims to enable them survive”, especially women and girls who had contracted HIV/AIDS during genocide. He considered this as “a compensation and reparation” in his report. He proposed that ICTR should transfer its headquarters

¹⁶ Diplomatie judiciaire no. 18 2002, page 8

to Rwanda¹⁷. In addition, ICTR was accused of being slow¹⁸ and corrupt due to the poor treatment it gave to witnesses. For instance, there were complaints on the need to establish ethnic balance and recruitment at ICTR.

From its inception, ICTR suffered from the problem of red-tape. It was always viewed as a scandalous body because genocide survivors felt that suspected criminals were given better treatment by ICTR than them. The survivors wondered at a big budget given to such an organization whose track record was poor and which was characterized by lengthy trials.

a. Limitations in promoting human rights

Some progress was made in the field of human rights promotion. The report of the National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR) attested to this fact. This is also supported by another report on the campaign for the defense of children's and women's rights. For its part, the International Community felt that the presence of the UN special report on human rights in Rwanda was not necessary. But there were still many things which remained unsolved. The UNHRC report pointed out the urgency of a land law that was needed to solve many pending conflicts. The report further denounced the illegal imprisonment and disappearance of people, the non-executed trials, the interference of the executive arm of government in judicial matters and the prolonged ICTR trials¹⁹.

Many Rwandese were of the view that corruption was rampant especially in the Justice department. Instances where corruption was noted included:

- Corrupt magistrates: they were corrupted by suspected criminals or their family members in order to favor them in their judgment and to declare them innocent or reduce their sentence;
- Falsification of files by the judicial staff and prison wardens²⁰;
- Deliberate disappearance of files by the judicial

¹⁷ Mugesera, A., Discours, in Conférence internationale sur la vie après la mort, Kigali 2001, p. 3

¹⁸ TPIR/ICTR, since nine years of its existence, TPIR/ICTR had dealt with 11 cases, 12 people had been declared guilty and one person was set free, May 2003.

¹⁹ CNDH-NHRC, Raporo y'umwaka wa 2011, p. 82-84.

²⁰ Ibuka, Congrès de l'Ibuka, du 15 au 16 septembre 2011.

personnel leading the defendants of many suspects without files to be set free

- Slow speed of trials (*itinda ry'imanza*);
- Granting prisoners permission to exit jail which were abused, especially those suspected of genocide crimes, prison staff gave permission to prisoners to work, enjoy family visits and getting married;
- Setting prisoners free as a result of political, administrative and military interventions;
- Threatening some people with imprisonment charges of genocide; this was done by the magistrate and prison staff in order to extort money from the former;
- Irregularities in the sale of goods and property belonging to people who were absent or those who were living outside or who were in prison²¹ and survivors who were of minority age;
- Illegal imprisonment declared on rich or affluent people, etc.

The above feeling by the majority of Rwandans on the high level of corruption within the judicial system at that time was supported by many witnesses. Hence, in the NURC Byumba assessment report, they complained of “justice which functioned poorly (...) this was the cause of slow trials or trails which were postponed without any valid motive”²². In the annual report of National Commission of Human Rights published in 2000, it was stated that: “it has been reported that a big part of these violations are based on the poor execution of decisions made by courts and a big part of the responsibility goes to the department charged with decision implementation. The Commission stressed that, as long as this point was not addressed, nobody would respect the outcome of a judicial system that did not respect human rights”²³. The National Judicial Commission also proposed to restructure the country’s judicial system.

²¹ *ibid*

²² NURC, “Ubutabera bukora nabi bigatuma imanza zitihuta cyangwa zihora zisubikwa nampamvu”, in *Le verdict*, no 32, Ugugshyingo 2001 p20.

²³ NHRC, Annual report of 200 March 2001, p. 29.

7.1.6 Differences of opinion on political leadership

We have identified the political actors who attended the forums above. The debate that followed highlighted the role of RPF not only in setting up a government political program but also in state management. Another point that was discussed was the forum of political parties and how the latter would function and co-exist. But, there were several divergent points of view. We have also noted however that, as far as the most important issues were concerned, the parties met at a joint-round table to forge a common vision for the country, namely restoring national unity and establishing the rule of law.

As far as state management was concerned, there were differences between political parties. In the first place, the parties worked together through trial and error. This was inevitable because people who had never co-existed were put under one managerial umbrella to assume roles in which they lacked skill and experience. They therefore operated in difficult conditions whereby everything was practically was to start from scratch, and especially so, with limited financial and material means. The political parties were poised to make innovations in almost every field.

The Prime Minister outlined the major political orientations of the country. However, it was necessary to design specific sectoral programs. On top of the internal desperate security situation where the genocide forces were still moving at large in the entire country or escaping from refugee camps, there was also a problem of the international community which was often hostile “to the government led by the minority”. On this was added a vast smear campaign. Many people were sweat-talked by the allies of the international community and accomplices of the deposed regime to go into exile. They aimed at organizing a strong opposition to the new regime which was predicted to fall within a short period of time. Put together, all these factors led to hostile working climate.

In several reports issued by RPF before 1998, the top leadership of the party made several self-appraisals. They addressed several issues like: weaknesses in leadership, negligence, lack of commitment, theft, corruption, sectarianism, violence, poor functioning of commissions, weak mobilization, etc. It was in

February 1998 that RPF took a new turn by proposing two major decisions, namely making RPF the engine of government in order to bring a fundamental change in the country and ensuring that all Rwandese were properly sensitized on RPF goals and objectives. This was done after the RPF self-appraisal on its role after taking over the reigns of government and after setting up new management structures.

Henceforth, RPF effectively contributed to establishing sectoral programs. In the meantime, it experienced an internal crisis especially regarding some of its senior figures in government as well as its top civilian and military cadres who went to exile. Some officers were accused of joining the army of the *King* in Uganda. This army was expected to regroup. It comprised RPF dissidents, former Forces of the Rwandan Army (ex-FAR) and *Interahamwe* as well as new recruits. In another development, the government spokesman blamed some ministers of sidelining the RPF position in making appointments of *préfets* (Governors) and *burgomasters* (Mayors).

On top of this RPF internal crisis, there was the issue of President Pasteur Bizimungu. The latter ended up by submitting his resignation. President Bizimungu hoped that, having been in control of government, he would use his influence to censor some ministers. The Transitional National Assembly (TNA) had censured MDR ministers like Anastase Gasana and Ngirabanzi but not ministers from other parties, notably from RPF such as Donald Kaberuka (Minister of Economy and Finance) and Jean de Dieu Mucyo (Minister of Justice). The President believed that he was not consulted in taking various decisions between RPF and other parties. There was a heated debate which generally ended into contentious issues, especially the status of RPF (as a dominating party), and the Forum of parties as well as the functioning of parties at territorial level. Unlike RPF, other parties functioned without contact with the grassroots. The former continued to recruit more members into its ranks and was well represented at the grassroots.

In November 1994, MDR produced a document in which it made some criticisms which can be summarized as follows: that RPF, had usurped power and people's property. On several occasions, MDR members demonstrated their differences *vis-à-vis* RPF. Towards the end of 1994, Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu

made a declaration that deeply shocked the nation. He said that the national event of mourning genocide victims was too long! The report conducted by the TNA from 24th December 2003 showed that several secret MDR structures were founded on PARMEHUTU ideology.

The TNA recommended that government should decide the fate of MDR. It was resolved that this party be removed from the list of the country's political parties charged with state management. It should be noted that other parties did not have any specific criticism against RPF nor did they question the way the state was managed. Some serious criticisms against RPF were made by political organizations in the Diaspora, namely the *Rassemblement pour la Democratie au Rwanda* (RBR). In addition, some organizations and allies of the former regime also criticized the way the state was managed.

7.1.7 Democratization and good governance

After the tragedy which befell Rwanda in 1994, it would have been naive to demand for strict democracy from the Transitional Government. However, the basic principles and structures were gradually set up after the first phase of emergency. At first, it was necessary to give meaning to terms like *democracy*, *majority* and *minority*. According to PARMEHUTU founders, their militants, allies and foreign accomplices, the term democracy meant the elimination of Tutsis from the political scene through violence. To them, democracy meant bringing *Rubanda Nyamwinshi* to power (i.e. another name for the Hutu community).

It is true that, in a democratic regime, the majority has the right to power. This power is determined by regular elections. In Rwanda's case however, the majority and minority were determined by adherence to a political program that resulted from personal choices. This therefore excluded the majority-minority criterion which was determined by birth in a negative sense as conceived by PARMEHUTU-MRND. According to the latter, elections referred to an ethnic count whose results were known in advance.

Before engaging the Rwandan people in the process of democratization, the Transitional Government was consequently supposed to correct this original concept of democracy which

was already internalized by a big portion of the population. Did the Transitional Government succeed in this endeavor? The presidential elections of 2003 provided an affirmative answer to this question.

Although it was considered as a negation of democracy, the original view of democracy spilled over the borders of Rwanda and Africa. It became popular elsewhere, with followers and militants in countries which had evolved for centuries. In this regard, many journalists, academics, writers and politicians addressed this issue.

The forums organized in Urugwiro village under the chairmanship of the Head of State played an important role. These meetings brought together people who had an important role to play in the process of decolonization. These included representatives of UNAR and PARMEHUTU). There were also important actors affiliated to the First and Second Republics; there were civilian and military personalities engaged managing the Transitional Government as well as university specialists on the history of Rwanda. The themes handled included: the ancient history of Rwanda, the struggle for independence, the relations between the constituent communities of Rwanda, Rwanda's civil war between 1990 and 1994 and its consequences, the restoration of national unity and reconciliation. The forums held in Urugwiro village constituted the culture of dialogue between RPF and its partners. It offered an initial leap into Rwanda's democratization process.

The second step dealt with the organization of a series of elections. After several sessions of sensitization on new ideas of democracy at all levels, and after citizen participation as well as administrative and political management, the next step was to organize elections in 1998. This was done by electing grassroots administrative committees (cells and sectors). Later, the 2001 elections were organized by electing Executive Committees as well as district and municipal council representatives.

By engaging in this political process of democratization, the Government of National Unity introduced several innovations. The major ones were:

- The electorate lined behind the candidate of their choice; this naturally provoked resentment from followers of the secret ballot;
- The heads of Cells and Sector Councilors no longer managed their administrative regions alone; an executive committee made of eight elected members was introduced. In addition, a Consultative Council made of all the citizens within the constituency aged 80 years and above was appointed;
- In places where the structure of female and youth were already in place, the coordinator became a member of the executive committee automatically;
- The people could at any time disqualify any member of the executive committee who was considered not to be serving the interests of the population.

The Urugwiro village forums were essentially characterized by the culture of dialogue and consultation between all national institutions. The members aimed at debating issues in order to give a political direction on various important topics regarding the political, economic and social aspects of life of the country. It was during these forums that the following policies were introduced: regrouped settlements (*Imidugudu*), law on Gacaca, program of national reconciliation, etc.

The national press, notably the radio, played an important role in enabling the population to share views on government programs and proposing implementation strategies. The private press and radios, many of which were set up during the period the Transitional Government, contributed significantly to this debate. Foreign radios like BBC, DW, and VOA also played a commendable role.

The year 2003 which closed the period of the Transitional Government culminated into a referendum as well as presidential and parliamentary elections.

7.1.8 Constitutional and Judicial Commission

In the process of preparing the fundamental law, the Judicial and Constitutional Commission embarked on a task which was

seemingly long for those who did not understand its objective. It stated as follows: “the constitution shall be written in favor of all Rwandese; that is why the commission shall spare no effort to concentrate on this point. In this context, the commission shall adopt a participative and inclusive approach that cuts across all its phases and plans of action (...)”²⁴.

After electing its 12 constituent members on 10th July 2000, the commission started business in January 2001. It organized a series of training sessions for its members and partners. This was done at ministerial and national levels. The national and international consultations enabled the population to get acquainted with the objectives of the commission and to write the necessary working documents.

The second phase consisted of sending members of the commission to the grassroots to sensitize the population on the issue of the constitution. They also wished to gather ideas that people wanted to include in the constitution. In addition, they aimed at making the first draft of the constitution basing on ideas collected from the population and presenting the draft constitution to the people. It was surprising to see that members of the commission even involved prisoners in this process! This was also a new innovation. In order to realize this project, the commission was ready to receive all the ideas using ordinary mail, telephone (free calls), using e-mail facility and encouraging people to visit Commission offices. The commission also made visits to several countries to learn from constitution-making experiences abroad. The commission produced a brochure entitled “Summary of views of the population on the new constitution”. The draft constitution was presented before a consultation team made of almost 700 experts. Later, the revised version was tabled to Government and Parliament for amendment before producing another draft which was officially resubmitted to the above bodies.

As a result of its contact with the population and cadres in different administrative departments, the commission discovered that very few people understood the meaning and importance of the constitution to the country. This explained why past leaders had modified constitutions in their favor. Hence, these consultations and training sessions enabled them to understand

²⁴ The Constitutional and Judicial Commission Report, February 2003.

the importance of this document. Through trainings, they also discussed its content on a point-by-point basis.

The debates involved handled the following points: the question of political parties and the sentiments held by Rwandans on single and multiparty politics. The forum of parties was considered by some people as an ideal solution. However, others saw it as an occasion where the dominant party was muzzling the voices of other parties, suppressed the opposition by proxy. It should be noted that no interviewed member within the allied political forces officially shared the above point of view²⁵. Can it be assumed that this was done by all or some of them did it through other means?

The constitution making process was guided by the following ideas: equitable sharing of power, restoration of the rule of law and multiparty democracy, fight against the ideology of genocide and ethnic divisions, establishment of national unity and formation of a state determined to promote the wellbeing of the population and social justice, permanent search for social consensus through dialogue, etc. Other principles included: consulting the population, integrating input from specialists as well as input from the Constitutional and Judicial Commission and input from the National Assembly of the Transitional Government, etc.

In comparison with previous constitutions, the new constitution had a number of important innovations, namely:

- Institutionalization of multiparty democracy; but at the same time, it introduced an ethical code for the ruling party and other political parties. The nasty history and excesses which characterized the past political movements led the legislature to take precautions by highlighting the importance of ethics in serving as a guiding principle for political parties;
- The political parties which did not obtain 5% of votes during electoral consultations were not allowed to join Parliament, nor were they benefit from state funding. This aimed at eliminating mushrooming political parties;

²⁵ Reyntjens, F., *Analyse de l'avant-projet de constitution de la République Rwandaise*, Anvers, le 11 février 2003, p. 9.

- The MPs were to be elected for a five-year term in a direct and secret universal suffrage;
- 30% of the seats were to be reserved to women;
- A Senate was to be made of members elected partly by District and Municipal Councils and partly designated by competent authorities;
- The creation of a committee of reconciliation: this was intended to provide a framework for reconciliation among the population before referring to courts at higher levels. The objective of this decision was to strengthen unity among the Rwandan people through dialogue;
- The creation of new commissions: the Commission on the Fight against Genocide, the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Custodian of Citizen's Rights, the Office of the Auditor General charged with controlling state funds, the Rwandan Academy of Language and Culture, the "gender observatory", etc.
- A semi-presidential regime.

The draft constitution provoked some reactions. Some examples are outlined below. After formulating a series of criticisms on the text, the International Crisis Group warned the International Community in these terms: "if the International Community funds Rwanda's elections, it will be considered as an accomplice of the *status quo*"²⁶.

After critically reading several articles on the draft constitution, F. Reyntjens came up with some negative remarks on the technical imperfections of this document. He wondered if "Rwanda had legal specialists in constitutional law". He went on to say that "despite its apparent nature, this is not a constitution". (...) A close look at the text reveals that the writers (...) base themselves on the proposals of the Transitional Government in place. In other words, this constitution can only work if the power-relations remain the way they currently are (...). This is not the first time that Rwanda has adopted an ad hoc constitution, tailored to suit the interests of the people in power"²⁷.

²⁶ International Crisis Group, *Fin de la transition au Rwanda: une libération politique nécessaire*, Nairobi- Bruxelles, 13 novembre 2002, p. 9

²⁷ Reyntjens F., *Analyse de l'avant-projet des constitutions de la République Rwandaise*, Anvers, le 11 février 2003, p. 9.

The Permanent Group of Rwanda's Democratic Opposition' (CPODR) which was made of several political organizations also criticized the Kigali regime. It resented the constitutional and electoral processes "unilaterally set up by the regime in Kigali by using political machinations and stereotyped ideas (...) that did not correspond to any practical reality"²⁸.

7.1.9. Decentralization

One minister in the Government of National Unity had this to say regarding Rwanda's administrative system in place at that time: "(...) We found an MRND system in place (...). The major weakness of this system was that it was dictatorial. It was resolved to provisionally keep these structures but reform them as soon as possible. Today, it has been done. The trade mark for RPF has been to give a say to the population and encourage leaders to come closer to the population."²⁹

Rwanda's decentralization policy was an important innovation. Its objective was to empower and invite the population to participate actively in debates on issues that concerned it directly. It also aimed at encouraging the electorate in the countryside to provide information and explain issues in order to take decisions knowingly. The decentralization of activities went hand in hand with the decentralization of financial, material and human resources. The policy enabled the population, not only to elect its leaders, but also to control them. Where need be, the policy enabled the population to replace them through regular election. It was this new policy altogether that changed previous mind set which was based on central administration whereby people were used to receiving orders. The major setback in realizing the decentralization policy was that some leaders at the grassroots did not earn any salary despite acting as pillars of the system. As time went on, the people started to get used to this policy.

It was adopted after consultations and discussions with the population. The Ministry of Local Government which was set up in 1999 published a document in 2000 entitled "National policy on decentralization". This was followed in 2002 by another

²⁸ Sebasoni, S., "La contestation du régime rwandais dans la diaspora", in *Grands Lacs Hebdo*, février, 2003.

²⁹ Muligande, C., "Les propos de l'ancien Secrétaire Générale du FPR et ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères et de la coopération régionale", in *Grands Lacs Hebdo*, février 2003, p.11.

“Policy on community development”. The major ideas of these sectoral policies can be summarized as follows:

- Enabling the people to participate in decision making at all levels;
- Enabling the people to freely choose leaders known to them;
- Giving a strong foundation to transparent management and, consequently, fight against bad practices in managing public funds;
- Promoting equality of all before the law. In achieving this policy, the government set up three levels of administration: central administration, de-concentrated administrative entities (province), decentralized administrative entities (district and towns). The government proceeded to setting up new administrative demarcations that took into account the viability of the set-up entities;
- Encouraging ministries to gradually reduce their load and responsibilities in favor of decentralized and de-concentrated units in terms of staff, material and financial means corresponding to tax categories and imports. It is still early to assess the impact, advantages and disadvantages of the decentralized policy. Nonetheless several advantages can be outlined.

Map 13: Administrative map of Rwanda (2001)



This policy encouraged teamwork in decision making between Councils and Executive Committees at local administration level. It brought services closer to the people in order to solve their problems. The policy also helped in enforcing unity in so far as Rwanda’s ethnic communities were concerned. In addition, the people participated in choosing and checking their leaders. Above all, the people took decisions jointly on concrete programs and activities.

However, the decentralization policy also had its disadvantages or eventual shortcomings. These included: low level education of the people concerned, poor standard of living, lack of experience this excluded some members of the population from participating in meetings; the problem of prestige based on an authoritarian

tradition. Some leaders occupying key posts failed to play the role expected of them in accordance with the decentralization policy. Some decentralized villages experienced the problem of poverty. There were inadequate resources to lead to development. The leaders relied on state and foreign donations. Lastly, some local authorities in the country were left out as far as the policy of decentralization was concerned.

7.1.10 Foreign policy

The Government of National Unity was supposed to make new innovations in its foreign policy. In achieving this objective, it was necessary for the government to assess the challenges in this field in order to determine its sectoral policy. This was done by considering all the favorable factors and challenges.

After genocide, Rwanda's name was no longer associated with its good climate. Neither was it associated with the beauty of its landscape anymore. The sophistication of Rwanda's culture and the smartness of its *Intore* dancers- winners of international trophies – became a thing of the past. Henceforth, Rwanda became known as a country of machetes whereby the majority Hutus finally resorted to violence in order to definitively eliminate and exterminate the minority Tutsi community.

The first diplomatic task of the Government of National Union consisted of showing the world how the former leadership had managed to hoodwink Western countries, organizations like the UN as well as religious groups. Rwanda's backward leadership was based on the politics of exclusion whose effect characterized the history of independent Rwanda. Nobody questioned this leadership and civilized nations never threatened to impose any sanctions on this country. The 1994 genocide was officially planned for a long time. The first task of the government consisted of showing that Rwandans had made a resolve to live together again, restore national unity, promote a process of reconciliation, build a democratic state poised to respect all the international conventions on human rights. To this end, the Government of National Unity sent its representatives and missions all over the world.

Another major challenge was to conduct an independent diplomatic policy. Despite the proclamation of independence

in 1962, Rwanda was under the Catholic Church, Belgium and later under France. Its diplomacy was influenced by other powers, namely those who gave cover to genocide and war crimes committed between 1990 and 1994. These powers supported the deposed regime in exile with the intention of returning it to power.

When the new government appeared on the international scene, it demonstrated its independence before the UN, AU, and other international forums. Hence, the first ambassador of the new regime declared in the UN General Assembly that: "Rwanda is a sovereign state and France can no longer express Rwanda's position (...) as it does for other African francophone countries". The interventions made by Rwanda's delegations during various international forums rekindled Rwanda's pride and dignity not only within the country but also in the entire African continent.

Several partners of Rwanda who were used to policies of the First and Second Republics found it hard to get used to the demands of the new Rwandan regime whose major principal was respect for national sovereignty. It should be noted that the international environment was hostile for various reasons. The partners who were totally committed to the disposed regime became hostile to the new regime. Those who confused ethnic majority/minority with majority/minority systems found themselves in the camp of the vanquished and were left with no option but to call for the fall of the current regime. Some governments were always involved in this matter³⁰.

Alongside these hostile forces, there were however some forces which made a resolve to denounce the crimes committed in Rwanda and their consequences. On this point, many works have been produced by journalist, writers, artist, academics, etc.³¹ Mention should be made of African and non African writers who

³⁰ IDC, Summarized report concerning the meeting of Bukavu on the crucial theme in the return of Rwandan refugees, 23rd-28th October 1994

³¹ Gouteux, J.P, *La nuit Rwandaise. Implication française dans les dernières génocides du siècle*, Izuba-Esprit Frappeur, 2003 ; Verschave, F.X., *Complicité de génocides? La politique de la France au Rwanda*, La Découverte, 1994 ; Les Temps Modernes, *Les politique de la haine Rwanda, Burundi 1994-1995* ; Hatzferd, J., *Dans le nu de la vie. Récit des marais rwandais*, Paris 1994 ; Hatzferd J., *Une saison de machettes. Récits*, Seuil, 2003 ; Kayimahe, V., *France- Rwanda : Les coulisses du génocides - Témoignage d'un rescapé*, Esprits Frappeurs - Dogorno, 2003 ; Duparquier, J.F.,(dir), *La justice internationale face au drame rwandais*, Paris, Kalthara 1996.

evoked the Rwandan drama under the theme of “writing for the sake of remembering”. Lastly, many films were produced on the Rwandan tragedy.

In its diplomatic offensive, the Government of the National Unity put emphasis on neighboring countries. Zaire came first. The relations with this country were sour. This was caused by two factors: the Kinyarwanda-speaking Zairians who fled to Rwanda for asylum argued that they were harassed by the state; secondly, Zaire was giving military training to many new Rwandese refugees. This army organized and launched deadly incursions into Rwanda. However, the leaders of these two countries succeeded in establishing a *modus vivendi* between the two countries. This ended in the return of a Zairian plane which was held in Rwanda. In return, Rwanda got back its helicopters and some military hardware which were smuggled to Zaire by the Ex-FAR soldiers. However, despite these diplomatic efforts, more conflicts continued to escalate. There were several meetings held in Uganda between the representatives of Rwanda and Zaire in an attempt to bring back some element of calm. Unlike Zaire and Tanzania, Burundi managed to control refugee camps. At a moment deemed suitable, all refugees in Burundi were repatriated back to Rwanda.

Rwanda’s relations with Tanzania were good. They were strengthened by discussing a project of reviving the construction of the railway terminal to Isaka, and another line to link Tanzania-Uganda- Rwanda-Burundi-DRC. Another issue on the agenda was identifying land where a warehouse would be built for goods to Rwanda.

Apart from its immediate neighbors, Rwanda embarked on reopening embassies and consulates. It reopened diplomatic missions in country’s that respected the country’s interests. Besides, it strengthened its relations with international organizations, particularly the UN and its agencies as well as regional and pan-African organizations and NGOs. Though however, Rwanda withdrew from some organizations.

Lastly, Rwanda revived its ties with foreign donors and launched a recovery program in all sectors of the country. Some countries which were aware of the special situation of the country responded quickly. In turn, Rwanda participated in mediation

efforts aimed at solving border problems in Burundi, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Later, Rwanda was visited by many important dignitaries. Former Presidents Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela were among such visitors. It received and accredited foreign delegations, ambassadors and representatives of international organizations, particularly the UN, which played an important role in the reconstruction of the country. It should be noted that the recognition of the crimes committed in Rwanda against the Tutsi as crimes of genocide and the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) by the UN were tantamount to moral reparation.

Besides, the UN set up an independent commission of enquiry to study the action of the UN in Rwanda. The UN report concluded that there was failure on behalf of the UN in stopping genocide. The UN made a series of recommendations. One of these was to apologize to Rwanda³². Boutros-Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary General, officially apologized to the Rwandan people. Kofi Annan, his successor, went a step further by asking all member-states of the UN to meet on 7th April 2000 to commemorate the Rwandan tragedy. In addition, he organized demonstrations in New York and Geneva to commemorate the 10th anniversary of genocide. The same move was done by the Belgian Prime Minister. When the latter came to Kigali to commemorate this anniversary, he declared: "In the name of my country, and in the name of my people, I would like to ask you for forgiveness". Before becoming Prime Minister, he had participated in preparing a report for the Belgian Parliamentary Commission on the Rwandan tragedy.

The organization of African Union produced an excellent report of enquiry on "the Rwandan genocide and its consequences". It should be noted that the French Parliament also produced a report in 1998 on the role of the French intervention in Rwanda. Although this report exonerated France from the Rwandan adventure, it hinted on some useful on some interesting data worthy of exploration³³.

³² UN, *The Independent Commission of Enquiry on the action of the UN in Rwanda, 1990-1994*.

³³ Parlement français, *Rapport sur l'intervention de la France au Rwanda, 1998*.

In conclusion, one can affirm that the major principles of Rwandese diplomacy were defined in 1995/1996. They produced the following fruits: a new image for Rwanda stood out conspicuously though this was achieved gradually. On many occasions, Rwanda's views were sought during international conferences. The country established strong relations both at bilateral and multilateral levels. Henceforth, Rwanda started participating in international negotiations and peace-keeping missions. Finally, Rwanda regained its confidence and henceforth, it has continued to host regular international and regional conferences of high caliber.

7.1.11 Regional conflicts

Despite its efforts to restructure its diplomacy, Rwanda has not been able to avoid war with Zaire. It also had a latent conflict with Uganda.

a. Two wars with Congo

In July 1994, the most critical security challenge for Rwanda took place in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1997. Almost 50,000 former soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and 20,000 *Interahamwe-Impuzamugambi* militia were trained and protected by the French troops under an arrangement known as "Opération Turquoise". With arms, a combination of these negative forces and Rwandan refugees crossed the Congolese border into Rwanda. Their military arsenal was reinforced by the French support and Mobutu's generals who saw in the operation a source of income and personal wealth and grandeur.

In effect, the refugees received military training from the politico-administrative and military authorities of the former regime. The refugees were forced to sell part of their ration to contribute to the war effort. They made monthly contributions of 1.2 USD per refugee. Those among them who tried to come to Rwanda were executed on the spot by their own supporters as a strategy to discourage Rwandan refugees from returning to their country. Thus, refugees were transformed into genuine hostages. Their camps became a breeding ground for gradual recruitment of a new force.

It became clear that the security threat was both real and serious for Rwanda. In 1995, the Ex-FAR started to infiltrate into Rwanda. This operation was very easy for them since refugee camps which accommodated military structures of the perpetrators of genocide were located just a few kilometers from the Rwandan border, sometimes less than 1 kilometer away. Note that this was contrary to the international conventions regarding refugees.

Between 1995 and 1996, military preparations were escalating on the Congolese side of the border. The rumors in Rwanda got information from refugee camps that the attack on the country was imminent. The army of genocide perpetrators was heavily positioned and poised for attack. Two divisions in North and South Kivu were subdivided into brigades and battalions, with headquarters at Mugunga under senior officers for each battalion. These forces outnumbered RPF soldiers.

➤ **First military campaign in Congo/Zaire (18th October 1996- 17th May 1997): Mission and objectives**

It was on 18th October 1996 that war officially broke out in Uvira region between the Zaire Armed Forces (FAZ) and the combatants of *Alliances des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL). A violent campaign against the *Banyamulenge* was launched; these were a Tutsi community established in South Kivu for more than two centuries. This campaign was orchestrated by local authorities (Uvira zone Commissar/Governor of South Kivu, etc.). They connived with high political and military authorities in Kinshasa. The Hutu extremists from Burundi and Rwanda established in the Congo took advantage and jumped on the bandwagon to chase the Tutsi. During this ethnic purge, the death-toll has never been established. In the first place, the AFDL war appeared as if the *Banyamulenge* were resisting against the politics of extermination directed towards their community. Nonetheless, the objectives of this war were beyond that.

AFDL was in reality created in August 1996 in a private residence in Kacyiru in Kigali even if its official establishing act bears the name of Lamera (near Uvira). This residence was linked with AFDL and later RCD. There were four political organizations that made up this alliance: The *Parti de la Révolution Populaire* (PRP)

of Laurent Désiré Kabila, the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples* (ADP) of Déogratias Bugera, the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre* (MRLZ) of Masasu Nindaga and the *Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie* (CNRD) of Kisasa Ngandu.

On the military scene, the preparations for war started in the first half of 1996. Contacts were established between the Rwandan military authorities and the old militia of the *Mai Mai* and Bangilima of Kivu whose combatants were trained in Gisenyi region. Under RPA, the soldiers who were familiar with Zaïre were systematically selected from all units to constitute a new force ready to wage war in Zaïre in due course. Intensive infiltrations were gradually organized with destinations to Rwandan refugee camps in North and South Kivu.

When war broke out in October 1996, Rwanda's objectives were as follows: dismantle refugee camps and bring the refugees back to Rwanda, destroy the military structure of the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe-Impuzamugambi* militia. The third objective was the fall of Mobutu. This objective was not clearly stated at the beginning of the campaign. In an interview held by the *Washington Post* of 9th July 1997, Major General Paul Kagame, Rwanda's Vice President and Minister of Defense at that time noted that the fall of Mobutu was associated with the third objective that was "broader" than war. However, other observers felt that ousting Mobutu was not among the initial objectives.

The major and rapid campaign in dismantling refugee camps and military structure of the genocide forces enabled Rwanda to pursue its third objective. There were two factors that militated in Rwanda's favor: absence of least resistance from Mobutu's army and many Zairians who were extremely in favor of a rebellion that the people described as God-given. On top of the list of objectives pursued by Rwanda in the AFDL war, it is important to mention some of the objectives disseminated by media propaganda³⁴:

- The creation of a buffer zone at the border with Zaïre in order to protect it against attacks from ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* militias. This hypothesis was defended for a

³⁴ Braekmann, C., *Les nouveaux prédateurs. Politique des puissances en Afrique centrale*, Fayard, 2003.

- longtime by the Zaire government of Kendo-wa-Dondo³⁵;
- The annexation of Kivu by Rwanda had for a long time become a dream of some extremist anti-Tutsi circles in Congo and in the world. A fake document entitled “the agreement of Remera” was coined to support this hypothesis by demonstrating that there was an agreement between the Congolese rebels of the AFDL and the Rwandese in exchange for Rwanda’s support in the war against Mobutu. This hypothesis contradicted the theory of the ‘Hima Tutsi empire’ that was developed by the same circles ³⁶;
 - The exploitation of mineral resources in Congo was another reason cited to justify the military presence of Rwanda in Congo. A commission to verify the looting of resources by the forces on the ground was even commended by the UN. Apparently manipulated by France, this commission published its first report which was strongly criticized for “lack of professionalism and full of bias”. A second report was sponsored by the UN Secretary General who equally reshuffled the membership of the commission;
 - The extermination of Hutu refugees was another objective put on Rwanda and proposed by some circles during the AFDL offensive. A few weeks after the beginning of hostilities, the former French Minister of Co-operation, Bernard Debre, proposed “a re-demarcation of borders to create a Hutu buffer-zone near the Tutsi held areas”. “If these borders are not demarcated, he said, “There will be millions of dead Rwandese”³⁷.

What was the Rwanda’s role in the war against Mobutu? In response to this question, “Not many people believed that Mobutu was really weak”, declared P. Kagame to the *Washington Post* of July 1997. “There are not many people who thought that Mobutu was very weak. They thought of Mobutu as a big monster who wouldn’t be defeated, with his big hat and his big stick. They thought little Rwanda and big Zaire [...]. Only when we started did they look at the map and see the possibilities.”

³⁵ Kengo wa Dondo, Discours au sommet de l’OUA de Lomé en 1997

³⁶ Kamanda wa Kamanda, G., Discours du Ministre zaïrois des Affaires étrangères, au sommet des ministres de l’OUA à Lomé, sommet préparatoire à celui des chefs d’état et de gouvernement, in *International*, no 301, février 1997.

³⁷ Debre, B., *Le retour du Mwami : La vraie histoire*, Paris, Ramsay, 1998, p. 107.

In the same interview, the first of its kind during which a senior officer in Rwanda openly admitted the role of Rwanda in this war, Major General Paul Kagame admitted “the key role of Rwanda in the overthrow of President Mobutu”, pointing out that “it was Rwanda which had planned and led the rebellion which overthrew the old dictator”; and that “it was the Rwandan officers and troops who led the Congolese rebel forces”, and that “the Rwandan forces had participated in taking over at least four major towns, namely Kinshasa, Kenge, Kisangani and Lubumbashi”; and that “Rwanda had given training and arms to the rebel forces long before the beginning of the war that overthrew the Marshall.

Promoted by Western powers in the middle of the 1960s, Mobutu succeeded in imposing himself to a people he baptized as Zairians. There was nothing surprising therefore if his overthrow was considered a major event in the history of the world. The contribution of Rwanda in the process of his overthrow was never examined in its due perspective. This was because of obvious reasons: France’s hostility to the Rwandan regime, the rampant anti-Tutsi ethnic ideology within the region and the world, and the declining pride of the Congolese who felt humiliated for having been liberated by a tiny country like Rwanda. Some analysts have even reduced Rwanda’s role by talking of “a vast regional solidarity”, in the overthrow of Mobutu and an American complicity in the matter. Indeed, it was considered as a genuine “regional dialogue” that took place to support the AFDL rebellion. Nevertheless, the liberation of Zaire was initiated by Rwanda which was given an indispensable regional and diplomatic support. For the first time, there was a new wave of diplomatic mentality on the African continent. In the past, this type of dialogue and support were negotiated only by Western powers. Another contribution by Rwanda was that it brought African countries on board in making vital political and diplomatic decisions within the continent.

Many observers noted the achievements of this innovation with satisfaction. Citing the proposals of several ambassadors of the European Union in Kinshasa and Rwanda, a journalist from ‘*Nouvelle Afrique Asie*’ made the following comment: “African countries in the regional have decided to handle their destiny themselves and they no longer wish to wait for the West to give them permission to take action. This was a turning point in the

history of Africa and a lesson for the former colonial powers. The geo-politics of the region is experiencing rapid transformation”³⁸

Elsewhere, Rwanda almost went it alone in this war. Was it war mongering by Rwanda as some people have been led to believe? Certainly not! But the major reason was to ensure that Rwanda’s security and survival were maintained. This is what prompted Rwanda to join this war. Indirectly, the real weight of other actors was often exaggerated. This was the case of Angola “when it was determined to take over Kenge”. However, there is scanty information on the reasons behind “Angola’s support which was basically in terms of logistics. They sent descendants of Katanga soldiers on the ground. According to one RPF officer, Angolan soldiers were neither efficient nor disciplined”.

Uganda’s role in the Zairian war was equally exaggerated. Before the war, Museveni had promised 4,000 soldiers. But when war broke out, no Ugandan soldier took part. There was no Ugandan soldier who set foot on Zairian soil until Kinshasa fell. There were a few exceptions of Ugandan soldiers who acted on their own though without permission from the Uganda’s People’s Defense Forces (UPDF). Some circles put it that Museveni was the genuine planner and commander of the anti-Mobutu war. The former accepted this out of mere pride.

There were other actors who played a lesser role in the Congolese campaign. Some sources quoted the Americans for assisting Rwanda and AFDL in the campaign against Mobutu. However, the American role is not properly documented. The witnesses given by RPA tend to minimize the American support. Finally, the other actors that are often quoted were Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burundi and Zambia. Their real contribution in this war has never been determined. It should be noted that the fact that regional states supported the rebellion led to the fall of Mobutu’s regime.

➤ **Second military campaign in Congo (2nd August 1998 to October 2002)**

Rwanda’s relations with L.D. Kabila, Mobutu’s successor, quickly deteriorated. From the beginning, the fact that Kabila was supported by Rwanda to take over power in Congo was

³⁸ La Nouvelle Afrique-Asie, no. 94-95, July- August 1997

considered as a political setback in the eyes of the Congolese public opinion. Congo's political opposition under Tschekedi's UDPS at the leadership of the civil society in Congo promoted an anti-Tutsi discourse. Rwanda's connection with Kabila was a very strong factor against him before the Congolese people. That is why Kabila himself wanted to get rid of Rwanda as soon as possible. Rwanda's influence in the Congolese affair was considered as embarrassing. However, since he did not have his own army, Kabila begged Rwanda to lend him James Kabarebe as his Chief of Staff. The latter stayed in RDC with a reduced team of 199 soldiers up to the time of his dismissal in July 1998.

The Congolese felt humiliated by the fact that a foreigner was a Chief of staff for their national army. This development brought a lot of anger to those who still remembered Barthelemy Bisingimana Rwema who was the head of Mobutu's Cabinet for many years. The Congolese did everything possible to get rid of a Tutsi from such an influential post. Henceforth, they started witch-hunting foreign nationalities in DRC, a process that targeted Tutsis essentially. Here was a situation where Kabila, who was brought into power by the Tutsi army, gave a top post of Chief of Staff to a Tutsi. Some people wondered if it was not a mistake for Rwanda to accept such a post in the Congolese army.

Rwanda suffered an escalation of hostilities because it was targeted after Kabila's take over. The decision to withdraw all her troops from Congo was taken, by carefully warning other countries in the regional coalition to reinforce the Rwandese troops by a team of technical trainers. Tanzania was quick to send trainers in DRC though they faced a bitter anti-Tutsi and anti-Rwanda sensitization campaign. They trained the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* in Kitona camp though officially, they were supposed to train Kabila's members of the Presidential Guard. Rwanda protested before Tanzania and Kabila. The latter promised to stop this bad development. The Tanzanian trainers were changed on two occasions but the anti-Rwanda campaign escalated despite the fact that Tanzanian authorities pleaded innocent. They swore that they did not conduct this training. Lastly, a joint commission of inquiry between Rwandese and Tanzanians revealed that the anti-Rwanda and anti-Tutsi campaign led by Tanzanian instructors was directly conceived and orchestrated by Kabila himself. There was a lot of

consternation that led Kabila to apologize before the Rwandese, though this was not convincing enough for the Rwandese.

Effectively, Kabila visibly decided to distance himself from the Rwandese. He gradually organized his army and gave key posts within his security services to his own people. A lot of suspicion and hostility between him and the Rwandese increased. Some sources which wanted to discredit Kigali said that, at a certain time, the Rwandan army officers who were in Kinshasa wanted to overthrow Kabila but were faced with a problem of lack of an alternative leader. During their negotiations, it was difficult for them to find a Congolese capable of replacing him within a short period of time. In the meantime, Kabila was also alerted on the matter and his strategy of getting rid of the Rwandese was concretized. He succeeded in establishing contacts with foreigners thereby giving support to ex-FAR soldiers in DRC training centers³⁹.

Kabila secretly felt that by supporting an army which was hostile to Rwanda, likely to take over power one day in Kigali, he would solve his problem of getting rid of his allies who had become an embarrassment to him. This would help him to achieve his secret ambition of becoming a regional influential leader one day.

The dismissal of James Kabarebe at the end of 1998 and the return of the last Rwandan soldiers to Kigali marked the end of their relationship. On 2nd August 1998, the second war in Congo broke out. It was declared by the military command of the 408th Brigade in Goma. The rebellion spread very quickly across the rest of the country. An aerial attack on Kitona was linked with the army in the outskirts of Kinshasa. Its progress spread rapidly within the Bas-Congo. Kinshasa would have fallen had it not been for Angola and Zimbabwe which decided to intervene in favor of Kabila. Kabila's regime was narrowly saved.

James Kabarebe and his companions held a grip on Bas-Congo. There, they decided to strike in the northern part of Angola where, for two months, they controlled a territory bigger than Rwanda. They captured and controlled an international airport in Angola which they used to transfer supplies from Kigali. They later evacuated all their troops and came back to Kigali.

³⁹ Rutazibwa Pr., *Les crises des Grand Lacs et la question tutsi*, Edition du CRID, 1999.

The RCD rebellion continued towards the East, but at a slow pace. During the signing of the Lusaka Accord in July 1999, RCD-Goma controlled more than half the Congolese territory. According to Rwandese officials, “the Lusaka Accord came at time when the military situation was favorable for Rwanda and RCD”. Its soldiers were almost on the verge of marching to Kinshasa but “the friendly superpowers advised us not humiliate the region because such a humiliation could have harmful consequences for us”⁴⁰.

The Lusaka Accord marked four important achievements: (1) branding the Ex-FAR, *Interahamwe* and the Hutu Burundi rebellion as “negative forces”, (2) declaration of a cease fire, (3) withdrawal for 15 kilometers; during this withdrawal, Rwanda offered unilaterally to withdraw for 200 km and (4) setting up a follow-up committee. Like in other accords, the Lusaka Accord was less respected. The death of Laurent Désiré Kabila and his replacement by his son Joseph Kabila did not reactivate the matter immediately.

The accord signed in Pretoria on 30th July 2002 between Congo and Rwanda was about the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from RDC and the neutralization and hand over to Rwanda of all negative forces operating in RDC. Whereas the last Rwandan soldier left DRC on 5th October 2002⁴¹, the Congolese side dragged its feet in fulfilling its obligation as demanded by the agreement. Though two officers were handed to ICTR and some ex-soldiers and militias repatriated to Rwanda, the bulk of the Rwandan negative forces continued to operate in DRC with the complicity of Kinshasa. These forces always posed a threat to Rwanda. According to the accord signed between RDC and Uganda, in Luanda on 6th October 2002, the Uganda soldiers started withdrawing from DRC, though belatedly.

The South African mediation efforts took two major directions, namely the bilateral negotiations between Congo and Rwanda on the one hand, and with Uganda on the other. The second South African mediation effort dealt with the internal dialogue among the Congolese themselves. This mediation started in Sun City.

⁴⁰ Muligande, C., Declaration of 23rd March 2002.

⁴¹ The issue of total withdrawal was contested on several occasions without the UN Mission to Congo (MONUC) confirming or contradicting this information. There was no effort by MONUC to search and send negative forces to Rwanda. This was contrary to the mission which it was assigned by the Pretoria accord.

The process almost flopped on several occasions. However, it culminated in the establishment of institutions for a transition.

There was an accord signed between Joseph Kabila and Paul Kagame in Pretoria on 30th July 2002. Rwanda proceeded with withdrawing its troops from 17th September 2002 and accomplished its responsibility as stated in the accord before the set-dates. The Congolese side did not observe this commitment with similar promptness. The Ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* remained active on Congolese soil but were disarmed at Kamina. They withdrew their military convoys as a mere window-dressing exercise. Rwanda conducted secret negotiations in Kinshasa in which MONUC did not participate. The Rwanda rebels operating in Congo also attended these negotiations, leading to one ex-FAR General, Paul Rwarakabije, who surrendered, together with his team, to the Rwandese government on 15th November 2004.

➤ **The effects of the two military campaigns for Rwanda**

The two military campaigns in Congo produced tangible results for Rwanda in terms of security. According to official sources in Rwanda, the attack of 1996 led to 1,500,000 refugees who were repatriated from Zaire to Rwanda. In the same spirit, almost 300,000 exiles from Tanzania also returned during the same period⁴². Since 1998, RPA operations in Congo led to the return of an average of 15,000 refugees per day. “If we did not attack Zaire, the question of refugees would remain unsolved,” declared RPA Chief of Staff. The forced repatriation of refugees led to the suppression of the recruitment of the breeding ground of soldiers and undermined the genocidal forces. Although the relatives of refugees continued to stay in Congo-Brazzaville, Central-Africa and Zambia, there was no recruitment ground for them. Hence, their return to Rwanda started. Up to 2001, the genocide forces started recruiting child-soldiers of 9 years⁴³.

The two wars conducted in Zaire and later in RDC by Rwanda significantly solved the problem of security. The first war

⁴² Contrary to the refugees in Congo, those in Tanzania did not pose any security threat for Rwanda because the Tanzanian authorities were understanding: 70,000 guns and 50,000 machetes were removed from Rwandan refugees before crossing into Tanzania in 1994 and no major military activity was noted in the camps

⁴³ The operation known as “Oracle du seigneur/ Lord’s oracle” initiated by the genocide forces in 2001 in the north west of Rwanda revealed this sad development. There were many child-soldiers among 2,000 captured soldiers.

specifically intervened at an opportune moment. According to the RPA Chief of Staff, “our intervention in Zaire in 1996 was done at the right time. We defeated them simply because we took them by surprise. We would not have defeated them if the war had taken place inside the country”. The military structure of the genocide forces was carefully planned. At the beginning of 2002, the estimates of the RPA high command placed their residual forces at 1/50 compared to what it was in 1996. At the end of 2002, the UN put the figure of ex-FAR and Rwandan militias still operating in RDC at 10,000 whereas the Rwanda authorities quoted the figure of 50,000.

There were still some sociopolitical organizations undertaking military training. RDR praised itself when the refugee camps were still serving as bases for recruitment and training. However, after dismantling them, another one called PALIR was created with two military branches. The first branch was known as PALIR I. It was operating in Kivu. The second one was called PALIR II. These operated under the official military structures of RDC. In Congo Brazzaville and Central Africa, FDRL was formed. It was made of members of the former Presidential Guard. It became the best known military force at that time.

Later, FDRL was revived by Kinshasa authorities in the context of negotiating a power sharing deal with Kigali authorities under the DDRR program. With regard to these movements, FDRL claimed that it was made of youth who did not take part in the 1994 genocide though such claims were established as completely baseless.

➤ **Major challenges during the two wars**

France’s support was a major handicap to Rwanda’s military campaigns in Zaire/ Congo. The emergence of RPF and the power takeover in 1994 in Rwanda was a source of frustration for the French geo-strategic interests in Africa and in the Great Lakes Region in particular. France succeeded in protecting the genocide forces that were in disarray during the “*Opération Turquoise*”. In Cyangugu, Gikongoro and Kibuye, where the French troops were deployed, it took almost four months for the genocide forces to settle and organize a planned exile. The genocide forces destroyed everything that was in their way.

In addition, many acts of genocide were perpetrated in the so-called “*Safety Humanitarian Zone*”. Some days after the “*Opération Turquoise*”, the survivors from Kibuye reported several atrocities inflicted on the survivors to the nearest RPA detach. An RPA commando came to their rescue but quickly found himself trapped in a French ambush laid by the “*Opération Turquoise*”. RPA soldiers encircled all the French soldiers who were held hostage. Negotiations followed under the framework of a “gentleman’s agreement”. This enabled France to withdraw its soldiers secretly⁴⁴. In exchange, France was strictly forced to respect the date of withdrawing “*Opération Turquoise*” from Rwanda as set by the UN resolution which established it. Later, France withdrew within the fixed dates.

France continued to operate a hostile diplomacy towards Rwanda, especially in the Security Council and international organization. During the war with AFDL, France fought an underground war backing a wrong card until AFDL was definitively defeated. An analyst described the French policy in this region as an amazing failure⁴⁵.

During Rwanda’s military campaigns in Zaire/Congo, the events of the French crusade against Rwanda were characterized by the “Mobutu card”. Whereas the latter had become an outcast before the international community, especially after the Student Massacres of Lubumbashi in 1991, Mobutu got France’s support during the ‘*Opération Turquoise*’. With the AFDL war, President Chirac continued to present Mobutu as a man who was better placed to represent his country. His Foreign Affairs Minister, Hervé de Charrette said from March 1997 that he was incontestably the only person capable of guaranteeing Zaire’s territorial integrity. On the other hand, France backed on the UN intervention force. At the time of dismantling the refugee camps in Eastern Zaire, France immediately pleaded for the UN intervention force with similar underground motives of protecting the genocide perpetrators who were on the run, like during the ‘*Opération Turquoise*’. Many humanitarian organizations put a lot of pressure on this issue. USA and Great Britain resisted for a long time to the French proposal. However, this proposal received the support of Italy, Spain and Germany. When the Security Council finally adopted a resolution on the creation of

⁴⁴ Braeckman, C., “Interview avec Kagame”, in *Le Soir*, 5 décembre 1994.

⁴⁵ Grand Lac Hebdo, no. 356 du 15 au 21 juillet 2003.

an intervention force in November 1996, it was too late. Rwanda had succeeded significantly in achieving a massive return of more than one million refugees. A Canadian mission appointed by the UN to carry out this operation said that the mission had already been accomplished and that it was no longer necessary. The humanitarian force of intervention was demanded by France for a long time. However, it failed for several reasons. First, USA refused to support it. Secondly, it was also because of the failure of the '*Opération Turquoise*' and the criticism leveled against it. Lastly and most importantly, it was because of the massive return of the refugees. On this last point, a French journalist made the following comments: "the success of the political and military operation by Kigali in Eastern Zaire was so impressive that some people described it as an 'Israel-type of victory'".⁴⁶

The political deadlock and contradictions within the big family of the humanitarian agencies prevailed as long as Rwandan refugees were still in Zaire. But when the refugees left, this put to question the principles on which the humanitarian movement was founded. Rwanda's achievements regarding the massive and forced return of refugees led the following lesson: the forced return of the refugees served as a precedent that was admitted internationally as a new plausible humanitarian principle that was workable under some circumstances.

After the failure of humanitarian intervention, France opted for other cards to sabotage Rwanda's plans. It proposed an idea of a regional conference of the Great Lakes countries; it also launched a media campaign and several interventions in the Security Council on the massacres of Hutu refugees; it set up a commission of inquiry to permanently denounce Rwanda's military presence in DRC from the time RCD launched a rebellion; it exerted pressure on the Security Council to set up a commission on looting Congolese resources; it manipulated the said commission, etc.

b. Conflict with Uganda and some Banyamulenge

The other challenges of the two Rwandan military campaigns in Zaire/Congo were related to the crises that shook the alliance between Rwanda, Uganda and the *Banyamulenge*. The crisis with Uganda manifested itself mostly during the successive

⁴⁶ Bijard, L., *Le nouvel observateur*.

confrontations between Rwanda and Uganda's troops in Kinsangani in 1999 and 2000. But the disagreement went back in time when Uganda wanted to create rebels who would obey its orders among the DRC rebel structure; hence, the creation of Jean Pierre Bemba's MLC as well as RCD-ML. These were created at the instigation of Uganda.

The major misunderstanding appeared on 23rd September 1998 when Uganda decided to support RCD rebels militarily who resisted for two months. The Rwandan officers in charge of the operations in Kinsangani welcomed Ugandan soldiers. But the latter asked for a new military command structure whereby the two armies would be under James Kazini. The Rwandese rejected this proposal saying that the two armies did not operate a similar language of command and that neither did they have a similar military doctrine. On the contrary, they proposed to fight with each army in charge of its zone but helping each other in case of need. The military achievements in the zone controlled by Uganda were never impressive. On the other hand, Rwanda's frontline conquered more territory and gave some of it to Uganda.

After the second crisis in Kinsangani, the RPF president made a report on the situation during the Political Bureau meeting of 1st April 2000. According to him, the Kinsangani crisis did not begin at that time but it was a continuation of a crisis which existed before. Its origin fell in a broad context of "some Ugandan circles" whose position on Rwanda was: "tiny Rwanda must obey Uganda's orders and must be consulted without Rwanda imposing its decisions"⁴⁷. In the circles of the Uganda government, it was established that Rwanda "was not grateful for the services Uganda had rendered to it". As for the Rwandan side, "it was a question of each country having an equal say in the matter".

According to President Museveni (who told Nyerere), the Uganda-Rwandan conflict had two causes: "the Rwandese attacked Congo without consulting them in advance; they did not follow Uganda's advice"⁴⁸. The first report on the Kisangani crisis was mitigated to save Uganda's face. Some Ugandan officials asked Rwanda to apologize before Museveni who was annoyed with them, especially after the Kisangani incident where his soldiers

⁴⁷ RPF, Biro politike , 1 mata 2000, p.5.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

had been humiliated by the Rwandan army. Museveni is reported to have decided not to talk to the RPF president. And when the Rwandese informed their Ugandan counterparts that they were responsible for the provocation, the Ugandans replied: “during a quarrel with your angry father, when the latter throws a spear to you and misses you, you cannot react by avenging and throwing it back to him. On the contrary, you should quickly apologize before him to calm him down”. According to Uganda, this father-child relationship was perfectly relevant and the source of the conflict was the reluctance of the Rwandan leadership to confirm to this code.

Always, the conflict between these two countries was essentially a struggle for power and influence. As for Uganda’s leadership, they wondered at the success scored by Rwanda. Uganda wanted to occupy center-stage at regional and continental levels, suffering from superiority complex and playing a big-brother role that was unjustified.

Despite the efforts of reconciliation and the restraint observed by Rwanda, this conflict lasted for a long time. More especially, what was worrying was that, according to the Ugandan side, revenge was another factor that carried the day. Museveni and his people, all of whom were military generals could have prompted it. The Ugandans never contemplated peace as long as the Kisangani affair was not avenged. For them, it was necessary to have a new confrontation where Uganda would emerge victorious, i.e. where Rwandan blood would be shed to avenge the three bouts of defeat suffered by Uganda in Kisangani⁴⁹.

Therefore, the conflict continued and the matter was left to explode at any time. In March 2002, there was another incident in Bunia (Ituri) where these two countries almost went to war again. Here, the Ugandan troops ousted a local rebellion of the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) and this gave a leeway to Kinshasa troops and ex-FAR forces as well as the *Interahamwe* militias. Kigali threatened to send its troops to Congo to prevent the advance of hostile forces towards its territory. It was Great Britain which used its influence by playing a diplomatic game between Kigali and Kampala that softened the tensions.

⁴⁹ Grands Lacs Hebdo, numéro spécial, 334, 2003, p. 97.

The differences among *Banyamulenge* ranks can be traced to the first AFDL rebellion. Some incidents of indiscipline and insubordination occurred between Rwandan commanders and *Banyamulenge* soldiers. Later, there were political ambitions that involved some *Banyamulenge* elites who gave their support to the young soldiers of their community. There was solidarity between other native communities who aimed at forming a common “Congolese” front against the “Rwandese foreign invasion”. Masunzu was the rebel Commander and his rebellion fell within this context. He succeeded in securing an alliance with Kabila who gave him direct military support. He was also supported by the Mai-Mai and FDD, Ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* militia, without forgetting the political support from political movements opposed to the Kigali regime which was operating from abroad.

Some analysts have affirmed that the conflict between Rwanda and some *Banyamulenge* was due to the superiority complex which the *Banyamulenge* had. Historically, the *Banyamulenge* were by nature rebellious and contemptuous.

However, the year 2003 ended with peace within the entire region. In Rwanda, a stable political life was ushered in after organizing the first multiparty election campaigns since independence. Some leaders of the Rwandan rebellion operating in RDC handed themselves to the government of Rwanda. The relations with this country normalized a bit after setting up new institutions for the Transitional Government in Kinshasa. The Ugandan President participated in the swearing-in ceremonies for President Paul Kagame. This was a sign that warm relations between these two countries had come back.

7.2 Economic and social evolution

The economic disaster and social chaos inherited from the war and genocide was another remarkable challenge that the Government of National Union was poised to face. This was achieved in two-linked successive periods, i.e. the emergence period and development phase.

7.2.1 Emergency period (1994-1999)

The government of National Unity inherited a country that was economically and socially destroyed by genocide and war. The infrastructures were considerably damaged⁵⁰. The Rwandan population had lost more than a million members. More than two million of the other Rwandese had run to exile, and almost an equal number had been displaced in the “*Opération Turquoise*” zone and elsewhere in the country. The majority of those who had survived were traumatized; many families had been dislocated and reduced to nothing.

The 1994 crisis was preceded by that of 1985-1994 which was basically socio-economic in nature⁵¹ but it later acquired a political character.

Between 17th July 1994 and 2000, the government of National Unity put a lot of effort on the reconstruction of the country that had emerged from war and genocide. At the same time, it designed policies and programs of economic recovery and social wellbeing. These two measures guided its action from that time until today. It should be noted that the government did not work single-handedly. It received aid from the international community. It also benefited from other national actors such as the state, parastatal-organizations and civil society.

Just after the power take-over and the stopping of genocide on 17th July 1994, RPF *Inkontanyi* formed a Government of National Union. The government adopted an eight-point program which included: the repatriation and reinsertion of refugees and displaced people, improving life conditions of the population and the recovery program of the economy. Although it was expected

⁵⁰ Rugmamu, S., and Osman, GBLA, *Studies in Reconstruction and Capacity Building in post-conflict countries in Africa, some lessons of experience from Rwanda*, Revised Report, The African Capacity Building Foundation, December 2003, p. 6; *La gouvernance locale et la réduction de la pauvreté au Rwanda: enseignement tiré de l'expérience acquise*, Country paper Rwanda, Tunis, Tunisie, 21-24 juin 2005, p.2

⁵¹ Marysses et al., *Rwanda: appauvrissement et ajustement structurel*, Bruxelles, Institut Africain CEDAF, Cahiers Africains, no. 12, Paris L'Harmattan, 1994 ; Ministère du Plan, *Rwanda, Conférence de Table Ronde des partenaires au développement économique et social de la République rwandaise. La politique socio-économique du Rwanda 1992-1994*, Genève, les 2 et 3 juillet 1992 ; MIFOTRA, *La politique de l'emploi*, Kigali, 2005, p. 7

that this program would initially last for five years⁵², in practice, it continued.

In order to address the structural and cyclical problems of the country, the Government of National Unity designed programs which enabled it to mobilize for funds necessary for reconstructing and igniting the process of economic and social development. It first of all designed a program of National reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Development. This program was presented to the donors in January 1995 during the Geneva donor's conference. It aimed at "restoring the macro-economic framework of the country, restoring state management capacities, and reinvigorating the participation of national actors, reintegrating refugees and displaced people and the providing favorable conditions for the return to normal economic and social activities"⁵³. At the end of this round-table conference, Rwanda received an emergence aid of almost 600 million US dollars for the period 1995-1996. This aid contributed to rehabilitating and repairing the basic infrastructures and boosting agricultural activity. It also improved Rwanda's balance of payments.

In June 1996, a second donors' conference was organized in Geneva where the government presented a second recovery program entitled "Rehabilitation and development recovery program (1995-1998)". At the end of this donors' conference, Rwanda received almost 500 million US dollars to achieve its goals.

Thirdly, from 13th to 22nd April 1998, the Government of National unity negotiated a structural adjustment program before the World Bank and IMF. This was supported by the Reinforced Structural Adjustment Facility (RSAF). This facility was intended to stabilize the country's macro-economic performance such as the improving the balance of payments, controlling inflation, etc. This was done to achieve economic growth. In June 1998, IMF approved Rwanda's application to achieve RSAF. In 1999, this "3-year program was transformed into a 'Facility for Poverty Reduction and Growth' (FPRG). It was supported with funds worth 413.3 million USD.

⁵² République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 1996*, Kigali, juillet 1996, p. 1

⁵³ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, pp. 43-4.

Up to November 1994, the most important portion of Rwanda's income from international trade was channeled to refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania. But with the above mentioned achievements realized from the beginning of 1995, the government was able to reverse its retrogressive trend and as a result, it embarked on the economic and social construction of the country.

a. Economy

The agricultural sector suffered from serious losses in 1994. The losses were felt at the level of harvests, animals, inputs, equipment and human resource which were required in this field. To overcome this crisis, the government assessed the damage in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry and then set up an activity program which included the distribution of inputs (tools, fertilizers, seeds, etc.), and sensitizing populations in the country to devote themselves to productive work. These activities were achieved thanks to the aid mentioned above and the minimal income from taxable and non-taxable bases.

As far as animal husbandry was concerned, between 500,000 and 600,000 cattle were brought back to Rwanda by former refugees from Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania. In a way, these heads of cattle compensated for those which were lost during genocide and war. The replacement of domestic animals and the rehabilitation process as well as the reopening of veterinary laboratories were done progressively. As a result, up to 1996, agricultural production increased gradually. However, some structural challenges such as poor mechanization, poor methods of product processing and packaging, challenges for the population still in exile and inadequate fertilizers delayed the realization of rapid recovery in the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry⁵⁴.

In order to boost external trade, the government gradually promoted the growth of coffee and cotton and some other non-traditional cash crops such as flowers and handicrafts. The government also initiated the extraction of minerals.

⁵⁴ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 1996*, pp. 49-52, 60 et 62.

Regarding industry and tourism, the government reports during the years 1994-1996 mention that the recovery of industries was slow in the first years. However, these areas generated more income in 1995. This was due to visits made by tourists to national parks and Nyungwe forest reserve.

From 1996, the government opted for a liberal economy which emphasized the privatization of state enterprises. To this end, Law No. 2 of 11th March 1996 fixed government policy of ceding public enterprises to private business people, public enterprises, shares and social dividends that the state held in mixed enterprises and some other activities. On the other hand, the Presidential decree No 8 / 14 of 3rd May 1996 set up the National Commission for Privatization and Public Investment. Under this law, both the program of privatization and public investment were enhanced.

a. Repatriation and reintegration of refugees and displaced people

Given that 2 million people had gone into exile and given that more than 2 million others had been internally displaced, the Government of National Unity had no other option but to focus on the return of displaced people and refugees. The government was also charged with normalizing the social situation of the country. In order to motivate new refugees to return to their country, the government deployed serious diplomatic measures which were sometimes combined with military means in the ex-Zaire. It also encouraged refugees to leave the “*Turquoise zone*”. A combination of both sensitization and military strategies was used in the camp of displaced people in Kibeho. Nonetheless, the task of persuading former refugees to return was not difficult at all. This was because the latter were tired of long years of living in exile. They therefore wished to return to their homeland as soon as RPF forces declared victory over the forces of genocide.

The return of refugees and displaced people was one of the most priority tasks for the Government of National Unity during the emergence period. In fact, on top of the negotiation efforts and logistics put in place for their return, the government set up reception centers where emergency assistance was given to reintegrate refugees and displaced people. This activity was successful thanks to the political willingness and a high degree

of organization by the Rwandan authorities according to which all Rwandese were encouraged to return to their country of origin. To this end, the plans of repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration were designed and gradually achieved. From the economic point of view, this activity succeeded as a result of the kindness deployed by the international community which provided funds to solve the problem of refugees and displaced people. The support by UNHCR as well as NGOs was commendable in this matter.

Up to May 1996, and before the massive return of new refugees, more than 250,000 former refugees and more than 1.7 million new refugees were still living in exile⁵⁵.

Table 19: Rwanda's refugees between 1993 and 1999

Country of Exile	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Burundi	245 500	278 100	153 000	720	2000	2000	1300
Rep.dém. du Congo (ex-Zaire)	53 500	1 252 000	1 100 000	423 600	37 000	35 000	33 000
Republique-Unie de Tanzanie	51 900	626 200	548 000	20 000	410	4 800	20 100
Ouganda	97 000	97 000	6 500	11 200	12 200	7 500	8 000
Total	447 900	2 254 100	1 808 100	455 520	51 610	49 300	62 400

Source: Legénociderwandaisetsesrépercussions, <http://ww.unhcr.fr/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/publ/opedoc.pdf?tbl=PUBL&id=41bdb5ca2>, consulté le 5 septembre 2007, p.250.

As the table demonstrates, in 1997, there were only a few tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees still living in other African countries and continents. The achievement of the massive repatriation program in November 1996 was attributed to the efforts of the Government of National Unity in general and to the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Social Integration (MINIREISO) in particular and to a lesser extent, to international donors and NGOs that did a commendable job.

⁵⁵ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 1996*, Kigali Juillet 1996, p. 19.

Although the repatriation of former refugees was done spontaneously, their resettlement was problematic. In effect, on arrival in Rwanda in 1994, due to lack of planned accommodation facilities, they occupied vacant houses. But, when the new refugees returned and claimed to reoccupy their houses, the problem of resettling former refugees became acute⁵⁶. In 1999, the government forced those who were occupying houses which were not theirs to abandon them for their rightful owners. But gradually, the problem was solved in towns and rural areas through the program of constructing grouped settlements (*Imidugudu*).

After massive repatriations, refugees continued to return to Rwanda. Between July 2000 and July 2001, 23,658 refugees were repatriated and settled⁵⁷. In 2003, 11,240 refugees returned to their homeland from Tanzania⁵⁸. The UNHCR was active in coordinating the influx of refugees. At the end of the transitional period, the Prime Minister's Office published the following figures: "during the transitional period, 3,282,128 refugees were repatriated and given facilities to return to normal life. The climax in the repatriation exercise was recorded in 1994 for former refugees, i.e. 129,800 people and from 1996 to 1995; they resettled 1,362,273 refugees. As of now, it is estimated that almost 80,000 Rwandan refugees have not yet returned. Currently a National Commission of Repatriation of Refugees has been set up. It is doing everything possible to convince the few refugees who are still outside to return to their motherland"⁵⁹.

b. Assistance to the most vulnerable people

From the social point of view, the Government of National Unity was faced with the problem of assisting vulnerable people. Almost all the Rwandan population that had survived genocide and war was described as vulnerable. With time, their numbers kept on reducing given the situation which improved politically, socially and economically. The vulnerable people included Rwandan

⁵⁶ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 1996*, Kigali Juillet 1996, p. 16.

⁵⁷ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2000*, Kigali Juillet 2001, p. 13.

⁵⁸ MINALOC Raporo y'ibikorwa bya Ministeri y'ubutegetsi bw'igihugu n'Imibereho Myiza y'Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2003, Kigali, Werurwe 2004, p. 27

⁵⁹ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2003*, Kigali Juillet 2003, p. 13.

refugees and repatriated displaced people, genocide survivors, single children and orphans, widows, the crippled, the poor, HIV/AIDS victims and prisoners⁶⁰.

➤ **Genocide survivors**

The survivors of genocide are part of the most important vulnerable groups in the country. The government handled them as a priority. In 1998, an Assistance Fund for Genocide Survivors (FARG) was set up. It was allocated 5% of the national budget. This budget enabled FARG to solve a big part of its problems experienced by vulnerable surviving children in the fields of primary, secondary and higher education. The fund was also used to pay for health care. The vulnerable survivors received medical insurance cards which covered 100% of their health care. FARG also helped vulnerable survivors to construct residential homes in regrouped villages (*Imidugudu*) and/or elsewhere. It was also used to repair their former residences⁶¹. FARG financed small projects to help survivors fight against poverty. However this assistance was deemed insufficient by the beneficiaries. The survivors complained of accommodation problems since, for some of them, constructed houses were not durable enough. Other survivors complained of not receiving any assistance. In addition, several young genocide survivors who had completed secondary education complained of lack education bursaries to join higher education.

➤ **Orphans and single children**

War and genocide did not only destroy physical infrastructure. They also led to the disintegration and stigmatization of the Rwandan society. On top of the dead who are estimated to be more than a million people, there were almost 100,000 parents

⁶⁰ Mbonyinkebe Sebahire, “L’intégration des groupes vulnérable comme stratégie de construction de la paix”, in Abastase Shyaka et Faustin Rutembesa (dir), *Afrique des Grands Lacs. Sécurité et Paix durable*, Butare, Editions Universitaires du Rwanda, 2004, pp. 224-236, p. 225.

⁶¹ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19Juillet 2000-19Juillet 2001*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, pp. 188 ; République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. vii ; MINALOC, *Raporo y’ibikorwa bya Minisiteri y’Ubutegetsi bw’Igihugu n’Imibereho Myiza y’Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2000*, Kigali, Gashyantare 2001, pp.50-51 ; Primature, *Rapport annuel du gouvernement pour l’année 2006*, Kigali, 2007, pp. 179-180.

who were separated from their children, while other children were traumatized for having been first-hand witnesses of acts of violence committed on them or on other people. In 2003, almost 45,000 homesteads were managed by children. In 1994 there were 85,000⁶² homesteads.

Children were used in both camps. Some of them were used as militias by the genocide government while others were used by RPF as part of the liberation forces. For instance, 2,900 children who were suspected of taking part in genocide were trained in Gitarama Center in 1998. On the other hand, the Kadogo School sheltered almost 2,500 former RPF child-soldiers up to 1998. These two organizations received UNICEF funding⁶³.

From 1994, the orphans and single-children received assistance of varied nature. For some of them, houses were constructed; others were received, trained and given supplies in reception centers. In this way, they received physical and mental health-care, education and social integration facilities. Some of them were able to reunite with members of their families. From the institutional point of view, several ministries in the Government of National Unity dealt with the problem of Non Accompanied Children (NAC). To this end, several NAC supportive projects were set up. A draft law was voted to establish NAC centers as well as a national program for NAC⁶⁴.

The number of orphans kept on reducing gradually. This was because some families of relatives and well-intentioned people chose to adopt children living in this precarious situation⁶⁵. The assistance given by UNICEF to assist single-children and orphans was commendable. It supported part of the government budget reserved for vulnerable people⁶⁶.

⁶² Obura. op. cit. p. 51; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, *National Poverty Reduction Program: The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Kigali, June 2002, p.8.

⁶³ Obura A., op. cit. p. 51, 68; République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 1996*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, pp. 23.

⁶⁴ MINALOC, *Raporo y'ibikorwa bya Minisiteri y'Ubutegetsi bw'Igihugu n'Imibereho Myiza y'Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2000*, Kigali, Gashyantare 2001, pp. 42-43.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 43

⁶⁶ MINALOC, *Raporo y'ibikorwa bya Minisiteri y'Ubutegetsi bw'Igihugu n'Imibereho Myiza y'Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2000*, Kigali, Gashyantare 2001, pp. 42-43.

MINALOC also conducted some activities intended to solve the problem of street-children. It was assisted by NGOs⁶⁷. The increasing number of children in towns after 1994 genocide gradually reduced. However, this problem did not completely disappear from the streets of major towns. In 2003, MINALOC set up a national policy for orphans and other vulnerable children⁶⁸. This policy identified several financial and social difficulties and designed strategies to improve the humanitarian situation in tackling this problem.

➤ **Widows and vulnerable women**

According to several estimates, between 200,000 and 500,000 women suffered from sexual violence and abuse in 1994. Rape was used as a tool of genocide; Tutsi women were deliberately targeted and mistreated. Many of them who survived had been raped; others had contracted VIH/AIDS⁶⁹. Due to the high number of widows and widowers, many homes were managed by women; though this number kept on decreasing.

The ministries which were dealing with social affairs performed the following services: designing intervention programs in favor of widows, providing material assistance, conducting a census of raped and pregnant women, etc.⁷⁰. On the other hand, women victims of war and genocide set up associations for mutual help. These actions produced tangible results. However, a big number of them still suffered from the after-effects of war and genocide.

⁶⁷ Ministry of Local Government, Information and Social Affairs, *National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children*, Rwanda, 2003.

⁶⁸ Ibidem

⁶⁹ Newbury, C., and Baldwin H., *Aftermath: Women in Post-genocide Rwanda*, Center for Development Information and Evaluation U.S. Agency for International Development Washington, Working Paper, No. 303, July 2000, p.4; CNUR, *Le rôle de la femme dans le processus de réconciliation et de consolidation de la paix au Rwanda: Dix après le génocide 1994-2004. Contributions, défis et perspectives d'avenir*, Mars 2005, pp. 12-13; Shelley Whitman, "The Plight of Women and Girls during the Genocide", in Susan M. Thomas, and J. Zoe Wilson (eds.), *Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region*, Special Issue of International Insights, Halifax, Canada, June 2005, pp. 93-110, p. 96; Anna, Obura, op. cit., p. 52.

⁷⁰ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994-19 Juillet 1996*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, pp. 23

➤ **People disabled by the war**

To assist the war disabled people, the government set up the following programs: designing centers for the disabled, providing supplies and material support to survivors, giving professional training. A project to assist the disabled was also set up⁷¹.

The government financially supported associations for the disabled people through MINALOC. These included: Mulindi, Japan-one love, Ngoma and Butare School for the Deaf and Blind, etc.⁷².

c. Disaster victims

Through MINALOC and other ministries, the government assisted individuals and groups of victims. These included: people hit by drought, poor harvests, calamities, famine as well as animal diseases in different regions of the country. They also included people hit by natural calamities such as torrential rains, mountain mud-slides, accidents, etc. According to their needs, victims received free food and assistance in the form of food exchanged with labor. The victims also received health care. On top of government aid, NGOs also provided assistance in the field of reconstruction.

The assistance for vulnerable people was one of the government efforts which led to the rehabilitation and stabilization of the Rwandan economy after war and genocide. But since this assistance was inadequate, the problem of vulnerable people continued to be felt. There were also other problems related to poor aid management which were pointed out in some instances⁷³.

d. Foreign refugees in Rwanda

Rwanda also extended its hand of hospitality to refugees from neighboring countries. For example, between November 1995 and February 1996, almost 37,000 refugees arrived in Rwanda. Half of these were former Burundi refugees and the other half was made of Kinyarwanda-speaking refugees from Zaire. Whereas the Rwandan government asked UNHCR to set up reception

⁷¹ Ibidem.

⁷² MINALOC, *Raporo y'ibikorwa bya Minisiteri y'Ubutegetsi bw'Igihugu n'Imibereho Myiza y'Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2000*, Kigali, Gashyantare 2001, p.45-47.

⁷³ CNUR, *Rapport des consultations nationales: initiatives d'unité et de réconciliation au Rwanda*, Kigali, s.d., p. 13.

camps for these refugees, UNHCR preferred to repatriate them to Rwanda following the example of their Rwandan counterparts. In 2000, MINALOC handled the coordination of first-aid activities and training of refugees in the camps of Kiziba, Kigeme, Gihembe, Nkamira, Nyagatare and those who were living in urban areas⁷⁴. Other activities of MINALOC included facilitating the return of refugees. Up to 2003, more than 300,000 refugees got asylum in Rwanda. But in 2003, only 35,000 of them were still in Rwanda in several camps⁷⁵.

7.2.2 Phases of development from 1999

In 1998, Rwanda felt that the problem of emergency was solved, to a big extent. The country was supposed to embark on the road to development. Even if some programs and policies were conceived, it was from 2000 that government started formulating long term policies. They included VISION 2020 and the Strategic Plan for the Reduction of poverty (EDPRS) which was published in June 2000. These two strategic programs demonstrated remarkable dynamism because they inspired subsequent policies which were designed in all government sectors.

a. VISION 2020

VISION 2020 was a 30-page document prepared by the Ministry of Finance and Planning. Under the framework of this vision, the government of Rwanda set the following objectives to be achieved in 2007⁷⁶: national reconstruction, a united, efficient state capable of playing a mobilizing role in uniting the country, good governance, development of human resource development of entrepreneurial skills and the private sector; management of land use and basic infrastructure, modernization of the private sector, etc.

In addition to the objectives regarded as the pillars of VISION 2020, there were cross-cutting issues which all the policies of the country were supposed to articulate and follow clearly. These included: inclusion of the gender dimension, promotion of science and technology, inclusion of ICT, protection of

⁷⁴ MINALOC, Raporo y'ibikorwa bya Minisiteri y'Ubutegetsi bw'Igihugu n'Imibereho Myiza y'Abaturage mu mwaka wa 2000, Kigali, Gashyantare 2001, p.45-47.

⁷⁵ République du Rwanda, Réalisation du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2003, Kigali, juillet 2003, p.15

⁷⁶ The Republic of Rwanda, VISION 2020 document, p. 13.

environment, regional and international integration, etc. VISION 2020 was one of the documents which were produced after prolonged consultations that took place in Urugwiro Village in 1998-1999.

Table 20: Key indicators of VISION 2020 in Rwanda

Indicators	Situation In 2000	Target in 2010	Target in 2020	Interna- tional level
1. Rwanda population	7,700,000	10,200,000	13,000,000	
2. Literacy level	48	80	100	100
3. Life expectancy (years)	49	50	55	
4. Women fertility	6.5	5.5	4.5	
5. Infant mortality rate (0/00)	107	80	50	
6. Maternal mortality rate (0/00.000)	1070	600	200	
7. Child Malnutrition (Insufficiency in %)	30	20	10	
8. Population growth rate (%)	2.9	2.3	2.2	
9. Net primary school enrolment (%)	72	100	100	100
10. Increase of secondary school enrolment (%)		100	100	
11. Secondary school transitional rate (%)	42	60	80	
12. Increase of Secondary school enrolment (%)	7	40	60	
13. Rate of qualification of teachers (%)	20	100	100	
14. Professional and technical training centers		50	106	
15. The rate of admission in tertiary education (0/00)	1	4	6	
16. Gender equality in tertiary education (F %)	30	40	50	50
17. Gender equality in decision-making positions (% of females)	10	30	40	
18. HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (%)	13	11	8	0
19. Malaria-related mortality (%)	51	30	25	
20. Doctors per 100,000 inhabitants	1.5	5	10	10
21. Population in good hygienic conditions (%)	20	40	60	
22. Nurses per 100,000 inhabitants	16	18	20	20

23. Laboratory technicians per 100,000 inhabitants	2	5	5	
24. Poverty (%<1US \$/day)	64	40	30	
25. Average GDP growth rate (%)	6.2	8	8	
26. Growth rate of the agricultural sector (%)	9	8	6	
27. Growth rate of the industry sector (%)	7	9	12	
28. Growth rate of the service sector (%)	7	9	11	
29. Ginni Coefficient (income disparity)	0.454	0.400	0.350	
30. Growth national savings (% of GDP)	1	4	6	
31. Growth national investment (% of GDP)	18	23	30	30
32. GDP per capital in US\$	220	400	900	
33. Urban population (%)	10	20	30	
34. Agricultural population (%)	90	75	50	
35. Modernized agricultural land (%)	3	20	50	
36. Use of fertilizers (Kg/ha/year)	0.5	8	15	
37. Financial credits to the agricultural sector (%)	1	15	20	
38. Access to clear water (%)	52	80	100	
39. Agricultural production (kcal/day/person/(%needs)	1612	2000	2200	
40. Availability of proteins/person/day(% of needs)	35	55	65	70
41. Road network (km/km ²)	0.54	0.56	0.60	
42. Annual electricity consumption (Khw/inhabitants)	30	60	100	
43. Access to electric energy (% of population)	2	25	35	
44. Land portion against soil erosion (%)	20	80	90	
45. Level of reforestation (ha)				
46. Wood energy in the national energy consumption (%)	94	50	50	
47. Non-agricultural jobs	200,000	500,000	1,400,000	

Source: *VISION 2020*, pp. 27-28

a. Strategic plan for poverty reduction

This document gives remarkable information on the social and economic situation of the country up to the time of its preparation. It covered poverty levels in Rwanda. It articulated clearly the objectives to be achieved from 2002 to 2005. This document was prepared by the National Program of Poverty Reduction which was established in 2000. There were consultations done at national level before designing this program. It was a culmination of several national studies on poverty⁷⁷.

Table 21: Percentage of households below the poverty line from 1985 to 1999

Year	% of households under the poverty line		
	Rural	Urban	Total
1985	48.5	16.1	45.7
1990	50.3	16.8	47.5
1994	82.4	27.5	77.8
1995	76.6	25.5	72.4
1996	75.3	25.1	71.1
1997	74.1	24.7	70.0
1998	70.7	23.6	66.8
1999	69.3	23.1	65.4

Source: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, National Poverty Reduction Program, *The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategies Paper*, Kigali, June 2002, p.14.

The 'Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan' (PRSP) analysed sector by sector⁷⁸. It showed the weaknesses and strong points of the major actors involved. And, in relation with the priorities identified in VISION 2020, it specified the target levels for the year 2015 with the aim of reducing poverty.

⁷⁷ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, *National Poverty Reduction Program, The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Kigali, June 2002, pp. 10-13

⁷⁸ Among these sectors, what were in correspondence with social and economical domains are: energy and fuel, commerce and industry; agriculture and environment protection; soil; lodger and leisure; water and sanitation; youth, culture and Sport, health, education and social protection (PRSP, P. 83). The evaluation of PRSP of 2006 of 2002-2005 proposed larger list of traversal questions.

PRSP also revisited cross-cutting issues, i.e. those which must appear in the development of every sector, namely: priority of science and technology, respect for gender equality, protection of environment, sensitization the population on the importance of integrating grouped settlements (*Imidugudu*), fight against HIV/AIDS, job creation, capacity building and the fight against inequalities⁷⁹.

The PRSP set the objective of increasing income and the consumption capacity of the population by 2015. In this connection, it aimed at reducing the poverty rate from 60% to 30% towards 2015. It also aimed at achieving an annual growth rate of GNP of 7-8% by 2020. It set other objectives of controlling demographic growth, increasing the rate of literacy of the population by achieving 100% in terms of education by 2015. In addition, it aimed at achieving a basic health-care access rate of 100% in 2010. In the field of agriculture, PRSP sought to increase the quantity of fertilizers and quantity of treated seeds. It sought to increase the rate of water supply from 57% by the time of preparing the PRSP document to 72% in 2015⁸⁰.

Every year, there was an assessment of the PRSP performance to ensure that the set objectives had been achieved to the letter⁸¹. One of the observations was that remarkable progress was noted in the fields of education, health and assistance to vulnerable people. The financial services in rural areas were improved, infrastructure improved, ICT centers were spread to many regions of the country, agricultural production increased, but fell short of set goals specified in PRSP, etc. This assessment also noted lack of quantification in the performance of sectors and in integrating cross-cutting issues.

7.2.3 Economic and social sectors

a. Agriculture and animal husbandry

Ever since it took over power in July 1994, the Government of National Unity focused its attention on boosting agricultural production. It sensitized the population to embark on agriculture

⁷⁹ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, *National Poverty Reduction Program, The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Kigali, June 2002, pp. 69-73.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89, Tables 6.3 et 6.4

⁸¹ PRSP, *Stratégie de réduction de la Pauvreté du Rwanda, Rapport d'évaluation (2002-2005)*, le 18 août 2006, <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Rwanda/PRSP/Rwanda%20Evaluation%20Rapport%20FR.pdf>, consulté le 8 septembre 2007.

as soon as peace and security were achieved. It sensitized the populations and distributed seeds, basic tools, pesticides, etc. to boost agriculture.

Agriculture was the key economic sector for Rwanda because it employed more 90% of the population. However, despite this fact, its output continued poor because the techniques of production used were still rudimentary with the use of the hand-hoe as the primary tool, lack of or inadequate use of fertilizer, poor training of farmers in terms of technological use and poor soils emanating from over-cultivation and overpopulation

To curb the problem of famine and guarantee food security, government priority identified the cultivation of the following crops: maize, rice, sorghum, beans and, irish-potatoes.

Rwanda's economy heavily depended on the export of coffee and tea. The evolution of quantitative production of coffee from 1994 to 2003 was achieved unevenly⁸². The new export crops on which the government focused its attention included flowers which started fetching foreign exchange to the Rwandan economy⁸³. In short, agricultural production increased from 1994. Between 1995 and 2005, it multiplied twofold⁸⁴.

In order to facilitate farmers and animal keepers to obtain bank loans, the government set up facilities to support farmers. A new fund known as 'the Rural Infrastructure Financing Facility' was created. It provided loans to farmers and cattle keepers from 2001⁸⁵.

In 2003, there was poor agricultural production due to lack of rain. However, later this production picked again⁸⁶. Rwanda's

⁸² Ibid. p. 53.

⁸³ Minega Rwigema, J.B., *An Analysis of non-traditional agricultural export potential of Rwanda. A case of Flowers*, Mini-thesis, Master of Commerce, Trade and Investment, in the Department of Economics, University of the Western Cape, November 2004, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁴ Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, *Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005*, p. 18.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 143.

⁸⁶ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. viii ; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, National Poverty Reduction Programme, The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report, October 2004, pp. 9, 39; Institut

agriculture suffered from structural and fluctuating problems. For example, Rwanda's soils depended entirely on rains because 1.64 % of this soil was under irrigation and only 1.2% was reclaimed. This showed that Rwanda's agriculture depended on unpredictable climatic changes. In addition, soil erosion affected more than 20% of the national territory⁸⁷. A fraction of the Rwandese population still suffered from food insecurity and malnutrition. Price fluctuation of exported products was also another problem whenever the agricultural prices fell⁸⁸. Although agricultural production increased from 1994, food availability per head per year was on the decline⁸⁹.

In the field of animal husbandry, government action since 1994 was bent on the following: increasing the reproduction of animals in all regions of the country, reopening of veterinary laboratories and research institutions in animal technology, provision of veterinary medicines and the sensitization of farmers to ensure an increase in animal production. In 1994 and 2003, the number of domestic animals increased almost fivefold⁹⁰. Quantitatively, animal husbandry also improved because big-sized animals and the number of cross-breeds increased, although generally, a lot of improvement was still needed⁹¹.

Farming and animal husbandry activities needed agricultural space. However, the Rwandan soil suffered from demographic pressure and physical degradation. It was overexploited because of high population density. Rwanda's inheritance system of family land transfer also led to land fragmentation. On average,

National de la Statistique du Rwanda, *Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005*, pp. 15-16.

⁸⁷ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, *Policy and Capacity Building at the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda Agricultural Survey, 2006*, Kigali, June 2007, pp. 17-18.

⁸⁸ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, and World Food Programme, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Branch (ODAV), *Rwanda Comprehensive Food Security and vulnerability Analysis*, Kigali, December 2006, p.4.

⁸⁹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, *Policy and Capacity Building at the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda Agricultural Survey, 2006*, Kigali, June 2007, p.32.

⁹⁰ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, *Policy and Capacity Building at the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda Agricultural Survey, 2006*, Kigali, June 2007, p.32.

⁹¹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, *Policy and Capacity Building at the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda Agricultural Survey, 2006*, Kigali, June 2007, p.36.

the size of owned cultivable land by a household was 0.72 ha, although there were differences at regional level. Hence, land fertility reduced gradually. Soil erosion affected a big portion of this land and anti-erosion techniques were not yet widespread on the entire territory. Other behaviors contributed to aggravate the soil situation. For example, overgrazing, bush burning practices, irresponsible deforestation, un-reasonable exploitation of marshlands by brick makers and the extraction of sand along valleys⁹².

To solve these structural and fluctuating problems related to the rational management of land and its protection, the government set up a land policy in 2004. The land law of 2005 was established by the National Land Committee. In article 20, paragraph 3 of this law, the organic law on the land regime in Rwanda stipulates that: “it is prohibited to fragment land intended for agriculture and animal husbandry to a level below or equal to one hectare. In the same vein, land size below or equal to five hectares can only be fragmented by the owner under permission from Land Commission authorities within the region”. The registration of land titles is stipulated in article 30.

Before that, some laws on the land regime were formulated in 1997. In the *ex-prefecture* of Kibungo, the Governor took the initiative to sensitize the population on sharing land among the populations. This was done without much conflict⁹³. However, there were some misunderstandings. For example, some of those who owned land wished that the new comers from exile should share their cows that they had come with but the problem was later solved and land distribution took place.

Some writers have criticized the land policy and law. They have expressed doubt on the capacity of this law to solve gender inequalities in land ownership, the feasibility of land registration, the economic viability of regional single-crop cultivation. They concluded that the land law of 2005 is likely to transform many Rwandese into landless people, with a possibility of creating conflicts⁹⁴. Nonetheless, the study conducted by NCUR in July

⁹² MINAGRI, Plan stratégique, pp. 1, 5, 7.

⁹³ Van Hoyweghen S., “The Urgency of Land and Agrarian Reform in Rwanda”, in *African Affairs*, pp. 353-372, p. 363; Interview, “ Kibungo nayo twarayisuye”, in *Interactions*, No 10, 2e trimestre, 1997, pp. 9-12.

⁹⁴ Pottier, J., “Land Reform for Peace? Rwanda’s 2005 Land law in Context”, in *Journal of Agrarian Change*, vol. 6, No. 4, October 2006, pp. 509-537, p.517.

2004 revealed that more than 60% of the population welcomed the proposal of land consolidation which was suggested later in the land law of 2005⁹⁵. Almost 80% of the population was in favor of land titles delivered by the state but 60% did not quickly register their land. The effect of these initiatives to adequately manage, exploit and protect land remains to be seen.

b. Trade and industry

As mentioned above, war and genocide affected industry and trade. Most of the consumption products and other goods found in shops, markets and supermarkets were looted. As for industries, a big number of them were destroyed and/or looted. However, thanks to the joint efforts of government and private businessmen, most of the destroyed industries were rehabilitated and new ones were established, especially in the fields of agro-processing and construction industries⁹⁶.

It should be noted that from the beginning of 1994, the Government of National Unity subscribed to the principles of free trade. To this end, it adopted the policy of privatization of public enterprises. This decision was taken to save enterprises which had been mismanaged in the past. The state expected to get more benefits by withdrawing from these enterprises thereby gaining from taxes which the private business people would pay. On the other hand, the state expected to increase the number private business people who would constitute the cornerstone of a market economy in Rwanda.

Hence in 2003, almost 37 business enterprises and 11 branches of OPROVIA were privatized out of 77 enterprises which were deemed fit for this process. On the contrary, seven of these firms were to be liquidated⁹⁷. The privatization of companies was achieved amidst a series of problems. In some companies, many workers lost their jobs. In addition, the new private beneficiaries preferred to engage new employees by choosing them from their immediate social circles. This was interpreted as discrimination⁹⁸. Nonetheless, in all privatized companies, the expected effect of managing the private sector still remained to be seen.

⁹⁵ CNUR, *Propriété de la terre et réconciliation*, Kigali, 2005, p. 24-26.

⁹⁶ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. x.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁹⁸ Institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix, *Reconstruire une paix durable au Rwanda: la parole au peuple*, Kigali, 2003, p. 93.

In order to develop internal trade, the government set up laws to protect consumers and promote the activity of businessmen. In this perspective, law No. 15/2001 of 28/01/2001 on internal trade was promulgated⁹⁹. According to this law, all Rwandan traders were supposed to attach price-tags on their trade items. But this law has never been implemented in all business areas. In addition, the Rwandan Bureau of Standards was set up in June 2000 to control the quality and authenticity of products¹⁰⁰.

Special attention was also put to foreign trade. In 2000, the Rwanda Investment Promotion Agency (RIPA) was created¹⁰¹. It was charged with the promotion of investments. In order to promote economic activity and find a solution to the problem of land-lockedness, Rwanda joined several regional organizations. For example, it became member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC). In addition, Rwanda signed an accord with the USA which enabled Rwandan products exported to the US to be sold on American market without fiscal barriers. This accord was called the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

The result of these efforts was to develop trade and industry. Exports recorded remarkable progress¹⁰². The major products exported were coffee, tea and minerals. The quality of coffee continued to improve and its production quantity was enhanced. The construction and mineral industries also improved. Export products were diversified with the introduction of artisan products such as the manufacture of baskets (*Uduseke*) which were exported in big quantities to Europe and America.

Government took the field of internal and external trade seriously. With limited means, and in collaboration with the private sector, it organized several exhibitions as well as national and international trade fairs. From 1995, it participated in international trade fairs organized abroad. As a result, the government won a number of trophies during these events. But

⁹⁹ Institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix, *Reconstruire une paix durable au Rwanda: la parole au peuple*, Kigali, 2003, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 39.

¹⁰¹ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 49.

¹⁰² Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, *Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005*, p. 16.

despite all these impressive results, Rwanda's balance of trade remained unfavorable.

In order to facilitate trade, Rwanda's banks were revived in 1994 after the war and genocide. These also had been looted. After rehabilitating them, and after reviving trade activities, some new banks were opened. Currently, there are six commercial banks in Rwanda: Bank of Kigali (BK), Rwanda Commercial Bank (BCR), *Banque à la Conférence d'or* (BANCOR), *Banque du Commerce, du Développement et d'Industrie* (BCDI) which later became ECOBANK Rwanda, *Banque Continentale Africaine* (BACAR), and the *Compagnie Générale de Banque* (COGEBANQUE). The credit service in these banks was not significantly developed because there was still a problem of recovering the loans given. This led to charging high interest rates which small traders could not afford¹⁰³. In addition to this list were the *Banque Rwandaise de Développement* (BDR) and the *Banque Nationale du Rwanda* (BNR). It should be noted that all these banks have improved their services to customers. They offer computerized services, and are housed in beautiful buildings which were constructed by the banks themselves. They have also opened up several branches in the countryside.

Apart from banks, microfinance institutions were set up. Although the microfinance sector is a recent phenomenon in Rwanda, it has undergone remarkable progress since its creation. Apart from the *Banque Populaire* which has been in existence since 1975, there are many microfinance institutions which were created in recent years. They were created by NGOs and the state. However, most of them still lack adequate capacity in terms of management¹⁰⁴.

As for insurance companies, they have also played their traditional role of protecting producers and their products. Aware of their importance in the field of trade, the government enacted four laws and a presidential decree on insurance. It set up a National Commission for Insurance Supervision which is still operational¹⁰⁵. On top of the existing insurance companies such as the *Société Nationale d'Assurance du Rwanda*

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁰⁴ Enterprising Solutions Global Consulting, *Rwanda Microfinance Sector Assessment 2005*, 2005, p. 8-9

¹⁰⁵ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. 60.

(SONARWA) and the *Société Rwandaise d'Assurance* (SORAS), there were new companies like the *Compagnie Rwandaise d'Assurances et de Réassurances* (CORAR) and the *Compagnie Générale d'Assurance et de Réassurance* (COGEAR) . In short, banks, microfinance institutions and insurance companies have become key providers of financial services that generate interest and create jobs.

To these services was added the development of the tourism industry. From 1994, tourism started developing in Rwanda¹⁰⁶. For instance, new hotels were constructed in several parts of the country while old ones were rehabilitated or expanded. In addition, Nyungwe natural forest was converted to the level of a national park in 2000¹⁰⁷. Museums were created under the framework of the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda. These were added to the Museum in Butare. The ORTPN consolidated its link with the population, national parks and other tourist sites by dedicating part of the income from the tourism industry to improving social conditions of the community.

As mentioned above, INSR reported that: “the provision of services continued to increase since 2002 with a comprehensive rate of approximately 5% to 9% per year¹⁰⁸ .

Lastly, in order to fight against corruption, the government set up several institutions charged with supervising the management of state finances. These included the National Tender Board in the Office of the Ombudsman and the Office of the Auditor General which were charged with supervising the management of state finances. Due to efficient supervision, these organs produced commendable results although the road to a completely corruption-free society is far from being achieved especially in the public sector.

c. Infrastructure

In the field of transport, ONATRACOM increased the number of its buses. It opened up new rural routes in the countryside.

¹⁰⁶ Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, *Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁷ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. 42.

¹⁰⁸ Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, *Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005*, p. 16-17.

For example, in Huye, Musanze, Rubavu, and Ngoma, private transport companies were set up and some of them are very efficient. However, although transport has improved in the countryside, it is still inadequate.

New tarmac roads were built while others were repaired and constructed. Bridges were built in many parts of the country. The tarmac roads in Rwanda were estimated to be between 930 to 1,100 km in 2002; and between 4,250 and 4,436 km for major non-tarmac roads. The roads that were not repaired covered 1,750 km¹⁰⁹. Repairing roads in Rwanda remained poor because they cost hefty sums of money from state coffers¹¹⁰. The major achievements included: completion of road construction works of Gitarama-Kibuye road, construction of the ANT Kinyinya¹¹¹ tarmac road, completion of Kigali Gitarama which was constructed thanks to the assistance of the European Union¹¹², etc. The latter was extended up to Kanyaru at Rwanda's border with Burundi.

Many government buildings were rehabilitated while several new ones were constructed. In this field, the development achieved was both qualitative and quantitative.

In the field of communication, ministries were computerized, the e-government project was put in place and the ICT program was extended to the Parliament and other state institutions. The Parliament of Rwanda embraced the Technology of information and communication (ICT). For the first time, it was equipped with new electronic technology¹¹³. One of Rwanda's major achievements in terms of telecommunications was the introduction of the Internet. In effect, internet connection was achieved rapidly. This led the number of cybercafés in the country to increase. Equally, the number of private and public connected services increased and the cost of connection gradually reduced.

¹⁰⁹ The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, *Private Solutions for Infrastructure in Rwanda. A Country Framework Report*, 2005, p. 18

¹¹⁰ The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, *Private Solutions for Infrastructure in Rwanda. A Country Framework Report*, 2005, pp.21-22;

¹¹¹ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 53.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 10.

¹¹³ Government of Rwanda, *ICT Policy Statement and Action Plan 2006-2010*, Parliament, September 2006.

The use of telephone services also expanded. The number of mobile telephone subscribers increased. With time, the cost of mobile telephone receivers gradually reduced though the cost of calls was considered to be expensive by the common man in comparison with costs in neighboring countries. On top of MTN, there were other companies that joined the communication revolution. These included: TERRACOM which was outcompeted in 2008; it was replaced by RWANDATEL and in 2010 and by TIGO. The government policy of embracing ICT in Rwanda was adopted and the Rwanda Agency of Information and Technology (RITA) was created¹¹⁴.

As for water and sanitation, NGOs helped the state to repair installations which were damaged during genocide and the war. From 36% in 1995, the rate of improved water and sanitation services rose to 54% in 2003¹¹⁵.

d. Financial policy

Government revenue mainly came from imports, taxes on national production as well as aid and internal and public debts. The Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) was created in 1996. Since that time, it has continued to improve the system of tax collection as well as the fiscal and non-fiscal revenue. This has had the effect of increasing state income considerably. According to the World Bank¹¹⁶, this institution is among those which have earned a good name for the country in terms of good governance. It introduced Value Added tax (VAT) in January 2001¹¹⁷. The income from RRA has enabled the government to gradually reduce Rwanda's dependence on external support.

¹¹⁴ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, pp. ix-x.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 64.

¹¹⁶ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. viii.

¹¹⁷ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 31.

Table 22: Income from Rwanda's taxes from 1996 to 2001 (1st Semester) in millions of RwF

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1 ^{er} semester 2001
Total income from taxes	39 225,5	54 266,9	62 634,0	62 299,3	65 324,7	37 433,0

Source: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, National Poverty Reduction program, *The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Kigali, June 2002, p. 117.

The economic reforms made since the establishment of the Government of National Unity led to a positive situation in 2003. The GNP in real terms which had fallen to 50% fell to 34% in 1995 and to 16% in 1996. It continued to expand rapidly with a growth rate of 13% in 1997 and 10% in 1998. Since then, growth reduced to almost 5.9% in 1999 and 2000. Lastly, in 2002, the rate of growth reached 9.5%¹¹⁸. These reforms led to the gradual reduction of inflation rate for the Rwandan currency. This rate was at 48.2% in 1995. It fell to 13.3% in 1996 and later to 6.8% in 1998. In 2001, it was at 3.4%¹¹⁹.

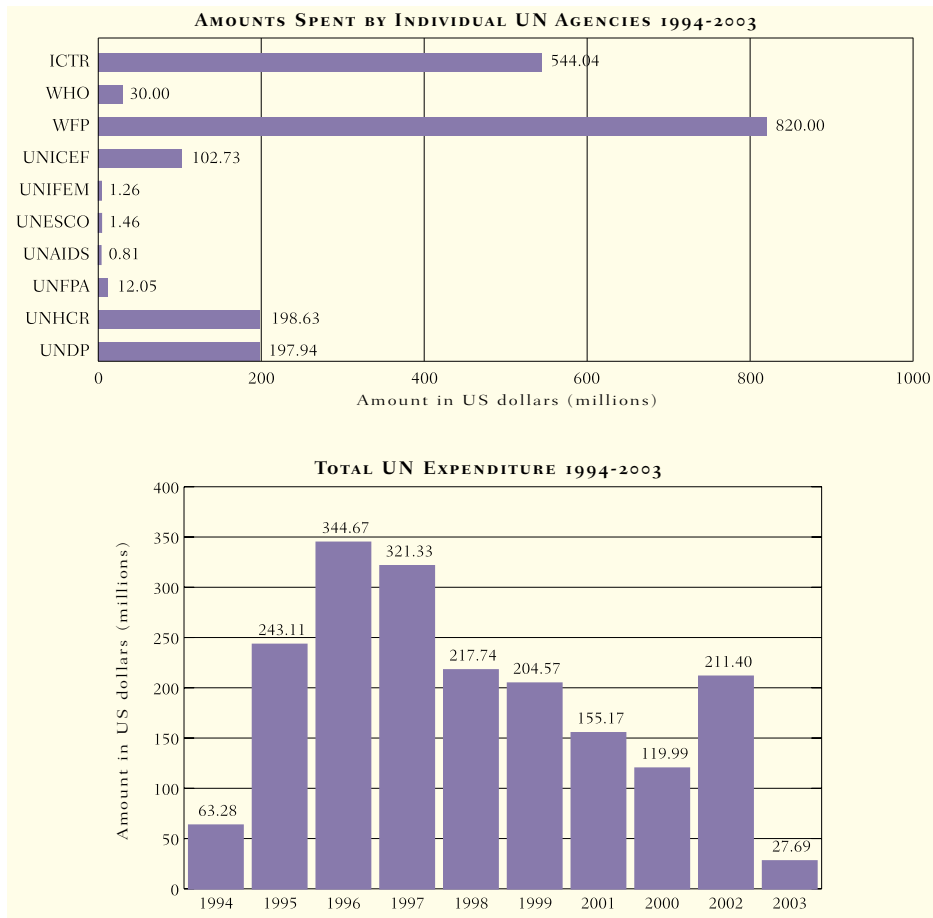
As far as foreign aid was concerned, Rwanda received aid from multilateral and bilateral partners as well as NGOs. This aid helped to reconstruct the country during the emergence period and supplemented national production during the country's development phase. But most of this aid was accompanied by tight conditionalities and sometimes, these were contrary to the priorities of government. In addition, the aid was sometimes released late, leading to poor government planning¹²⁰. Some other aid did not tally with government budget which led the latter to have no voice as far as this aid was concerned. For example, the following two tables show the amount of aid given to Rwanda by the UN.

¹¹⁸ République du Rwanda, Services du Premier Ministre, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994 – 19 Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, pp. 65-66.

¹¹⁹ The Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, *Rwanda Vision 2020*, Kigali, July 2000, p.8.

¹²⁰ Musoni, P., *Challenges and Opportunities of Foreign Aid Delivery and Aid Management*, Mexico City, 2-3 November 2003, pp. 14-15.

Tables 23 and 24: UN aid to Rwanda from 1994 to 2003



Source: United Nations, Ten Years on: Helping rebuild a nation, the United Nations in Rwanda, New York, April 2004, p. 1.

e. Employment

Like in other developing countries, the informal sector was important for Rwanda because it employed two thirds of the country's active population. As far as the formal sector was concerned, the state continued to be the major employer in the country. In 2001, it employed almost 40,000 people¹²¹. In 2001, only 295,742 people were employed in the formal sector, i.e. both private and public. Since then, this figure reduced due to the restrictions imposed to the public service and the privatization of state enterprises¹²². In 2003, the state employed more than 60,000 people as revealed in the table below:

¹²¹ Institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix, *Reconstruire une paix durable au Rwanda: la parole au peuple*, pp. 93-94.

¹²² MIFOTRA, *La Politique de l'emploi*, Kigali, 2005, p. 13.

Table 25: Number of jobs per sector in 2003

Sector	% of total	Number employed	% Males	% Female
Public sectors	1.98%	67 461	62.8%	37 .2%
Parastatals	0.47%	15 865	70.3%	29.7%
NGOs	0.35%	11 829	71.3%	28.7%
Cooperatives	0.30%	10 315	71.5%	28.5%
Other private sectors	94.77%	3 225 071	44.0%	56.0%

Source: Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, *Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report*, October, 2004, p. 63.

In 2003, the number of people employed varied according to the economic activities performed. This was as follows:

Table 26: Employment status and economic activities in 2003

Activity	% of total	Number of employed	% Males	% Females
Agriculture	86.67%	2 949 592	41.3%	58.7%
Fishing	0.10%	3 468	97.3%	2.7%
Industrial activities	0.16%	5 328	69.3%	30.7%
Production activities	1.28%	43 643	75.6%	24.4%
Electricity&water production & distribution	0.08%	2 667	89.6%	10.4%
Construction	1.26%	42 885	97.1%	2.9%
Commerce repairing	2.64%	89 699	63.4%	36.6%
Hotels & restaurants	0.20%	6 836	66.2%	33.8%
Transport & communication	0.93%	31 562	93.7%	6.2%
Financial intermediaries	0.07%	2 400	65.0%	35.0%
Administration & defence	0.27%	28 064	80.1%	19.9%
Education	0.82%	39 734	57.1%	42.9%
Health & social activities	0.17%	14 575	51.6%	48.4%
Collection service activities	0.43%	18 487	76.9%	23.1%
Domestic personnel employment	0.54%	86 295	47.5%	52.5%
Territorial associations	2.54%	3 718	66.5%	33.5%

Source: Republic of Rwanda, *Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report*, October 2004, p. 63.

Since 1994, the government of Rwanda opted to rationalize the management of public servants¹²³ under the terms and conditions of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP).

Henceforth, it gradually restructured the employment sector by reducing the number of employees. From 2000, thousands of employees were removed and many soldiers were retrenched from 1995¹²⁴. As a result, those who lost their jobs in the formal sector joined the informal sector where the craft industry and retail small scale trade dominated¹²⁵. Here, employers who were dismissed following the downsizing of the public service received various types of assistance. Some of them received bank loans to start small projects. For others, they received some training on various skills while those who wanted to upgrade their level of education received bursaries to pursue university studies.

In order to reduce the rate of unemployment in rural and urban areas, the state designed a national policy on employment. In practice, it set up several strategies and activities which included the program of 'High Intensity Labor Force' (HIMO) and the promotion of cooperatives.

It is hoped by government that the HIMO program would reduce the problem of lack of jobs and underemployment by contributing to the development of infrastructure and rural development¹²⁶. HIMO program offered jobs to the rural workforce, especially the youth with lesser qualification. This sector consisted of construction enterprises, agriculture and transport¹²⁷ which employed a lot of rural and urban labor force. The government reports on the achievements of HIMO in the field of agriculture, in reparation, or in the development of infrastructure revealed that this program succeeded in employing tens of thousands of people. The advantage of the HIMO program is that it gave jobs to many people. However, its limitations were that the jobs it generated were part-time jobs.

Cooperatives are another sector to which the government gave priority. This is because they were susceptible of generating employment by creating more organizations in the informal sector¹²⁸. In 1996, there were more than 8,000 cooperatives

¹²⁴ MIFOTRA, *La Politique de l'emploi*, Kigali, 2005, p. 11.

¹²⁵ MIFOTRA, *La Politique de l'emploi*, Kigali, 2005, p. 11-12 ; Primature, *Rapport du Gouvernement pour l'année 2005*, Kigali, 2006, pp. 97-100.

¹²⁶ Country paper- Rwanda , Local Governance and Poverty Reduction in Rwanda: Lessons From Experience, Tunis, Tunisia, 21-24 June 2005, p. 8.

¹²⁷ MIFOTRA, *La Politique de l'emploi*, Kigali, 2005, pp. 15-16.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Investment Promotion, Tourism and Cooperatives, Sector Strategies Document: Cooperatives sector, Kigali, February 2006.

¹²³ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 1996*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 90.

in Rwanda. They were later reduced to 4,700 in 1996. The sensitization of the populations on the form of associations and cooperatives attained commendable levels. The rural and urban populations understood the importance of organizing themselves in cooperatives and *Ubudehe* systems. However, the problem of accessing loans continued to be felt in many regions. The government's message to the population was clear: Rwandans must create jobs themselves instead of waiting for government to employ them. Cooperatives and associations were identified as an ideal channel to achieve this objective.

f. Education

Education was among the key sectors in the country. This was due to several reasons. First of all, the government of Rwanda intended to solve the structural problem of its economy by resorting to education. This was done by giving education to the majority of Rwandans to produce an enlightened society capable of evolving into a middle-class amply knowledgeable to lead to a knowledge-based economy. In other words, it was hoped that the Rwandan economy should be not only be based on agriculture and mineral extraction as per tradition, but it should also be based on human resource.

In addition, since the Government of National Unity inherited a complicated situation to manage in July 1994, education was seen as a last resort solution in solving the problem of manpower. A lot of skilled manpower was lost during genocide and owing to the massacres that took place. There were many skilled people who escaped to exile. Education would, in a record time, enable the country to fill the vacuum created by dead manpower, imprisoned people or those who had run to exile. This explains why, from the period of emergence, emphasis was put on boosting the education sector.

From the beginning of this decade, the international community has put a lot of attention to education. This is demonstrated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which state, among other things, that towards the year 2010, primary education should be provided to 100% of boys and girls on the planet. MDGs also state that girls should no longer be excluded from the field of education¹²⁹.

¹²⁹ Kabanda, C., «Gestion d'autres défis actuels», in Faustin Rutembesa et al. (éds.),

➤ **Kick-off stage**

Both genocide and the war destroyed a big portion of Rwanda's infrastructure, school and academic equipment. These terrible events led to the loss of a big fraction of teachers¹³⁰. In order to reconstruct the country therefore, the Government of National Unity decided to rekindle the activities of education at an early stage. Hence, an immediate revival of primary and secondary education which has given to the country a new image, an image that has made the country to return to normal. As for the higher education which started in 1995, it took some time to produce qualified personnel to fill the manpower vacuum.

The initiation of primary education was regarded as a big achievement for Rwanda¹³¹. Effectively, on 19th September 1994, just two months after taking over the reigns of power, the Transitional Government reopened all primary schools. This measure was judged as "historic" due to the methodology used. Both parents and Rwanda's partners did not believe that this action would be possible. However, the government used some few available resources to reopen primary schools.

The third quarter of the school calendar (1993-1994) started on 19th September 1994 and was closed in December 1994. Only 68.2% of educational centers started business on these dates. The academic year 1994/1995 started on 16th January 1995 and ended on 29th October 1995. The national exams for the academic year 1993/1994 for primary schools were also organized.

The reopening of secondary institutions was done at the beginning of the third quarter of the academic year 1993/1994 on 20th October 1994. Classes continued up to February 1995 and lasted for only 60 days. Out of 3,077 students who took part in this program, and those who sat for their national exam, 81.7% managed to obtain their secondary school certificates. Some of those who succeeded filled the vacuum in the primary

Rwanda, Identité et citoyenneté, Butare, Editions Universitaires du Rwanda, 2003, pp. 220-238, p. 227 ; The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, *Education in Rwanda. Rebalancing resources to Accelerate Post-Conflict Development and Poverty reduction*, Washington D.C., October 2003, p. 1.

¹³⁰ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 1996*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 34.

¹³¹ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 1996*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 34.

school teaching posts. Owing to the high level of performance in that exam, it was nicknamed “Thank you Kagame!”

The government also put priority on the reopening of higher education. This was possible on 2nd April 1995 for the National University of Rwanda. The academic year 1994/1995 closed on 3rd March 1996. Since that time, education was one of the most important sectors where government allocated a substantial portion of its budget¹³².

➤ **Increase in school enrolment**

Before 1994, the quota system was used as a criterion to enroll students in schools and to employ people in the civil service¹³³. In this context, education contributed to the destruction of the social fabric and in dividing the Rwandan people. From July 1994, the Government of National Unity removed the policy of ethnic and regional balance in education and employment. It set up a new system based on merit as the sole criterion for enrolment in the education and employment sectors. The government chose unity and reconciliation as yardsticks for national reconstruction.

As a result of the policy of social equity, the available statistics indicate that since 1994 to 2003, the number of students enrolled at all levels of education increased considerably. As far as primary education was concerned, the gross rate off school attendance doubled in 2002/2003 compared to 1993/1994. This was a tremendous achievement¹³⁴.

In 2001, the rate of enrolment in primary schools was 72.6% at national level. This figure did not take gender into account. But at rural and urban levels, there was a difference because in urban areas this rate was 80.8% and in rural areas it was 71.8%. In secondary education, the net rate of enrolment was low because it was 7.6% at national level. In urban areas it

¹³² Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report, October 2004, p. 54. For example, education took 30% of government expenditure in 2000-2001, 27% in 2001-2002, 23,7% and in 2002-2003.

¹³³ Obura, A., *Never Again: Education Reconstruction in Rwanda*, Paris, UNESCO, International Institute for Education Planning, 2003, p. 17.

¹³⁴ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, pp. 34-35.

was 22.5% whereas in rural areas it was just 5.8%¹³⁵. In 2001, the ratio of enrolment in primary education exceeded that of some Sub-Saharan African countries. But the ratio of school enrolment in secondary education which was 13% was lower than that of Africa at 20%. The enrolment in higher education was also impressive. It rose from 3,400 students in 1990/1991 to 17,000 in 2000/2002¹³⁶.

After the presidential and legislative elections, i.e. at the end of the transitional period in 2003, the government decision to remove student school fees of 300 RwF in primary school increased school enrolment at that level. The state decided to shoulder the task of supporting students by paying their school fees. The state also gradually increased the number of classrooms. This had the effect of increasing the enrolment capacity. This increased the transition rate from primary to secondary education. The school enrolment at secondary school doubled between 1994/1995 and 2002/2003¹³⁷.

Between 1994 and 2003, higher education improved considerably. The rate of school enrolment increased and the number of universities and institutions increased. A result, the number of successful candidates also increased. All this was possible because of the efforts of the government and private sector. Before 1994, the following institutions of higher learning existed in Rwanda: *Université Nationale du Rwanda* (UNR), *Institut Supérieur d'Agriculture et d'Élevage* (ISAE), *Institut Supérieur des Finances Publiques* (ISFP), *Université Laïque de Kigali* (UNILAC), *Université Adventiste d'Afrique Centrale* (UAAC), *Institut Supérieur de Pédagogie de Gitwe* (ISPG), *Grand Séminaire Catholique et Faculté de Théologie de Butare*.

The new institutions created after 1994 were: Kigali Health Institute (KHI) which was established in 1995, Kigali Institute of Science Technology and Management (KIST) established in 1997, Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) created in 1999. Besides these public institutions, other new private universities were established such as 'Kigali Independent University (ULK)'

¹³⁵ MINECOFIN, *A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An Analysis Based on the Results of the Household Living Condition Survey 1999-2001*, February 2002, p. 15.

¹³⁶ The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, *Education in Rwanda Rebalancing Resources to accelerate Post-Conflict Development and Poverty Reduction*, Washington D.C., October 2003, p.3.

¹³⁷ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2003*, Kigali, juillet 2003, p. 36.

established in 1995, Catholic University of Kabgayi (UCK) established in 2003 and the University of Agriculture, Technology and Education of Kibungo (UNATEK) established in 2003.¹³⁸

Alongside these universities and higher institutions, student enrolment in these institutions increased considerably both in public and private institutions. The developments that took place from 1994 up to 2002 are indicated in the tables below.

Table 27: Enrolment in tertiary government institutions from 1994/1995 to 2001/2002

	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
NUR	3 261 (24) ¹	3 948 (26)	4 178 (27)	4 548 (26)	-	4 535 (23)	4 840 (24)	5 922 (?)
KIST	-	-	-	20 (12)	561 (25)	1149 (31)	1 512 (29)	1 445 (?)
KIE	-	-	-	-	299 (35)	597 (31)	959 (28)	1 269 (27)
KHI	-	-	-	29	279	383	690	784
IAE	-	20	92	113	164	314	526	860
ISFP	-	-	67	161	110	98	121	?
Total	3 261	3 968	4 387	5 065	1 413	7 076	8 648	10 280

Source: Obura Anna, *Op.cit.* p. 116.

Table 28: Enrolment in tertiary private institutions from 1994/1995 to 2001/2002

	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
UAAC	-	-	92 (42)	149 (22)	216 (47)	351 (53)	445 (56)	495 (51)
ULK	-	-	20 (21)	406 (34)	1 406 (46)	2 312 (49)	3 250 (49)	4 188 (50)
ISPG/ Gitwe	-	-	-	-	-	81	54	69
UNILAC	-	-	-	-	-	-	280	321
Total	-	-	112	555	1 622	2 744	4 029	5 073

Source: Obura Anna, *Op.cit.* p. 117.

NB: In the tables above, the figures in brackets show the percentage of girls and women.

¹³⁸ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 juillet 1994-19 juillet 2003*, Kigali, juillet 2003, p. 37.

With the creation of three other institutions of higher learning in 2003, namely UNATEK, UCK and UNIR Ruhengeri Campus, the number of students enrolled rose to slightly more than 20,000 students in 2003¹³⁹.

The above student enrolment had the effect of increasing the number of graduates in the country. For example, in the National university of Rwanda, whereas the number of graduates was 457 in 1992/1993, it rose to 785 in 2001/2002¹⁴⁰. In other words, there was an approximate increase of 600% in 9 years. From 1963 to 1993, i.e. during a period of 30 years, there was a total of 1,962 university graduates¹⁴¹.

This quantitative progress resulted from the government policy which focused on 'education for all' and education 'without any discrimination'. The policy on education was published in July 2003¹⁴².

On reading this policy, it can be seen that this document was inspired by two documents already quoted, namely VISION 2020 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Program (PRSP). From 2000 to 2001, the National Examination Board was established. It was equipped with staff, and material and it also acquired a legal status¹⁴³.

➤ **Quality of teaching**

From the qualitative point of view, the primary and secondary teaching curricula were revised from 1996. The programs aimed at transforming analytical and critical minds of the pupils at primary level. They also aimed at inculcating to the youth a sense of individual responsibility and decision making¹⁴⁴. Another reform was the introduction of French and/or English from the

¹³⁹ Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report, October 2004, p. 51.

¹⁴⁰ République du Rwanda, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19Juillet 1994-19Juillet 2003*, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. 37.

¹⁴¹ National University of Rwanda, Graduation Ceremony, 28.03.2008, facts and figures.

¹⁴² Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research, Education Sector Policy, July 2003.

¹⁴³ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 2000- 19 Juillet 2001*, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 21.

¹⁴⁴ Obura, A., op. cit., p. 87.

first year of primary school¹⁴⁵. This varied from one institution to another. The above reform carried with it the introduction of a new subject called “Elementary Science and Technology”¹⁴⁶. The task of designing the curriculum and school reforms was performed by the “*Conseil National du Développement des Programmes* (CNDP).

In order to ensure wider dissemination of this curriculum, the government distributed teachers and students’ manuals as well as other teaching and learning materials to the schools in the country. The text book policy was established in 2002. As for language text books and elementary science books, they were distributed from 2003. However, despite all these efforts, the majority of students still lacked class text books¹⁴⁷. It should be noted that up to 2003, the history of Rwanda was not taught in primary and secondary schools¹⁴⁸.

In order to improve the quality of teaching, the government saw to it that all teachers had the required level of qualification. The government planned and managed the teacher-student ratio before deploying teachers. In addition, there were various programs that dealt with restructuring government civil servants. This also affected untrained teachers who lost their jobs. The result was that, from 1994, the average rate of qualifications for primary school teachers continued to improve. It rose from 39% in 1994/1995, to 85.2% in 2002/2003. It should be noted that before the war it was at 60%. The rate of secondary school

¹⁴⁵ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 2001*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 35.

¹⁴⁶ République Rwandaise, *Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 2001*, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 34.

¹⁴⁷ Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report, October 2004, p. 49.

¹⁴⁸ République du Rwanda, The government felt that it was necessary to agree first on the teaching content which was supposed to be prepared later by historians. For, the curriculum which existed was marred by divisive ideas that led to the perpetration of genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. Under the auspices NCDC, in the framework of rewriting our own history, both Rwandan and US historians met and worked together and produced a basic document on methodology that was to evolve into a curriculum for the history of Rwanda in secondary schools. (Sarah Warshauer Freedman, *Education for Reconciliation, Creating a History Curriculum after Genocide in Rwanda*, Winter 2006, pp. 16-17). This documents were: Sarah W. Freedman et al., « *L’enseignement de l’Histoire du Rwanda, Approche participative. Pour les écoles secondaires au Rwanda*. This was a reference document for teachers. The Regents of the University of California, 2006.

teachers also increased. It rose from 33.3% in 1994/1995 to 52.1% during the academic year 2002/2003. But private schools had more qualified teachers than government schools¹⁴⁹. In higher learning institutions, the number of qualified staff increased from 1994 to 2003 due to the training given to teachers.

➤ **Challenges**

Nonetheless, despite all this quantitative and qualitative progress, the education sector still encountered major challenges linked to the structural situation of the country's economy. First of all, as already mentioned, the average rate of qualification for secondary teachers was still low and needed to be enhanced. This could be done especially by encouraging KIE and NUR graduates to teach in secondary schools. But in addition, there was need to increase salaries of primary and secondly school teachers as well as teachers at higher levels in order to motivate them to join and remain in the teaching profession. This was because qualified graduates who could get other jobs preferred to drop teaching and this affected education negatively.

Structural poverty was another factor that affected the availability of adequate teaching and learning facilities at all levels. It complicated the achievement of positive results from primary to secondary schools and from secondary to higher levels of learning. At each level, this led to thousands of young people without adequate qualification and therefore devoid of better prospects for the future.

g. Health

The health sector also suffered from the destruction of war and genocide because it lost a big number of material infrastructure, equipment and staff. But government action considerably boosted this sector. In some areas, government performance reversed it to pre-conflict levels whereas in other cases, it surpassed this level.

¹⁴⁹ République Rwandaise, Ministère de l'Éducation, de la Science, de la Technologie et de la Recherche Scientifique, Unité de Etudes et de la Planification de l'Éducation, Enseignement secondaire, Année scolaire 2003-2004, Recensement Statistique, Kigali, 2005 ; République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 1996, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 36 ; Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report, October 2004, p. 54.

➤ **Diseases**

The dominant diseases in Rwanda were malaria, HIV Aids, respiratory diseases and several other infections. In 2003, 8% of the patients who went for medical consultation in health centers suffered from malaria and parasitic/respiratory diseases. Although mothers and children were victims of these diseases, children of less than 5 years proved to be more vulnerable¹⁵⁰.

To fight against these diseases, many efforts were deployed by MINISANTE and other private institutions. But, there was a deficiency in terms of staff, inadequate infrastructure and health equipment; there was also lack of appropriate medicine to treat some diseases. Patients experienced poor purchasing power, poor hygiene, etc. All this made the health conditions of the people to be poor. The report on health stressed that: “in most cases, morbidity levels in Rwanda are dominated by infectious diseases which could be avoided through improved hygiene, better living conditions and behavioral change”¹⁵¹.

➤ **Health infrastructure**

Particular focus was put on the improvement of the health infrastructure given the role that the latter plays in the improvement of health. Some new hospitals were constructed and old ones were constantly rehabilitated or expanded. Several health centers were also constructed while old ones were repaired gradually.

In 1996 the majority of health facilities started to provide both curative and preventive treatment. National referral hospitals such as King Faisal Hospital, the *Centre Hospitalier de Kigali* and the University Teaching Hospital of Butare were rehabilitated, re-equipped and made operational. There were 25 district hospitals in the country. Out of 279 health centers and dispensaries, 257 were reopened after rehabilitating them with new equipment. In 1996, 100% of health facilities provided curative treatment whereas 93% provided vaccinations, 73% health facilities admitted patients although 43% of them offered laboratory services¹⁵². As time went by, these services were extended quantitatively in many parts of the country.

¹⁵⁰ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, p.5.

¹⁵¹ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, p.3.

¹⁵² République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 1996, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 24.

In 2000, Nyanza Hospital and Kimironko Health Center were established¹⁵³. In 2001, there were 33 district hospitals and 40 health centers. The above district hospitals were coordinated by 11 regional health officials. There were 4 referral hospitals at national level, i.e. on top of three national referral hospitals was a neuro-psychiatry department in Ndera¹⁵⁴. In 2003, the Teaching Hospital in Butare and the *Centre Hospitalier de Kigali* were merged to form the *Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU)*¹⁵⁵. King Faisal Hospital was financially and legally supported by government to become a leading modern hospital in the country. In 2003, there were 34 district hospitals and 385 health centers. The hospitals and health centers were 60 % government-owned and 40% privately owned¹⁵⁶.

➤ **Staff and health centers**

The statistics available indicate that health staff increased qualitatively and quantitatively. The NUR Faculty of Medicine produced 1,999 general doctors. This faculty was reformed and, in its postgraduate programs, some health-related disciplines were introduced. Other specialized doctors were also trained. Nonetheless, the government resorted to foreign doctors from neighboring countries and even beyond to solve the problem of inadequate medical personnel.

KHI also trained several medical assistants at A1 level. The nursing section at secondary school also level produced nurses of A2 level, whereas those in the social section trained and graduated social workers.

As a result of the restructuring process by government, the reduced expenditure equally affected the health sector. This had the consequence of increasing the proportion of qualified staff which rose to 64% in 2002¹⁵⁷. Government also issued a policy which gave health centers permission to recruit their own staff. Hence, the number of nurses increased.

¹⁵³ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 2000- 19 Juillet 2001, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 19.

¹⁵⁴ MINECOFIN, A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An Analysis Based on the Results of the Household Living Condition Survey 1999-2001, February 2002, p. 11.

¹⁵⁵ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, p. 101.

¹⁵⁶ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, pp. 97-98. As far as health centers are concerned, various figures are found in: Gouvernement du Rwanda, Politique du Secteur Santé, Février 2005, p. 8.

¹⁵⁷ Gouvernement du Rwanda, Politique du Secteur Santé, Février 2005, p. 8.

Up to 1996, the following institutions were established to provide treatment for preventive and curative diseases: the National Program for the Fight against Malaria¹⁵⁸ and the Extended Vaccination Program. Between 2000 and 2001, the PNRS was restructured to become a Treatment and AIDS research Center¹⁵⁹. ICT was gradually extended to health institutions such as TRACK, referral hospitals, etc.

The government policy of encouraging the people to participate in health programs was successful. The Rwandan Sickness Insurance Scheme (RAMA) was established to ensure that government civil servants get proper medical insurance coverage. It started business in 2001¹⁶⁰.

For the remaining population, several health-care schemes were established. Thus, health-care schemes expanded rapidly. In 2003, there were 88 schemes, i.e. 23%¹⁶¹. The membership to these health schemes was also done quickly. In 2003, it covered 7% of the population¹⁶². One of the strategies which facilitated the dissemination of health schemes across the entire country was the policy of decentralization. In fact, the policy of promoting health schemes stated that: “the district shall be responsible for facilitating the promotion of health schemes. It shall support the initiation of health schemes and sensitization activities, establishment and make a follow-up of health schemes. (...) at the Cell and Sector levels, there shall be committees to initiate membership to health schemes (CIM). Members shall be elected by members of health schemes¹⁶³.”

The services of extending health insurance to the sick relied on the existing administrative structure. The annual contribution for individual members at health centers was 891RWF which was rounded to 1,000 RWF¹⁶⁴. However, to ensure the viability of this program, the government subsidized these contributions.

¹⁵⁸ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 1996, Kigali, Juillet 1996, pp. 24-25.

¹⁵⁹ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d’Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 2000- 19 Juillet 2001, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 19.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 2

¹⁶¹ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2006, p. 18

¹⁶² MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2006, p. 19.

¹⁶³ République du Rwanda, Ministère de la Santé, politique de Développement des Mutuelles de Santé au Rwanda, Kigali, s.d., pp. 13-14.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

Finally, as far as pharmaceutical activities were concerned, several achievements were made. For example, the national list of medicines was regularly reviewed and updated and the pharmacy personnel in districts were given training. In addition, district health pharmaceutical stores were repaired. The pharmaceutical warehouses, i.e. those where medicine was sold in wholesale, dispensaries and retail small-scale pharmaceutical stores were regularly inspected. In short, the job of pharmacists was boosted and their services were enhanced in many parts of the country. The Central Store for Rwanda's Essential Medicines (CAMERWA) was charged with supplying essential drugs at national level. As for Rwanda Pharmaceutical Laboratory (LABOPHA), it started manufacturing some medicines.

However, the doctors /patients ratio remained low. It was at 1: 37,000 in 2003. In the same year, this ratio dropped to 1: 4,500¹⁶⁵.

➤ **Preventive and curative treatment**

Some factors led to the increase in the number of hospitals and health centers. These included: extension and improvement in terms of preventive and curative facilities, quantitative and qualitative increase in medical staff, gradual availability of essential medicines, etc.

According to the available statistics, the services for curative treatment were low between 1997 and 2003¹⁶⁶ compared to 2002 when they rose to 30% and continued to rise¹⁶⁷.

In addition, MINISANTE sensitized the population on hygiene. To this end, it relied on existing decentralized or administrative structures endowed with departments charged with social and health affairs. MINISANTE also used Radio and written messages in hospitals and health centers.

Special attention was focused on sensitizing the population on the fight against HIV/AIDS. The studies conducted in 2005 revealed that the rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence was 3% for the age-bracket between 15 and 49 years. These studies further

¹⁶⁵ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, p. 98.

¹⁶⁶ Gouvernement du Rwanda, Politique du Secteur Santé, Février 2005, p. 7.

¹⁶⁷ Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005, p. 83.

revealed that women were more infected than men¹⁶⁸. The rate of infection was 13% in 1997. It then reduced to 11.2% in 2001¹⁶⁹. The improvement of this trend was due to combined effort by the state through MINISANTE, CNLS, TRACK, bilateral cooperation, local and international NGOs and the UN. All these partners contributed to raising the level of awareness and giving maximum care to the sick. To this end, PACFA action in the fight against discriminating HIV/AIDS victims and in extending services to the sick and the sensitization effort was done by radio programs such as “*Urunana*” (of BBC Health unlimited of *Urunana* Development Communication). This program proved to be beneficial to the Rwandan population.

The care to VIH/AIDS victims gradually improved. For example, the centers for Voluntary Counseling and Testing of HIV/AIDS (VCT) increased at national level. In 1997, there was one VCT centre. Later, these centers increased to 4 in 2000. In 2002, they increased to 34 and finally to 53 in 2003. The number of patients receiving Anti-Retro Viral treatment (ARV) also increased. They were 4,189 in 2003¹⁷⁰. Thanks to the assistance by several NGOs and humanitarian organizations, some people received ARVs free of charge while others bought them at subsidized prices¹⁷¹.

Like with AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis also received special attention in terms of prevention and cure. As far as malaria was concerned, more than a million mosquito nets were distributed to the populations in 2005¹⁷². This was done concurrently with giving treatment of combining medicines such as quinine and coartem.

¹⁶⁸ Republic of Rwanda, Institut National de la Statistique, Ministère des Finances et de la Planification Economique, Rwanda Démographique & Health Survey 2005, Kigali, July 2006, p. xxix ; Primature, Rapport du gouvernement pour l’année 2005, Kigali, 2006, p. 105.

¹⁶⁹ IDA, Rwanda: Redressement, réhabilitation et espoir Mai 2007, <http://www.Banquemondiale.org/Ida> ; MINECOFIN, A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An Analysis Based on the Results of the Household Living Condition Survey 1999-2001, February 2002, p. 10.

¹⁷⁰ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, pp. 52-53; MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2004, p. 15 et 17 ; Primature, Rapport du Gouvernement de 2005, Kigali, 2006, p. 106 ; Primature, du Gouvernement pour l’année 2006, Kigali, 2007, pp. 171-172

¹⁷¹ International Rescue Committee, World Relief, PVO Collaborative Research: Baseline Survey of the Rwanda Community; Distribution of anti-malarial pilot program, August 20, 2004, p. 2.

¹⁷² Primature, Rapport du Gouvernement pour l’année 2005, Kigali, 2006, p. 107.

Regarding the sensitization programs on family planning and preventive medicine, the data obtained from 1996 to 2003 shows that the number of different categories of the population who had properly understood the message of this sensitization increased. However, the number of mature women who used modern contraceptive methods remained low. It was 6.7% in 1996 but rose to 4.7% from 2000 to 2003¹⁷³.

➤ **Funding the Health Sector**

Table 29: Funding the health sector from the source: 1997 - 2003

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Outside	13,875	17,258	11,784	3,828	1,881	9,337	2,985
Rwanda	1,887	2,275	3,720	4,383	4,147	4,118	7,743
...+...Total	15,582	19,533	15,504	8,211	6,028	13,453	10,738

Source: MINISANTE, Annual report 2004. p.66.

This table shows that the finances in the health sector evolved unevenly between 1997 and 2003. As for funding from the national budget, it increased from 1997 to 2003, with a slight decrease in 2000 and 2001 as compared to the year 2000. The health sector therefore suffered from dependence on external funding.

Everywhere, there were both qualitative and quantities deficiencies in terms of staff, especially in rural areas. The most impoverished patients did not afford expensive medicines even if the health insurance scheme was supposed to solve this problem. The people's behavior towards communicable diseases was still inadequate. In addition, hygienic and living conditions were also inadequate.

➤ **Settlements and hygiene**

In 1994, houses were seriously affected by the destructive nature of the war and genocide. The majority of genocide survivors found their houses destroyed by genocide perpetrators. This was because genocide did not only target ending the life of the

¹⁷³ MINISANTE, Rapport annuel 2003, p. 71.

Tutsi. It also targeted the removal of their material traces in the countryside as well. Again, houses were destroyed following a series of looting expeditions and confrontations between the government army and RPF. Thus, their houses were destroyed beyond repair, following a series of looting expeditions and confrontations between the government army and RPF. In addition, when the former refugees returned to Rwanda, they had no houses to shelter them. They were forced to occupy houses that belonged to new refugees. It was towards 1999 that they were forced to vacate these houses because their rightful owners had returned to Rwanda in big numbers.

One of the major challenges to which the Government of National Unity was confronted with was the availability of accommodation facilities for various categories of people without shelter. Accommodation challenges exacerbated when the rural urban migration increased after 1994. The urban population consisted of almost 391,174 inhabitants in 1991 (5.5% of the total population of Rwanda). This figure rose to 1,362,312 inhabitants in 2002 (16.7%)¹⁷⁴.

Whereas those with personal means constructed their own houses, the state assisted the vulnerable people to establish their homes. This was the beginning of the first national policy on settlements formulated in 1996. It defined the modalities of urban planning, the reconstruction of natural neighborhoods and group settlements in rural populations. This policy scored impressive results from 1995 to 2001. Effectively, 265,000 houses were constructed in grouped settlements (*Imidugudu*)¹⁷⁵. This was possible thanks to the financial efforts by the government and assistance from the international community. For example, in February 1996, the international community used bilateral and multilateral aid and NGOs to give Rwanda more than 1.4 billion USD. This aid helped to repatriate and resettle refugees and displaced people¹⁷⁶.

As far as *Imidugudu* were concerned, the abolition of dispersed settlements in favor of group settlements aimed at optimizing

¹⁷⁴ République du Rwanda, Ministère des Infrastructures : Politique Nationale de l'Habitat au Rwanda, Kigali, Juillet 2004, p.8.

¹⁷⁵ République du Rwanda, Ministère des Infrastructures : Politique Nationale de l'Habitat au Rwanda, Kigali, Juillet 2004, p.2.

¹⁷⁶ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 2003, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. 18.

land management. This was done by rationalizing land for accommodation, agriculture or other purposes. On the other hand, the policy aimed at facilitating the provision of socio-economic infrastructure. This enabled the rural populations to attain a decent social wellbeing and economic development¹⁷⁷.

The policy of grouped settlements expanded rapidly in the former province of Kibungo and Byumba. It was later gradually promoted in other provinces. For example, in Mukarange Commune in the Former *Préfecture* of Byumba, it was estimated that 80% of the rural populations lived in grouped settlements¹⁷⁸. In 1999, 78% of the population in Kibungo lived in grouped settlements. Several other grouped settlements were planned and introduced in other parts of the country though not at the same percentage. However, the efforts to sensitize the rural masses to join grouped settlements continued.

The plan for Kigali city and other towns were designed. The construction of new residential and commercial neighborhoods in Kigali was largely inspired by the group settlement criterion. Other settlements where the same principle applied were middle-income houses in Gicukiro, Kinagabaga, Gisozi, Nyarutarama, Kimirinko, to name but a few. Other such houses were in Kacyiru, Remera, Gikondo, etc. These constructions were generally realized thanks to the support of private businessmen, the Habitat Bank in Rwanda (which replaced the former *Caisse Hypothécaire du Rwanda*), the *Caisse Sociale du Rwanda*, and commercial banks in Rwanda. The beneficiaries were government civil servants and other employees. They bought these houses on credit which was paid back at intervals.

The construction of group settlement houses in these neighborhoods gave Kigali city a new image in terms of beauty. These constructions tell the success story of the post-1994 government of Rwanda. Due to these architectural reforms, Kigali city has since then been considered as the cleanest cities in Africa.

Nevertheless, urban populations have continued to construct houses in neighborhoods that were unplanned. Although the

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁷⁸ Van Hoyweghens, S., “The Urgency of Land and Agrarian Reform in Rwanda”, in *African Affairs*, pp. 353-372, p. 363.

latter were thought to be illegal, they accommodated more than 50% of the urban population in 2003¹⁷⁹. It can be said that these neighborhoods satisfied the needs of urban people in terms of accommodation though their quality still left a lot to be desired. At national level, the problem of accommodation was both qualitative and quantitative. A study conducted in 2001 revealed that there were still 92000 plastic-roofed houses (*blindés*)¹⁸⁰. From the qualitative point of view, poor quality of construction material was used. For example, in 2001 almost 80% of the houses in the countryside were constructed of mud bricks¹⁸¹ and were of poor quality¹⁸².

Other statistics related to the health conditions in residential houses deal with the availability of water and electricity. Up to 2001, only 2.4% of the homes were connected to water supplied by ELECTROGAZ as opposed to 38.1% homesteads which got water from natural wells. The poorest people fetched water from rivers. The average distance between homes and water sources was 703 meters in 2001¹⁸³.

As for electricity, the number of ELECTROGAZ customers increased. It rose from 2% of the population in 1994 to 6% in 2002¹⁸⁴. But since then, its progress has been slow. In addition, there was a significant difference in living standards between rural and urban dwellers¹⁸⁵.

In conclusion, it can be said that in the field of construction industry and accommodation, the government and private sector achieved much in a short period of time. With the introduction of poverty reduction programs, it was hoped that an adequate number of decent accommodation facilities would be increased.

¹⁷⁹ République du Rwanda, Ministère des Infrastructures : Politique Nationale de l'Habitat au Rwanda, Kigali, Juillet 2004, p.21.

¹⁸⁰ MINECOFIN, A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An Analysis Based on the Results of the Household Living Condition Survey 1999-2001, February 2002, p. 21.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p.19

¹⁸² Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005, p. 60.

¹⁸³ MINECOFIN, A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An Analysis Based on the Results of the Household Living Condition Survey 1999-2001, February 2002, p. 22-23.

¹⁸⁴ République du Rwanda, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisation du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 2003, Kigali, Juillet 2003, p. x.

¹⁸⁵ Institut National de la Statistique du Rwanda, Indicateurs de Développement du Rwanda en 2005,p. 62.

7.2.4 Promotion of women and youth

Since women and youth constituted the majority of Rwanda's population, the Transitional Government deemed it fit to include them in national programs. This aimed at solving the problem of injustice which had been experienced in the past.

As shown above, women lived in conditions of extreme economic and social vulnerability in 1994¹⁸⁶. The action of government and civil society was to strengthen capacity building programs for women in all fields.

Hence, women and family promotion were made government priorities. Since women were structurally disadvantaged by previous legislation and culture, the first task for government was to try and correct the Rwandan legislation in that matter so as to give equal chances to both men and women. To this effect, the government officially launched a project of revising the Rwandan law in favor of women and children's rights. It set up the National Commission for Women's Rights. This commission played an important role revising the law and culture; it removed articles that were disadvantaging women. Similarly, women organizations became very active in this endeavor. Hence, an association called PROFEMMES trained women and empowered them to take up roles in decision making organs, justice. In addition, laws on inheritance were reformulated. There were more consultations on women's rights at national level¹⁸⁷. The review of laws was successful. In addition, the gender factor was included within all national policies on Rwanda's long term development.

As far as political participation was concerned, the state encouraged women to get involved in decision making instances. This started from the first electoral campaigns of 1999, 2001 and 2003. For example, during the 2001 elections organized by district and sector committees, almost 25% of the women were elected¹⁸⁸.

¹⁸⁶ Newbury, C., and Baldwin, H., "Aftermath: Women in Post-genocide Rwanda", Center for Development Information and Evaluation U.S. Agency for International Development Washington, Working Paper No. 303, July 2000, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸⁷ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 1996, Kigali, Juillet 1996, pp. 27-28 ; Kimonyo, J.P et al., Supporting the post-Genocide Transition in Rwanda. The role of the International Community, Working Paper, The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Dec.2004, p. 53.

¹⁸⁸ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 2000- 19 Juillet 2001, Kigali, Juillet 2001, p. 17.

All categories of the Rwandan population took part in the process of drafting the Rwandan constitution of 2003. This facilitated the inclusion of the gender factor in the constitution¹⁸⁹.

The Rwandan Constitution of 2003 stipulates that women shall occupy at least 30% of the decision making organs in the country. The results of the 2003 elections showed that Rwanda was the first country in the world with the most outstanding percentage of women in the National Assembly.

There were 48.8% of the women in the Chamber of Deputies¹⁹⁰. In the Senate, women occupied 30% of the seats. They also occupied 37% in Executive organs and 41% in the Supreme Court.

The issue of promoting women in the political field was enshrined in the RPF program at its inception¹⁹¹. As a sign of appreciation, the President of the Republic of Rwanda received several prizes on good governance and respect for gender. In his speeches, the President reiterated that these prizes belonged to all Rwandans. Rwandan women rejoiced as a result of this achievement.

Women did not only participate in government action to demand for their rights, they also took part in reconstructing the country. They occupied various leadership positions and intellectual responsibilities.

Women became leaders, heads of organizations, heads of families, etc. Some old customs were overturned because women started constructing houses, doing hard and challenging tasks, etc. They also contributed significantly to the efforts of peace and reconciliation¹⁹².

¹⁸⁹ Union interparlementaire, Le processus d'intégration du genre dans la nouvelle constitution du Rwanda, 20-22 juin 2001, Kigali (RWANDA), Genève.

¹⁹⁰ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in Parliament", Economist, 1st April 2004; Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women Elected in 2003: the year in perspective, Geneva, January 2004.

¹⁹¹ Powley, E., Rwanda: The impact of Women Legislators on Policy Outcomes Affecting Children and Families, UNICEF, December 2006, pp. 4-5.

¹⁹² CNUR, Le rôle de la femme dans le processus de réconciliation et consolidation de la paix du Rwanda. Dix ans après le Génocide 1994-2004. Contributions, défis, perspectives d'avenir, Mars 2005, pp. 8-9, 17, 28-30.

Today, Rwanda boasts of full legal and political emancipation for women. But from the economic and social points of view, there is still a lot that remains to be done. For example, in the field of education, gender equality has been achieved in primary education. In secondary education, it is yet to be achieved. In higher public education, the situation is somber. In the field of employment, equality has not yet been achieved. In the private sector women have not yet attained entrepreneurial skills.

Like women, the youth have also been integrated in country's decision making organs. They have participated in national reconstruction since 1994. The 'National Council for the Youth' was set up and has enabled the youth to join organs which represent them from grassroots to the top administrative hierarchy. Since 2003, this Council was represented by two youth members in the Chamber of Deputies (MPs).

In addition, the youth have been sensitized on several political issues in solidarity camps. They have been taught civic education which enabled them to be responsible members in society. The youth have not only organized themselves nationally but they have also extended their collaboration to regional and continental levels by attending youth conferences in the Great Lakes Region and the African Union.

From the professional point of view, the government created Youth Training Centers (YTC) to train the youth on job-creation skills. The government supported youth projects in several ways. It set up the "Youth Economic Chamber". This body has enabled them to acquire and implement entrepreneurial skills¹⁹³.

Socially, in 1994, the government organized sensitization programs for the youth to fight against AIDS. Several anti-AIDS clubs have been created everywhere in the country and a program on street children has also been initiated to deal with the problem of AIDS. Like many other sections of the Rwandan people, the youth have been confronted with the problem of poverty.

In the last analysis, the transitional period that started in 1994 was Rwanda's drawing board in the quest for the political, social

¹⁹³ République Rwandaise, Service du Premier Ministre, Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale, 19 Juillet 1994- 19 Juillet 1996, Kigali, Juillet 1996, p. 44.

and economic reconstruction of the country. It was characterized by tough problem and challenges. The country was destroyed by genocide and war which were caused by an authoritarian regime. The RPF government embarked on the process of pacifying the entire country, restoring peace and security, repatriating and resettling refugees and all the displaced people as well as setting up institutions capable of correcting mistakes of the past. These mistakes included the destructive role of the colonial policy on the Rwandan society, the post-independence authoritarian regimes and political struggles for power between leaders and political parties.

Gradually, the government of National Unity restored peace and security; it resettled the majority of refugees and all the displaced people back to their motherland; it initiated several programs such as restoring democracy and the rule of law; it promoted the politics of national unity, embarked on a decentralization program, etc. These programs transformed the political landscape of the country. As a result, the politics of ethnic and regional exclusion as well as gender inequality which prevailed in the past were addressed. With peace and political stability, government created an enabling environment for economic reconstruction. This has paved the way for economic and social progress. In 2003, Rwanda's economic growth was noted in major economic sectors like agriculture, industry, trade, service delivery and the establishment of infrastructure, etc. In addition, sectors like employment, education, health, accommodation, etc. have also scored remarkable progress. All this was associated with two factors: a committed leadership and willingness on behalf of the Rwandese population who have committed their lives to serious work.

The presidential and legislative elections of 2003 marked the end of the period of the post-genocide transition. Since that time, Rwanda's pride has been characterized by elected leaders. For, the country continues to wage a bold struggle against poverty because the progress scored so far has not yet provided all solutions to the existing country's economic, political and social problems. The journey to achieve a satisfactory level of wellbeing for the entire population is still long.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study attempts to summarize the history of Rwanda from its beginning to the year 2003. While it does not claim to be exhaustive, it resorts to available sources and recognizes its inability to access some sources conserved abroad. On the other hand, the study was not able to access some sources which were lost owing to the demise of some important resource persons who were equipped with traditional knowledge.

The rigorous and professional consultation of various sources and documents have helped the authors to shutter the myths and ideologies which have, for a long time, made the history of Rwanda to be regarded as an ideological history, rich in controversies of all sorts and deliberately subjected to falsification and manipulation.

The recent studies on the pre-history and settlements of Rwanda emphasize what is generally known as a formal denial of the 'ethno-racist theories' of the 'Hamite-Bantu myth' whose objective was to divide the people of Rwanda and colonize them in order to rule them. In the First Millennium before Jesus Christ, the region from which the Kingdom of Rwanda emerged was inhabited by agriculturalists, herdsman, fruit gatherers and hunters. The available archeological traces do not in anyway reveal that Rwanda's inhabitants were made of different races. There is also no evidence to show that the arrival of the first waves of migrants to Rwanda was separated by centuries.

From the beginning up to the nineteenth century, the formation of Rwanda, its expansion and its gradual organization was under different reigns of *Nyiginya* Monarchs. This system ended with the reign of King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri who designed a sophisticated political, social, economic and cultural organization for Rwanda. He developed a centralized system of organization with an independent, military, agro-pastoral and religious enclaves. It was as a result of this organization that the Arab slave traders were completely repulsed. However, their system was unable to resist European penetration which came soon after. This was due to the military superiority of the latter.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the European penetration ushered the colonial regime in Rwanda. The Europeans assumed that no history existed in Rwanda prior to their arrival. During the Belgium Mandate and Trusteeship, the Colonial Charter which was the official document governing Belgian Congo at that time was applied to Rwanda. The '*Mortehan reform*' of 1926-1931 reshaped the Rwandan administrative structures and mentalities and launched 'Works of Public Interest' (TIG) to boost the colonial economy. The reform placed Rwanda's education system into the hands of the Belgian Christians.

The effect of this reform was to render traditional institutions subservient to the colonial regime. By proxy, the reform established a Hutu-Tutsi racial divide in the power-sharing exercise. It introduced a monetary economy and made Rwanda's economy dependent on the outside world. It imposed Western values and education as well as the Jewish-Christian mode of life.

The human product of this system was called the "*évolué*": 'an elite group of newly civilized natives'. The *évolué* was supposed to be a literate Christian assimilated to the European system and, in this respect, was referred to as an "emancipated" citizen. From the 1950s, these emancipated people demanded for independence. Soon, from 1950, the Belgian colonizer imposed on them a policy of "divide and rule" by openly backing the ethnic struggles for power between the Tutsi and Hutu elites who originally manifested no enmity amongst themselves.

These ethnic struggles ended by exploding in November 1959. They were backed by the colonial regime which decapitated the

Rwandese nationalist movement whose objective was to struggle for independence. And effectively, the independence which was won on 1st July 1962 was given to new supporters who were faithful to the colonial regime. Their former supporters opposed the colonial regime and were considered as rebels. It was in this new context of division and civil war between the Rwandan elite (Hutu-Tutsi *évolués*) that the First Republic was born.

The First Republic lasted from 1962 to 1973. PARMEHUTU was enshrined in the constitution of 24th November 1962. It was a party which introduced a policy of ethnic exclusion against the Tutsi and suffocated all parties within the opposition. Before it was eliminated, it had evolved into a single party dictatorship led by one ethnic group.

PARMEHUTU hardly succeeded in making significant economic reforms despite the foreign support and funding it got from abroad. The period of economic stagnation was linked to poor supervision and inadequate funding of the agricultural sector. At international level, Rwanda was never in a position to meet its coffee quota requirements.

In the final analysis, the party in power was synonymous with the state and was legitimized by the Catholic Church. But these two institutions were not in a position to prevent President Grégoire Kayibanda's regime from evolving into a racial and ethnic dictatorship.

The First Republic was quickly replaced by the Second Republic which heightened ethnic tensions and divisions through the policy of regional and ethnic balance introduced by MRND, a single party and state party at that time. Its manifesto and statutes formed the framework of the 1978 Constitution which was the legal pillar of the Second Republic.

From the socio-economic point of view, the policy of ethnic and regional balance resulted into the *Akazu* phenomenon. This was a closed circle made of close relatives for the President. It seized all the wealth and resources of the state.

From the socio-cultural point of view, the above policy was translated into the exclusion of the Tutsi as well as the Hutu from the central and southern regions. Faithful to the policy of

ethnic and regional balance, MRND and its founding President led the Second Republic to its collapse in 1994 owing, first of all, to his absolute rule but also to economic mismanagement of the country and lastly, to the war he declared on the opposition army of RPF soldiers.

In July 1994, the Transitional Government of National Union put an end to this tragic period of the Second Republic during which period bad governance had created an institutional vacuum in the state machinery.

From its inception, the Government of National Unity fought against the negation of human rights and aimed at satisfying the emergency needs of the people by preparing the country to achieve sustainable development. The government introduced the rule of law as the only viable framework capable of warding off arbitrary rule and bad governance of the past.

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 - 60.5.1235737
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 - 67.1.1366
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 - 68.4. 369
 - 68.4. 374

N-°s photos négatifs :

HK 5501

HK 5949

HK 5952

HK 5968

HK 5983

HK 6006

HK 7389

HK7410

III. ORAL SOURCES

List of interviewed persons*

No	Names	Age	District	Level of Education	Profession
1	ANONYME	74	Gicumbi	Secondary	Merchant
2	AYINKAMIYE E.	53	Nyabihu	Primary	Teacher
3	BAGIRA S.	69	Burera	Primary	Farmer
4	BAKUNDAKWITA	69	Nyanza	Primary	Farmer
5	BARIYANGA F.	72	Burera	Primary	Farmer
6	BASANGIRA C.	79	Nyabihu	Secondary	-
7	BAVAKURE F.	60	Bugesera	Primary	Local Leader
8	BAZIGIRA E.	57	Karongi	Primary	Farmer
9	BAZIMENYERA P.	68	Nyabihu	Secondary	-
10	BISETSA P.	69	Burera	Secondary	-
11	BITABWAHE Ch.	76	Musanze	Primary	-
12	BUDARAMANI G.	71	Gicumbi	Secondary	-
13	BUHONGO A.	72	Rusizi	Primary	-
14	BUHURA P. C.	76	Nyamasheke	Secondary	-
15	BURARIYO A.	77	Gicumbi	-	-
16	BUTSIRIKA E.	72	Musanze	Secondary	Pastor
17	BYOSE J.	72	Rubavu	Primary	Farmer
18	DUSABIMANA O.	34	Rutsiro	University	Teacher
19	GACINYA F.	68	Bugesera	Secondary	-
20	GAFUTERI M.	77	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
21	GASHAGAZA Ph.	69	Nyaruguru	Secondary	-
22	GASHIRAMANGA I.	52	Kicukiro	University	-
23	GASHUMBA J.	78	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
24	HABIMANA C.	56	Rusizi	University	Teacher
25	HABIYAMBERE N.	48	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
26	HAKIZIMANA T.	68	Burera	Primary	Farmer
27	HANGARI F.	79	Rusizi	Primary	-
28	HARERIMANA V.	68	Muhanga	Secondary	-
29	HATEGEKA A.	57	Muhanga	University	-
30	HATEGEKUMUKIZA G.	40	Nyamagabe	Secondary	-
31	HITIMANA A.	78	Nyamasheke	Secondary	-
32	HITIMANA G.	62	Bugesera	Secondary	Clerk
33	KABAKESHA B.	72	Nyaruguru	Primary	Farmer
34	KABANDA A.	49	Bugesera	Primary	-
35	KABURAME I.	47	Gatsibo	Primary	Farmer
36	KABURAME M.	44	Nyarugenge	Primary	Merchant
37	KAGERUKA A.	52	Nyanza	Primary	Merchant
38	KALISA J.M.V.	51	Rwamagana	Primar	Mason
39	KAMANA A.	62	Bugesera	D5	Local Leader
40	KAMANZI F.	70	Rusizi	Primary	Teacher
41	KAMARENZI M.	68	Kicukiro	Secondary	Farmer

42	KAMASHARA A.	70	Kicukiro	Primary	Farmer
43	KANAMUGIRE F.	73	Rusizi	Secondary	Enseignant
44	KANYARWANDA A.	68	Musanze	Secondary	-
45	KANYARWOYA J. P.	76	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
46	KANYEMERA A.	77	Bugesera	primary	Local Leader
47	KAREKEZI A.	57	Rwamagana	Secondary	-
48	KAREKEZI F.	79	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
49	KAYARASHI S.	54	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
50	KAYIHURA T.	82	Nyaruguru	Primary	Farmer
51	KWIZERA V.	43	Nyamagabe	Secondary	-
52	MBAYIHA M.	71	Rwamagana	Secondary	-
53	MFUMUGORE C.	69	Musanze	Secondary	Mason
54	MPIRIKANYI Z.	70	Bugesera	Secondary	-
55	MUGABO W. G.	47	Nyarugenge	Secondary	Farmer
56	MUGANGA A.	76	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
57	MUJAWAMARIYA D.	49	Bugesera	-	-
58	MUKAGAGA V.	69	Gasabo	Secondary	Farmer
59	MUKAKABERA D.	43	Karongi	Secondary	Farmer
60	MUKAKAGERUKA E.	33	Karongi	Secondar	Teacher
61	MUKAMURENZI A.	49	Rutsiro	-	-
62	MUKAMWEZI L.	26	Bugesera	University	-
63	MUKANDERA B.	54	Nyanza	Secondary	Teacher
64	MUKANSURU J.	40	Karongi	Secondary	Farmer
65	MUKANTWARI M.	30	Bugesera	Primary	Local Leader
66	MUKARUHUNGA Th.	49	Rutsiro	Primary	Local Leader
67	MUKARWEGO L.	77	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
68	MUKASEKURU M.	68	Ngoma	Primary	Merchant
69	MUKASHEMA B.	36	Rutsiro	Primary	Local Leader
70	MUNDANIKURE C.	98	Rubavu	Secondary	Farmer
71	MUNYANKORE J. B.	70	Bugesera	Primary	Merchant
72	MUNYEKAWA J.	71	Rwamagana	Primary	Merchant
73	MUREKATETE A.	33	Nyanza	Primary	Farmer
74	MURWANASHYAKA G.	44	Rwamagana	Primaire	Carpenter
75	MUSHALI F.	63	Musanze	University	Teacher
76	MUSHIMIRE C.	27	Kicukiro	Primary	Farmer
77	MUSONI Antoine	73	Nyamasheke	Primary	Farmer
78	MWENEMARIYA I.	56	Bugesera	Secondary	Local Leader
79	MWONGEREZA E.	49	Karongi	Secondary	Prisoner
80	NDARIFITE Z.	73	Rubavu	Primary	-
81	NDEGEYE J.	65	Gicumbi	Primary	Merchant
82	NDEKWE Ch.	78	Nyaruguru	University	Clergy staff
83	NDINDABAHIZI F.	38	Kicukiro	University	Farmer
84	NGIRINGOGA S.	78	Nyamashake	Secondary	-
85	NIBASEKE L.	71	Bicumbi	Secondary	-
86	NIBAYAZI J.	77	Rubavu	Primary	Farmer
87	NIKUZE A.	42	Nyarugenge	Primary	Civil servant

88	NIZEYIMANA F.	40	Nyanza	Primary	Prisoner
89	NKURUNZIZA J.	50	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
90	NOHELI P. C.	31	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
91	NSENGIYUMVA E.	49	Ngoma	Primary	Merchant
92	NYAGAHINGA F-X.	66	Bugesera	Secondary	Civil servant
93	NYAMUBERWA A.	68	Ngoma	Secondary	Farmer
94	NYIRAMISIYONI B.	51	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
95	NYIRAMUKATSI M.	74	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
96	NYIRANGARUYE M.	59	Nyamagabe	Primary	Local Leader
97	NYIRANYIMA Th.	89	Rubavu	Primary	Farmer
98	NYIRIMIGABO H. P.	80	Ngoma	Primary	-
99	NZABAHIMANA J.B.V	23	Karongi	Secondary	Farmer
100	RUDAKUBANA J.	69	Gasabo	Secondary	-
101	RUGARUKA J.	57	Kicukiro	Secondary	Student
102	RUGURABAGANWA Th.	60	Gasabo	Secondaire	-
103	RUHIMBANA R.	39	Nyaruguru	Primary	Local Leader
104	RUKARA R.	79	Rusizi	Primary	-
105	RUKWAVU G.	80	Nyaruguru	Primaire	Farmer
106	RUSHITA T.	67	Bugesera	Secondary	-
107	RUTINDUKA L.	50	Gatsibo	University	Religious person
108	RUTSOBE M.	30	Ngoma	University	Student
109	RUZIBUKIRA J.	70	Nyaruguru	Primary	Farmer
110	RWAMUNINGI N.	54	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer
111	RWANGALINDE J.M.V.	60	Musanze	-	-
112	RWANYABUGIGIRI P.C.	67	Gatsibo	Primary	Farmer
113	RWARAHOZE M.	79	Rubavu	Secondary	Farmer
114	SAGAHUTU B.	72	Bugesera	Primary	Farmer
115	SEBUGIRIGIRI L.	69	Musanze	Primary	Farmer
116	SEBUTUYU J.	70	Rubavu	Primary	Farmer
117	SEMANA D.	46	Rwamagana	Secondary	Carpenter
118	SEMINEGA F.	35	Gasabo	Secondary	Artist
119	SEMUCYO F. X.	59	Musanze	Primary	Farmer
120	SESONGA P.	57	Rwamagana	Secondary	Mason
121	SEZIRAHIGA F.	53	Rwamagana	Secondary	Civil servant
122	SINDIKUBWABO E.	59	Nyanza	Secondary	Prisoner
123	TOMANI J. C.	30	Rwamagana	University	Reseacher
124	TWAYIGIZE L.	32	Rutsiro	Primary	Farmer
125	UKIRIHO F.	53	Muhanga	Secondary	Local Leader
126	UMULISA C.	32	Nyaruguru	Primary	Farmer
127	UWAMARIYA A.	61	Gatsibo	Primary	Farmer
128	UWIMANA J. P.	49	Nyarugenge	Primary	Prisoner
129	UWINGABIRE J.	30	Nyaruguru	-	Local Leader
130	UZAMUKUNDA P.	36	Nyabihu	Secondary	Teacher
131	YADUFASHIJE A.	36	Rutsiro	Vocational training	Local Leader
132	ZIBONEYE I.	57	Nyabihu	Primary	Farmer

*The informants on this list were interviewed between 26 July and 15 August 2007.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

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